

January 20th MHDO Consumer Advisory Group Meeting Cost of Care Conversations Materials Packet

Dear MHDO Consumer Advisory Group member,

Thank you for agreeing to provide feedback from the patient perspective on materials we are developing for our study to improve how providers discuss the costs of different diagnostic and treatment options with patients to help them make more cost-informed choices. As a member of the MHDO Consumer Advisory Board, you know how important it is to get the patient's perspective, and we welcome your input on the tools.

At your January 20th meeting, the first hour will be devoted to the focus group discussion about the materials/tools we've been developing to facilitate conversations between healthcare providers and their patients. Since there are several tools to discuss and we want to ensure we get your feedback on all of them, we are attaching the package of materials for you to review in advance and come prepared to give us your feedback.

Some of the materials may already be familiar to you as they were developed by the Choosing Wisely initiative (pages 7-9) and CompareMaine (page 5) and are already being used in some practices to discuss low-back pain options and treatment costs. Our goal is to build off of these materials to improve how providers discuss the costs of different diagnostic and treatment options with patients to help them make more cost-informed choices. The Choosing Wisely documents are included to provide context, but we cannot make changes to them. Your feedback about the CompareMaine flyer is welcomed.

The primary focus of our discussion on the 20th will be to get your feedback about the new materials we've been developing (pages 1-4). Specifically, we'd welcome your feedback on whether they:

- Add information or present the cost-information in a new way for patients.
- Are easy to understand/follow and laid out in a way that will resonate with patients.
- Will help patients with low back pain understand the costs of different treatment options to make more cost-informed decisions about which treatment to pursue and where to go for care.

Thanks again for agreeing to participate in our study and in coming prepared to discuss your feedback. We look forward to talking further at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Fox, Project Director
Carolyn Gray
Jennifer MacKenzie
USM, Muskie School of Public Service

Materials for Review

These materials were developed to support providers discussing the costs of different diagnostic and treatment options with patients to help them make more cost-informed choices.

1. Financial health poster and/or letter
2. Discussion guide
3. CompareMaine rack card
4. CompareMaine flyer (this is currently available, but review/feedback is welcomed)

Choosing Wisely Materials

These materials have been developed by the Choosing Wisely initiative and cannot be altered. These materials provide you with context as to what is already available to practices and patients.

5. Choosing Wisely: Imaging tests for lower-back pain: When you need them – and when you don't
6. Choosing Wisely Rack card: Does your lower back hurt? You probably don't need an MRI, CT scan, or X-ray

1. Financial health poster and/or letter

Your Financial Health is Important to Us!

An Important Message from your Providers

Dear Patient,

We know that the cost of medicines and healthcare services can influence your decisions and it is difficult for you to know how much you will pay for different treatments. We want to help you.

- The costs you pay can vary by:
 - type of medication, treatment or test you need,
 - whether you have health insurance and in particular your health insurance plan
 - and the place you choose to get care or tests.
- Knowing your options can help you choose which one is best for you.
- Higher cost does not mean higher quality and in health care, more is not always better. There may be lower-cost treatments that are just as effective for your health.

What can you do as a patient? Talk to us about your cost concerns. Find out what your insurance covers, or what discounts are available to you if you don't have insurance. What will you have to pay? Look up the costs on CompareMaine. You can find the test or treatment you need at the place you plan to go for care compared with other locations in Maine (see brochure). Our office wants to help you find the treatment options that you can afford and are best for you.

As your health care provider, I will give you the best care possible. I know that finding out the cost of health care treatments and services can be very difficult. We promise to help you make cost-informed choices and our practice team will work with you to understand what you will pay for the treatment options we talked about.

Sincerely,

The Providers and Staff at (name of your practice here)

2. Discussion guide

Low Back Pain Treatment Options and Costs



Talk with your provider about low back pain treatment options and costs.

Treatment Options



self-care

- Heating pad
- Stretching/yoga
- Sleep on your side with a pillow between your legs
- Stay active



medications

- Over the counter medications (e.g. Advil/Tylenol)
- Prescription medications



alternative therapies

- Physical Therapy*
- Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine*
- Chiropractic care
- Acupuncture



When do imaging tests make sense? Imaging is not recommended for low back pain within the first 6 weeks of symptoms onset. You may need an imaging test right away if you have signs of severe or worsening nerve damage, or a serious underlying problem such as cancer or a spinal infection.



Costs can vary depending on treatment and location. See differences in cost by location at CompareMaine.org

Procedure/Service	Maine Average	Maine Range
X-ray of lower and sacral spine	\$156	\$49 - \$480
X-ray of entire spine	\$558	\$95 - \$604
MRI scan of lower spinal canal	\$1,021	\$311 - \$1,912
MRI scan of upper spinal canal	\$1,016	\$368 - \$1,853



*See CompareMaine

Cost estimates shown are based on data collected by Maine's all-payer claims database (APCD) and represent claims from October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015

For more detailed information about care cost in Maine visit www.comparemaine.org

Brought to you by the Maine Health Data Organization

CompareMaine
health costs & quality

Home | Compare Costs & Quality | Find a Facility | Methodology | Resources | About

know what to expect before you receive care

compare the costs & quality of healthcare procedures in Maine

find the cost of a procedure

more information. better decisions.

The Maine Health Data Organization, in collaboration with the Maine Quality Forum, is required by law to promote the transparency of healthcare cost and quality information via a publicly accessible website. The cost and quality of healthcare procedures can vary widely among providers. You have a choice in where you receive care. CompareMaine shows the average cost of common healthcare procedures at different facilities in Maine. You can also see patient experience ratings and how Maine hospitals compare on patient safety.

The cost estimates on CompareMaine are median payments. They are meant to serve as a reference point for comparison. In order to find out your actual payment, please contact your insurance company. If you do not have insurance, please contact the facility that you are interested in. When contacted directly, facilities often report their charges which may be higher than the actual payments they receive from insurance companies and patients.

- *Costs vary based on health insurance and other factors.*
- *Cost estimates are based on typical payments and do not represent what you should expect to pay.*
- *Contact your health insurer for more specific cost information.*
- *If you do not have insurance, contact the facilities to find out about costs.*

This material was developed by the University of Southern Maine Muskie School of Public Service, Maine Quality Counts, and the Maine Health Data Organization, with funding by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

3. CompareMaine rack card



We want you to have as much information as possible to make the best decisions about your health care.

Visit www.CompareMaine.org to see the typical costs in Maine for low back pain services including:

- Physical Therapy
- MRI
- X-rays

Below are some examples of the ranges of costs in Maine, according to the website CompareMaine*:

Procedure/Service	Maine Average	Maine Range
Physical therapy evaluation	\$160	\$80 - \$364
Physical therapy re-evaluation	\$77	\$51 - \$135
Manual physical therapy techniques	\$47	\$28 - \$154
Therapeutic massage	\$69	\$67 - 149
X-ray of lower and sacral spine, 2 or 3 views	\$156	\$49 - \$480
X-ray of entire spine	\$558	\$95 - \$604
MRI scan of lower spinal canal	\$1,021	\$311 - \$1,912
MRI scan of upper spinal canal	\$1,016	\$368 - \$1,853

*Costs vary based on health insurance and other factors. Cost estimates are based on typical payments and do not represent what you should expect to pay. Contact your health insurer for more specific cost information. If you do not have insurance, contact the facilities to find out about costs. Cost estimates shown above were collected by the State of Maine's all-payer claims database (APCD) and represents claims from October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015.

4. CompareMaine flyer



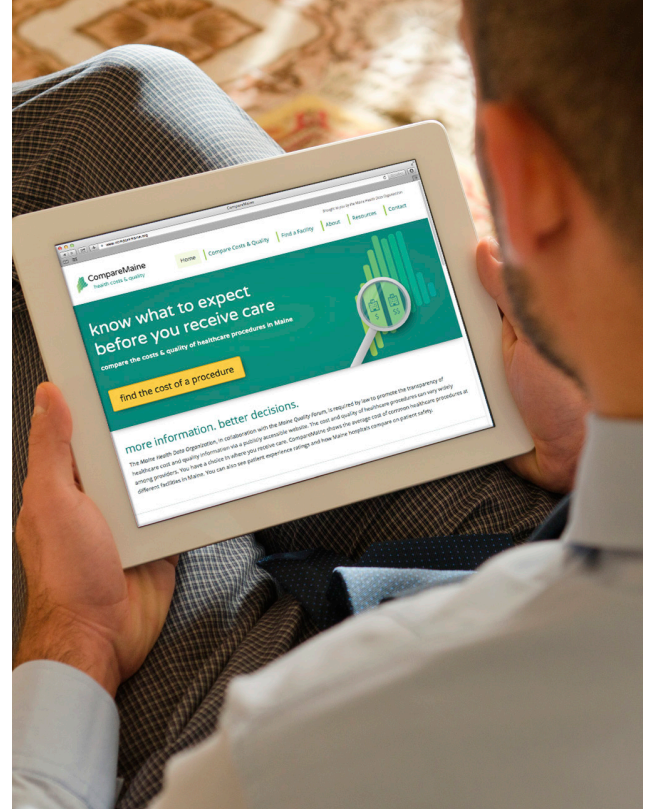
Compare the cost and quality of over 200 common health care procedures at Maine health care facilities at

comparemaine.org

making health care more transparent

The *Maine Health Data Organization*, in collaboration with the *Maine Quality Forum*, is required by Maine law to promote the transparency of health care cost and quality information for common health care procedures via a publicly accessible website.

The cost and quality of health care procedures can vary widely among facilities. You may have a choice in where you receive care. CompareMaine shows the average cost of common health care procedures at different facilities in Maine. You can also see patient experience ratings and how Maine hospitals compare on patient safety.



here's what you can find on CompareMaine:

health care procedures

Over 200 are listed – from childbirth to knee replacement surgery to blood tests.

costs

The amount the facility typically gets paid by the insurer including member cost sharing for a medical procedure.

insurers

See the average payments made by the top five insurers (including consumer payments) to facilities. Cost data are not included for MaineCare (Medicaid) or Medicare.

patient experience

Facilities are rated by their patients on their overall experience and quality of care.

complications

Facilities are rated on their ability to prevent serious complications.

infections

Facilities are rated on how well they keep patients safe from infections.

over →

how to use the CompareMaine website:

Maine Health Data Organization launched comparemaine.org in October 2015 to let people compare costs and patient experiences at more than 150 Maine health care facilities.

The screenshot shows the CompareMaine website interface for a 'Knee replacement' procedure. The main content area displays a table of results for three facilities: Central Maine Medical Center (\$28,183), Eastern Maine Medical Center (\$46,853), and Maine Medical Center (\$34,857). Each facility entry includes a checkbox, address, and three performance metrics: Patient Experience, Preventing Serious Complications, and Preventing Healthcare-Associated Infections (C. diff). The table is sorted by Facility Name and shows the Average Total Cost.

Annotations on the right side of the screenshot:

- 1 Enter procedure:** Use common name or medical code, a procedure list includes hundreds of options. (Points to the search input field containing 'Knee replacement')
- 2 Search fields:** Lets you narrow to specific insurance coverage and region. (Points to the search filters for distance, city/ZIP code, and insurance company)
- 3 Results:** Hospital location, patient ratings, cost comparison. (Points to the table of facility results)

The cost information in this graphic was collected by the State of Maine's all-payer claims database (APCD) and represents claims from 10/1/14 – 9/30/15. Patient Experience ratings are from 2014 – 2015 CAHPS surveys. Preventing Serious Complications ratings are from AHRQ collected during 7/1/12 – 6/30/14. Preventing Healthcare-Associated Infections ratings are from the Federal CDC collected during 7/1/14 – 6/30/15.

contact information




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CompareMaine was developed by the Maine Health Data Organization (MHDO) in partnership with Human Services Research Institute, NORC and Wowza. A Consumer Advisory Group was convened to provide feedback throughout the website development process.

CompareMaine is for informational purposes only. MHDO has made every effort to provide accurate information. Cost estimates are based on typical payments and do not represent what you should expect to pay. Consult your provider and insurer to get a personalized estimate. Neither MHDO nor this website endorse any particular healthcare facility or physician in the State of Maine.

5. Choosing Wisely: Imaging tests for lower-back pain: When you need them - and when you don't

 <h1>Choosing Wisely[®]</h1> <p><i>An initiative of the ABIM Foundation</i></p>	ConsumerReportsHealth
	 <p>AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS</p>
	 <p>ABIM FOUNDATION</p>

Imaging tests for lower-back pain

When you need them—and when you don't

Back pain can be excruciating. So it seems that getting an X-ray, CT scan, or MRI to find the cause would be a good idea. But that's usually not the case, at least at first. Here's why.

They don't help you get better faster.

Most people with lower-back pain feel better in about a month whether they get an imaging test or not. In fact, those tests can lead to additional procedures that complicate recovery. For example, a study that looked at 1,800 people with back pain found that those who had imaging tests soon after reporting the problem fared no better and sometimes did worse than people who took simple steps like applying heat, staying active, and taking an OTC pain reliever. Another study found that back-pain sufferers who had an MRI in the first month were eight times more likely to have surgery, and had a five-fold increase in medical expenses—but didn't recover faster.

They can pose risks.

X-rays and CT scans expose you to radiation, which can increase cancer risk. One study projected 1,200 new cancers based on the 2.2 million CT scans of the lower back performed in



the U.S. in 2007. While back X-rays deliver less radiation, they're still 75 times stronger than a chest X-ray. That's especially worrisome to men and women of childbearing age, because X-rays and CT scans of the lower back can expose testicles and ovaries to radiation. And the tests often reveal spinal abnormalities that could be completely unrelated to the pain. For example, one study found that 90 percent of older people who reported no back pain still had spinal abnormalities that showed up on MRIs. Those findings can cause needless worry and lead to

unnecessary follow-up tests and procedures such as injections or sometimes even surgery.

They're often a waste of money.

An X-ray of the lower back ranges from about \$200 to \$290, an MRI from \$880 to \$1,230, and a CT scan from \$1,080 to \$1,520, according to HealthCareBlueBook.com. Imaging also accounts for a big chunk of the billions Americans spend on lower-back pain each year, not only for the tests themselves, but also the unnecessary interventions they trigger.

When do imaging tests make sense?

It can be a good idea to get an imaging test right away if you have signs of severe or worsening nerve damage, or a serious underlying problem such as cancer or a spinal infection. Red flags that can make such testing worthwhile include a history of cancer, unexplained weight loss, fever, recent infection, loss of bowel or bladder control, abnormal reflexes, or loss of muscle power or feeling in the legs. In other cases, you probably don't need an imaging test for at least several weeks after the onset of your back pain, and only after you've tried the self-care measures described at right.

USING THIS INFORMATION

This information is provided for you to use in discussions with your health-care provider. The content is for educational use only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Unfortunately, we cannot answer individual medical questions. Always seek the advice of a physician or other qualified health-care provider with questions about any medical condition. Never disregard, avoid, or delay in obtaining medical advice from a health-care provider because of something you have read in this report. Use of this report is at your own risk. Consumer Reports, AAFP, the ABIM Foundation, Archives of Internal Medicine, and their distributors are not liable for any loss, injury, or other damage related to your use of this report.

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Consumer Reports Advice

How should you treat lower-back pain?

Most people get over back pain in a few weeks, and these simple steps might help.

• **Stay active.** Resting in bed for more than a day or so can cause stiffness, weakness, depression, and slow recovery.



• **Apply heat.** A heating pad, electric blanket, or warm bath or shower relaxes muscles.

• **Consider over-the-counter medicines.** Good options include painrelievers such as acetaminophen (Tylenol and generic) or anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen (Advil and generic) and naproxen (Aleve or generic).

• **Sleep comfortably.** Lying on your side with a pillow between your knees or on your back with a few beneath them might help.

• **Talk with your doctor.** If symptoms don't improve after a few days, consider seeing a doctor to make sure that the problem doesn't stem from a serious underlying health problem. If the pain is severe, ask about prescription painrelievers.

• **Consider alternatives.** If you don't feel better after four weeks or so, it might be worth talking with your doctor about other options, including physical therapy, chiropractic care, yoga, massage, acupuncture, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and progressive muscle relaxation. More invasive choices, such as surgery, should be considered only if those other treatments don't help.

6. Choosing Wisely Rack Card - Does your lower back hurt? You probably don't need an MRI, CT scan, or X-ray

Question it. Know it. Choose it.

**Does your lower back hurt?
You probably don't need
an MRI, CT scan, or X-ray.**



Here's why:

- **They won't help you feel better any faster.**
- **They have risks, including exposure to radiation.**
- **They aren't cheap.**

What can you do to feel better? Five easy ideas are on the other side.

Question it. Know it. Choose it.

Most people can get over lower-back pain in a few weeks by trying these steps:

- 1 Stay active and walk.**
- 2 Use heat.**
- 3 Take non-prescription pain relievers like Tylenol, Advil, or Aleve.**
- 4 Sleep on your side or your back, with a pillow between or under your knees.**
- 5 Ask your health care team about acupuncture, massage, yoga, or physical therapy.**

There are still times when you might need an imaging test. Talk to your health care team about your symptoms to find out if you need imaging tests – or if you can wait to see if you just get better with time.

ConsumerReports

With thanks to the American Academy of Family Physicians

Choosing Wisely

An initiative of the ABIM Foundation

 **Maine Quality Counts**
Better Health Care. Better Health.

Learn more at

www.ConsumerHealthChoices.org/BackPain

This information is to use when talking with your healthcare provider. It is not a substitute for medical advice and treatment. Use this information at your own risk.

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