

2014 -- H 8349

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- HOSPITAL CHARGES

Introduced By: Representatives Naughton, McNamara, Shekarchi, E Coderre, and Diaz

Date Introduced: June 17, 2014

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 23-17 of the General Laws entitled "Licensing of Health Care
2 Facilities" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

3 **23-17-60. Compilation and publication of the charges for common hospital**
4 **procedures. -- (a) Each hospital, licensed under this chapter, shall compile a list of its twenty-**
5 **five (25) most commonly performed outpatient procedures and shall submit annually to the**
6 **department of health a list of the range of average charges for each procedure, in a uniform**
7 **reporting form adopted by the department.**

8 **(b) The department shall establish a list of the twenty-five (25) most commonly**
9 **performed inpatient procedures in Rhode Island hospitals, as organized by a Medicare diagnostic-**
10 **related group. The department of health shall annually develop a list of each hospital's range of**
11 **average charges for those procedures. The department shall publish this compiled information on**
12 **its website.**

13 **(c) Each hospital shall provide a copy of the lists described in subsections (a) and (b) to**
14 **any person upon request.**

15 **23-17-61. Written estimates for hospital medical services. -- Upon the request of any**
16 **person without health coverage or with an insurance deductible of five thousand dollars (\$5,000)**
17 **or higher, a hospital shall provide that person with a written estimate based upon the best medical**
18 **information known at the time, of the amount the hospital will require the person to pay for the**
19 **health care services, procedures, and supplies that are reasonably expected to be provided to the**

1 [person by the hospital, based upon an average length of stay and services provided for the](#)
2 [person's diagnosis. The estimate may also indicate that it does not reflect any unanticipated](#)
3 [services that become apparent at the time of treatment. The hospital may provide this estimate](#)
4 [during normal business office hours. In addition to the estimate, the hospital shall provide](#)
5 [information about its financial assistance and charity care policies and contact information for a](#)
6 [hospital employee or office from which the person may obtain further information about these](#)
7 [policies. If requested, the hospital shall also provide the person with an application for financial](#)
8 [assistance or charity care. This section shall not apply to emergency services.](#)

9 SECTION 2. Section 23-17-36 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-17 entitled "Licensing
10 of Health Care Facilities" is hereby amended to read as follows:

11 **23-17-36. Rules and regulations.** -- The director of the department of health is
12 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the intent of this chapter [as well as](#)
13 [establishing administrative penalties for violations of the provisions of §§ 23-17-60 and 23-17-61.](#)

14 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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1 This act would require all Rhode Island hospitals to annually compile a list of the range
2 of average charges for the twenty-five (25) most commonly performed outpatient and inpatient
3 procedures and to submit these lists to the department of health. These lists would be made public
4 by the department of health. It would also require a hospital, upon the request of a prospective
5 patient with no health coverage, to provide that person with a written estimate of the amount the
6 hospital will require that person to pay for those reasonably expected health care services,
7 procedures and supplies. Finally, it would require the hospital to provide information about its
8 financial assistance and charity care policies to its patients upon request.

9 This act would take effect upon passage.

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