

New Report Calls for Urgent Reforms to Improve Healthcare Price Transparency Data

New report urges reforms to improve health care price transparency, making data more accessible and usable for patients, employers, and policymakers.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, March 19, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A newly published analysis by health policy expert David Muhlestein highlights the significant challenges facing the implementation of healthcare price transparency regulations and offers 14 key recommendations to enhance their effectiveness. The report, featured in [Health Affairs Forefront](#), underscores the need for regulatory improvements to make hospital and insurer price transparency data more accessible and useful for patients, employers, and policymakers.



Despite federal mandates requiring hospitals and insurers to disclose pricing data, the report finds that barriers to access, inconsistent reporting, and massive data complexity continue to limit their real-world impact. Muhlestein emphasizes that without meaningful improvements,

these transparency efforts will fall short of their intended goal: empowering consumers and driving down healthcare costs.

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Transparency is key, but only if the data is accessible and usable.”

David Muhlestein

Key Challenges Identified in the Report

- **Difficult Access:** Insurers use inconsistent data-hosting

practices, with broken links and throttled downloads making it hard to retrieve information.

- **Data Overload & Errors:** Transparency files can be terabytes in size, riddled with duplicate

records, conflicting prices, and literally billions of “ghost codes” (irrelevant or incorrect data).

- Compliance Failures: Many insurers are failing to report required data, with no enforcement actions taken to date.
- Technical Barriers: Processing the data requires advanced expertise and high computing power, making it inaccessible to most researchers and analysts.

Proposed Reforms to Unlock Transparency’s Full Potential

Muhlestein presents four key areas where the federal government can improve price transparency data:

1. Improve Data Sharing: Develop standardized reporting structures, create a centralized database for data locations, and simplify access.
2. Enhance Data Quality: Require reporting of drug prices, care volumes, and actual paid amounts alongside negotiated rates.
3. Expand Reporting Requirements: Extend transparency mandates to Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, and other health plans, as well as more providers like ambulatory centers, labs, and clinics.
4. Strengthen Compliance: Introduce public reporting tools for non-compliance, require insurers to provide contact points for questions, and enforce stricter certification requirements.

A Call for Action

“The current transparency rules have unveiled critical insights into healthcare pricing, but the complexity and inconsistency of the data prevent the public from fully benefiting from these efforts,” said Muhlestein. Examples include (1) academic work to assess how hospital market share is related to commercial rates, (2) creating market-level metrics to understand regional variation in prices, and (3) working with multiple different health care organizations to understand, for the first time, what market rates actually are. “By implementing these practical reforms, the government can lower the barriers to entry, enhance the usability of the data, and ensure that patients, employers, and policymakers have the information they need to make informed decisions, Muhlestein added.”

About the Author

David Muhlestein, Ph.D., J.D., is a leading expert in healthcare policy and data analysis and the founder of [Simple Healthcare](#), a firm dedicated to leveraging data-driven solutions to enhance transparency, efficiency, and affordability in the healthcare system. His work focuses on improving healthcare transparency, cost efficiency, and market dynamics. This research was supported by the Peterson Center on Healthcare.

David Muhlestein
Simple Healthcare

info@simple-healthcare.com

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