



IHA Board and Member Workgroup on Transparency Action Plan and Principles

Define the Opportunity:

The IHA Board of Officers and Trustees approved a recommendation from board chair, Ted Townsend, President/CEO, UnityPoint Health-St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids, to form an IHA Workgroup on Transparency. Transparency was a break-out discussion topic at the IHA Board Retreat in August 2014 with strong member support that this should be a 2015 focus area for IHA. The IHA Board at its meeting in December 2014 approved a recommendation of the IHA Council on Health Information that the IHA Board appoint a member work group on transparency. The Workgroup determined its focus would be on Iowa hospitals leadership in transparency and identification of the resources that IHA can provide. The Workgroup met on April 6, June 9 and July 14. The following objectives were set:

- Focus on transparency in the areas of hospital price, quality and patient friendly billing (including chargemaster review).
 - Develop an action plan
 - Identify strategies, opportunities and recommendations for Iowa hospitals to lead in transparency.
 - Identify action for IHA (and IHC) to enhance resources and lead in Iowa hospitals data transparency.
 - How can IHA assets and resources (Advocacy/Education/Information/Communication) be deployed to assist members.
- Present the IHA action plan on Iowa hospital leadership in transparency at the IHA Board Retreat on August 13-14.

At the IHA Joint Boards Retreat in August, there was member break-out session discussion of the draft plan. Kirk Norris, IHA President/CEO then presented the action plan to IHA District meetings in September for input. The IHA Board gave final approval to the action plan and principles at its meeting on October 6, 2015. IHA is sending the IHA Transparency Action Plan and Principles to each Iowa hospital and health system. Iowa hospitals are requested to have their governing boards adopt the Transparency Principles to highlight Iowa hospital collective focus on leading in transparency.

Hospital Chargemaster:

- Iowa Hospitals:
 - Statewide voluntary effort of hospitals to analyze chargemaster and charges in relationship to costs and competitor charges.
 - Review and implement changes to line item charges by adopting the California Hospital Association's (CHA) Modern Pricing quick start strategy that recommends, for example, the elimination of charges for low-cost items; items that can be purchased at a drug store; obsolete charges and ensuring codes are accurate and in compliance with regulations.
 - Identify the impact of altering chargemasters and the timing related to individual payers.
 - Where appropriate, bundle services into one price to simplify presentation to patients.
 - Consider providing a pricing structure and guide for high-volume patient retail services.

- IHA:
 - Provide education to members on the CHA’s “Modern Pricing” initiative.
 - Distribute the CHA Modern Pricing Guide and other resources to assist members.
 - Facilitate education programming to highlight hospital best practices in price transparency, bundling and consumer education/outreach.
 - Survey hospital CFOs to obtain baseline data on existing chargemaster review work, vendor relationships and local transparency practices/efforts.
 - Identify voluntary consultative resources to assist members in chargemaster review and cost accounting analysis.
 - Provide regulatory/legislative assistance and facilitate communication with payers if necessary.

Patient Friendly Billing:

- Iowa Hospitals:
 - Seek to improve public perception of hospital billing practices through adoption of the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) developed “Patient Friendly Billing” resource.
 - Implement training (and scripting) for appropriate hospital staff in responding to patient, family, public and media inquiries about hospital billing and price.
 - Provide patient education on hospital billing and establish the ability to provide price estimates.

- IHA:
 - Develop a member-focused transparency section on the IHA website.
 - Develop a public-focused education/awareness campaign to detail statewide progress on transparency.
 - Distribute HFMA “Patient Friendly Billing” resources including the Consumer Guide to members.
 - Provide education and training programs for members.
 - Produce patient/consumer guides and resources for availability to members to download, customize and distribute.
 - Identify software vendors/resources for hospitals to use voluntarily to provide patients with out-of-pocket estimates.
 - Define difference between price and cost to assist members and consumers.

Price/Quality Transparency:

- Iowa hospitals:
 - Hospitals will lead in price and quality data transparency in responding to their communities needs for information.
 - Hospitals can establish web links to the IHA Iowa Hospital Facts and Iowa Healthcare Collaborative (IHC) Iowa Report public transparency websites.
 - Utilize the American Hospital Association (AHA) Transparency Self-Assessment Checklist to identify opportunities.
 - Submit ANS1835 remittance (payment) data at the discharge level through the IHA IPOP program when developed.
 - Patient portals implemented should be patient/user friendly.
 - Provide the public with patient experience information.
 - Seek to provide clear and open communication to patients and families.

- IHA:
 - IHA will lead in transparency of Iowa hospital price and quality data.
 - Enhance the IHA Iowa Hospital Facts website.
 - Develop and implement a new website similar to the Indiana “My Care Insights” website that provides both hospital comparative charge and quality data (replacing Iowa Hospital Charges Compare website).
 - Work with IHC to enhance its “Iowa Report” with hospital quality and patient safety data to be more public friendly.
 - Work with IHC on data definitions including defining a core data set for public release and ensure that all quality and patient experience data reported and released is endorsed by the National Quality Forum.
 - Develop and implement a major enhancement to IPOP to collect and release meaningful ANSI835 remittance (payment) discharge data to Iowa hospitals.
 - Identify and release to hospitals price and quality data resources on freestanding ambulatory surgery centers and physicians.
 - Provide Iowa hospital benchmark comparisons to other states and the nation to highlight Iowa hospital value.
 - Provide transparency resources for members through IHA website including AHA developed “Transparency Toolkit”.
 - Identify resources (e.g. guides, checklists) for hospitals which details best practices in developing user-friendly patient portals.
 - Provide education programming, through a transparency education conference, on best practices in price and quality transparency, and patient portals.
 - Design a transparency education track at the IHA Annual Meeting.
 - Include transparency as a topic in a 2016 Business Forum webinar.
 - Monitor and evaluate federal/state data activity, regulations and legislation.
 - Engage payers to discuss and encourage transparency.

Iowa Hospital Transparency Principles:

The IHA Board of Officers and Trustees adopted and now is seeking Iowa hospital governing boards’ adoption of the attached “Iowa Hospital Principles for Transparency”.