

3 Reasons Why Surprise Billing Is A Problem

You may have noticed the new legislation and a flurry of articles about medical surprise billing. Patients experience unexpected or Surprise Bills when hospitals / doctors ("providers") don't give upfront prices or charge for procedures and services they didn't expect. Usually, these bills are large enough that patients end up struggling to pay. However, there has been a recent change. On January 1st a new price transparency rule went into effect that requires hospitals to disclose what they charge for basic items and services.



Despite the rule, surprise bills have not gone away. Here are the top three reasons why surprise billing continues to be a problem:

1. **Expensive bills**

As you know, healthcare bills tend to be large. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation ([KFF](#)), two-thirds of adults worry about affording unexpected medical bills and more than 50 percent worry about affording their health

insurance deductibles. And they have good reason to worry. KFF surveyed members and found one in five insured adults received at least one unexpected bill from 2018 to 2020.

No wonder, 40 percent of American households struggle to pay an unexpected expense of \$400 or more, while medical bills can reach tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars. Certainly enough to bankrupt the average family.

2. *Time intensive*

When problems or billing inconsistencies occur it takes significant effort and time to handle the problem. The new rule doesn't address these administrative "headaches". Even worse few people have the expertise or time required to fight these bills. Adults spend hours on phone calls during business hours waiting to speak with insurance and providers to understand the bills. They make another set of calls to negotiate with hospitals for a lower rate and establish payment plans. Moreover, paying off the bills can take months or years, which sacrifices future spending and saving.

3. *Delay of future medical care*

"Once bitten, twice shy" seems to apply as it's a normal human reaction. The expense and resource cost makes members think twice about visiting a doctor again. Families postpone other medical visits and necessary treatment out of fear of getting another large

bill or waiting to pay off the current one. It's a normal reaction but the delay can lead to more expensive treatments later.

Are you continuing to hear stories about surprise bills from your customers or members? My [company](#) focuses on eliminating the pain of surprise bills and making it easier for everyone to understand their care options. Check us out or feel free to contact me at Richard@REDUHealth.com.