



Billings Clinic

Billings, Montana

388 beds

39,232 ED visits

14,525 inpatient admissions

Impetus for Initiative: Value is key to the organization's mission and a word they take seriously. The price transparency initiative is part of the Billings Clinic's commitment to transparency in all areas but most specifically quality and price.

Currently, Billings lists the price of its most common procedures on its website for patients to easily find. Most procedures have a price range because complications can occur and patients' medical situations may vary. Patients unable to find information on the website are encouraged to contact the hospital via phone or web contact form and are connected with the Patient Financial Services department, which can help them with specific questions. Patients without insurance or who are unable to afford services are connected immediately with a representative, who discusses charity care programs and payment options. Billings Clinic staff who work in the Patient Access and the Patient Financial Services departments undergo specialized training that includes price transparency education.

Total charges are broken out into coinsurance and out-of-pocket costs. These can vary greatly, and the Billings Clinic does not have access to the level of insurance detail needed to appropriately inform consumers of their unique responsibilities. Because the Billings Clinic is integrated with most physician services, the price quoted to consumers typically includes all services. There is a new layer of transparency currently underway with an effort to make costs simpler for patients to understand.

Challenges: The payment system is not evolving or conducive to price transparency. Many consumers struggle to understand that lower prices from other organizations do not include professional fees, such as radiology or pathology. Billings has worked to ensure staff appropriately communicate how care is delivered and how charges in other organizations may be billed separately.

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