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Competition, Transparency Key to Lowering Health Care Costs

Senate Interim Committee on Health Care dug in on health care pricing during May Legislative Days Meeting

SALEM, OR – Yesterday, the Senate Interim Committee on Health Care held their May Legislative Days meeting. The full agenda can be found [here](#). Of note, legislators heard presentations on Health Care Price Transparency in Oregon.

“Oregonians and their employers are feeling the pain of rising health care costs. From what we saw yesterday, it’s a lack of competition and transparency that’s driving the growth in health care costs,” said **Senator Deb Patterson (D - Salem)**, chair of the Senate Interim Committee on Health Care. *“We need to empower Oregon employers and consumers to demand more transparency and better results from our health care system.”*

[In his presentation](#), Chris Whaley (Associate Professor, Brown University) told lawmakers that the rising costs of premiums and deductibles, driven by higher costs for hospital and medical care services, are significantly outpacing wage gains and inflation. Whaley’s research also found a strong correlation between rising prices and industry consolidation.

[In another presentation](#), Piper Block (Research and Data Manager, Oregon Health Authority) reported that payments for procedures vary widely between and within hospitals, therefore, increased transparency would create an opportunity for policymakers to better understand the challenges with growing health care costs.

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