



OFFICE OF THE
STATE AUDITOR

News Release

For Immediate Release

June 25, 2020

**Office of the State Auditor Announces the Availability of
Utah Health Cost Compare – A Healthcare Cost Comparison Tool**

Patients Can Easily Compare the Relative Cost of a Variety of Healthcare Procedures

Salt Lake City, UTAH –

The Office of the State Auditor (Office) today announced the release of Utah Health Cost Compare, an online system that allows for easy comparison of the cost of a variety of healthcare procedures from different providers across Utah. Over 100 healthcare procedures across the state are included in this initial rollout of Utah Health Cost Compare. Additional procedures will be added over time.

The procedure analysis began in late 2018 and was supported in early 2019 by legislation sponsored and championed by Utah State Representative Brad Daw (R-Orem). The underlying procedure cost data comes from existing healthcare data gathered by the Utah Department of Health's (DOH) All Payer Claims Database (APCD). The DOH's Office of Health Care Statistics (OHCS) manages the APCD. Utah Code and Utah Administrative Rule requires health insurance carriers covering 2,500 or more Utahns to submit medical claims data to OHCS. The APCD data represents approximately 90 percent of Utah's non-Medicare population.

This beta version of Health Cost Compare includes "non-bundled" procedures. The Office plans to add more complex "bundled" procedures, such as surgeries, which require bundling costs from multiple providers. Health Cost Compare uses actual amounts paid for procedures, rather than billed amounts, when calculating the average cost per procedures among the various providers.

State Auditor John Dougall commented, "Utah Health Cost Compare provides Utahns with a quick, online way to compare the cost of certain healthcare procedures. Utahns will likely be surprised by the extremely wide range of costs for the same procedure. For example, one procedure, a simple test for strep infection, ranges from \$3 to over \$100, depending upon the provider. As the tool expands to include additional procedures, we hope it will help Utahns become more savvy consumers of healthcare services. "

Representative Brad Daw said, “In today's health care market, getting accurate prices for services is often difficult. This healthcare transparency tool being rolled out today can be a great help to patients seeking to get the best value for their health care dollar.”

Health Cost Compare may be accessed via: HealthCost.utah.gov or HealthCostCompare.utah.gov.

Health Cost Compare is part of the commitment of the Office to increasing transparency for Utah's taxpayers, including:

- Transparent Utah – the government spending website;
- Project KIDS – public education spending and performance dashboards; and
- Auditor.utah.gov, the Office's website.

The news release and related information may be found on the Office's website at auditor.utah.gov.

About the Office of the State Auditor

The Office of the State Auditor provides Utah taxpayers and government officials with an independent assessment of financial operation, statutory compliance, and performance management for state and local government.

Specific activities of the Office include performing financial audits, conducting Federal funds compliance audits, providing local government oversight, conducting agency and program performance audits, performing fraud and compliance audits, and operating the State Auditor Hotline for citizens to report suspected financial issues or improprieties. These capabilities strengthen Utah State Government and help taxpayers have confidence in the integrity of Utah's government agencies.

The Office also provides interactive graphical tools to help taxpayers and policymakers gain greater insight into governmental financial activities.

The State Auditor is a Constitutional Officer of the State of Utah, elected directly by the state's citizens every four years. The role of the State Auditor is authorized in Article VII, Section 15 of the Utah Constitution. For more information, see auditor.utah.gov.

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