

Frequently Asked Questions - About Charge Master

Read these frequently asked questions — and answers — about Charge master.

What is a charge master and what is it used for?

A "charge master," is a hospital-specific comprehensive listing of the items that can be billed by the hospital to a payer, patient or facility. The charge master is a complex, technical and internal financial document. The itemized billing descriptions were developed to meet government and health plan parameters.

Are the charges for everything in the charge master?

Almost all of this hospital's charges are included in the charge master. However, there are some additional databases that exist outside the charge master to allow for some technical calculations to be performed when entering a price onto a patient's statement. Pharmacy is one example. Since all pharmacy charges are not calculated until the drug and dose are ordered, the actual charge is not developed until the medication is dispensed. Other items that may not be found are custom items or new technologies.

How should I use this document for "cost comparison"?

The charge master is not necessarily a useful document for consumers who are "comparison shopping" between competing hospitals because the descriptions for a particular service could vary from hospital to hospital. Procedure charges may be comprised of several separate line items that are not necessarily in the same



department. It is very difficult to try to independently compare the charges for a procedure at one facility vs another.

If you need an estimate for a specific procedure, please have your physician contact the hospital with the information, and our business office team will work with you and your physician to develop an estimate for the service.

How are your charges determined?

Charges are based on our overall mix of services and costs. Specific cost factors affecting our charges include labor costs, facility and facility improvement costs, current and projected technology expenses, the competitive marketplace and the number of uninsured patients treated by this hospital.

Why can't I have a copy of your charge master?

Boone Memorial Hospital is making a copy of our charge master available in the manner required by law. We will not print and bind copies for distribution.

As you can see, the charge master is a complex and lengthy document. Viewed in isolation, the charge master itself will not provide consumers with a true picture of charges associated with a hospital stay or procedure.

We hope that making the charge master available for home viewing via the Internet, will encourage visitors who have questions about the charge for a particular procedure to discuss the charge with our representatives.

Can I talk to you about getting my bill lowered?



We continue to offer one-on-one financial counseling to explore a consumer's best options for addressing his/her hospital bill. This could include a discounted bill, assistance with health coverage or other options. If you do not have health coverage, we urge you to talk with our Patient Accounts Manager.

Who can tell me how much a procedure costs in your facility?

An actual procedure is comprised of numerous components from several different departments — room and board, laboratory, other diagnostics, pharmaceuticals, implants, therapies, etc. A physician or physicians make these determinations on individual considerations using the patient's diagnosis, general health condition and many other factors.

For example, one individual may require only a one-day hospital stay for a particular procedure, while another may require a two-day stay for the exact same procedure.

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