

NEWS RELEASE

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VHI Publishes Health Care Transparency Report

Groundbreaking report shows average allowable amounts on 31 health care services

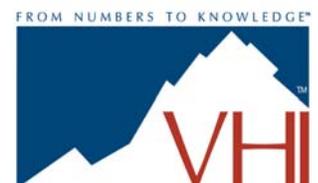
For the first time, Virginians have access to information on what health care procedures cost before they receive medical care. **Virginia Health Information** has published a report showing the average amounts that health insurers in Virginia pay for 31 procedures including preventive, emergency, outpatient and hospital inpatient care. Examples of procedures include everything from a routine office visit to an MRI, knee surgery or delivering a baby. This groundbreaking report will help the growing number of consumers without health insurance, the increasing number of enrollees in high -deductible health plans and those needing a better idea of what their co -payments might be for medical tests or surgery.

The latest data available shows Virginia with more than one million uninsured, and according to the recent Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Research Educational Trust annual survey of employers' health benefit offerings, more workers are enrolling in plans with an annual deductible of \$1,000 or more. Forty percent of covered workers in small firms (fewer than 200 workers) and 13 percent in larger firms were enrolled in such plans.

"Virginia is one of the first states to have produced a report like this," says Michael T. Lundberg, **VHI's** Executive Director. Lundberg worked with a group of stakeholders including representatives of health plans, hospitals, physicians and the Virginia Department of Health. "This effort was an outgrowth of legislation introduced by Delegate John O'Bannon (R-Henrico) and Senator John Edwards (D-Roanoke) in 2008, directing that greater transparency in health care costs be attempted through disclosure of health plan reimbursement to providers,"

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Lundberg continued. In addition to providing the average health plan allowance for a range of common procedures, Lundberg highlighted that the web-based report also contains descriptions of the procedures, links to expert sources for additional information on the service as well as the ability to view the procedures on YouTube.

*"Virginia is a leader on health care transparency," said Senator Edwards. "We want to empower Virginia's health care consumers with reliable information so that they get the greatest value for their health care dollar." Delegate O'Bannon agreed, saying "This is an important step forward for consumers in Virginia that will allow them to really know what things cost." O'Bannon continued: "I would like to commend **VHI** for working with stakeholders for getting it done. It really shows the value that **VHI** brings to the table in the health care arena."*

To access **VHI's** Transparency Guide to 31 Services, visit www.vhi.org/transparency_intro.asp

Virginia Health Information is the nonprofit organization the Commonwealth of Virginia and businesses go to for consumer and business health information. **VHI** information also includes hospitals, physicians, nursing facilities and other health care providers. Visit www.vhi.org or call toll free 1-877 VHI-INFO.

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