



For Immediate Release

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New Web Site Teaches How to Price Shop

January 7, 2009. Nashville, TN. Americans can't control the economy, but they can do a much better job of educating themselves about what they should pay for healthcare. Healthcarebluebook.com, the first national effort to provide free pricing data to consumers launches today, and is designed to give people the information they need to pay fair prices for healthcare.

Price variations for healthcare services, even within the same market and provider network, may be thousands of dollars. So knowing what the fair price is can help consumers better manage the cost of their healthcare.

Healthcarebluebook.com is easy to use. Type in the kind of healthcare service needed plus a zip code and the Healthcare Blue Book pulls up the fair price based on fees paid by Preferred Provider Organizations (PPO) to doctors for services in that market. Consumers can then use the suggested Healthcare Blue Book price to discuss prices for services and treatments with their doctors and other healthcare providers.

Healthcarebluebook.com also offers a customized application to employers that supports implementation of consumer directed health plans (CDHP), high deductible health plans (HDHP) and health savings accounts (HSA) among other consumer benefits designs. Applications are built depending upon the types of healthcare services employees use, and what in and out of network PPO and other healthcare providers charge for these services.

Healthcare costs are expected to continue climbing throughout 2009. The National Survey of Employer-Sponsored Health Plans conducted by Mercer, reported that in 2008, PPO deductibles doubled at many companies from \$500 to \$1,000.

Americans do price/value comparisons for their homes, cars, vacations and the majority of goods and services they buy. "Why not healthcare?" asks Dr. Jeff Rice, Healthcarebluebook.com founder. The former CEO of CareSteps, Rice has a long history in the healthcare industry of developing innovative products for consumers.

"Patients should not assume that a high price means good quality," says Rice. "It is up to patients to ask about the cost of services and to learn about the quality of their providers."

Doctors and hospitals that charge a fair price, often provide the best value. Healthcarebluebook.com can help consumers figure out what they should pay."

Consumers need better education about the healthcare services they purchase and 2009 is a good year for them to start. Using Healthcarebluebook.com can help people learn how to obtain fair prices for their healthcare.

CareOperative LLC provides the information, tools and processes that enable fair, upfront pricing for healthcare services and products. As parent company of Healthcarebluebook.com, it has developed a consumer friendly guide to find fair prices for healthcare services. Employers can use the Healthcare Blue Book to help their employees more effectively manage the cost of their healthcare.