oshpd Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development

Director's Office
400 R Street, Suite 310
Sacramento, California 95811-6213
(916) 326-3600
Fax (916) 322-2531
www.oshpd.ca.gov

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CONTACT: Patrick Sullivan
916 326-3600

New Web Tool Gives Consumers Access to Common Surgery Prices

Sacramento – Reinforcing Governor Schwarzenegger's commitment to making California's healthcare system more transparent and improving consumer access to healthcare information, the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) today unveiled the Common Surgeries and Price Comparison, a new web tool allowing healthcare consumers to view and compare the price of 28 common elective inpatient procedures at hospitals across California.

"As consumers are presented with more decisions about their healthcare options, the value of cost and price information is substantial," said OSHPD Director Dr. David Carlisle. "Using our patient discharge datasets, this tool allows consumers to access data about common inpatient procedure prices in an easy to use online setting."

The query tool allows users to look up and compare how much each California hospital charged for the different procedures. Ranging from gallbladder surgery to heart valve replacement, consumers can search a wide array of procedures including digestive, heart and circulatory, male system and female system, obstetrical, and skeletal procedures. Also, included in each search is the total number of procedures performed at the hospital, charge per stay, and average length of stay (in days).

While these charges are not what the typical health plan, Medicare or Medi-Cal actually pays, they do provide the average "sticker price" for these common procedures.

This new Web site, coupled with OSHPD's other consumer-centric web tool, the Hospital Fair Pricing database, which collects and displays a hospital's free and discount payment policies, empowers consumers with information about hospital pricing and access to care.

The data used to power the Web site is derived from OSHPD's 2007 patient discharge datasets.

As one of 12 departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency, OSHPD's vision is "Equitable Healthcare Accessibility for California." OSHPD is a leader in analyzing the state's healthcare infrastructure, promoting a diverse and culturally competent healthcare workforce, informing the public about healthcare quality, ensuring the safety of buildings used to provide healthcare, insuring loans to develop

healthcare facilities and facilitating the development of sustained capacity for communities to address healthcare issues.

The Common Surgeries and Price Comparison can be accessed at www.oshpd.ca.gov