

AN AMERICAN SICKNESS



HOW HEALTHCARE BECAME
BIG BUSINESS AND
HOW YOU CAN TAKE IT BACK

ELISABETH ROSENTHAL

Economic Rules – Why it Isn't a Market

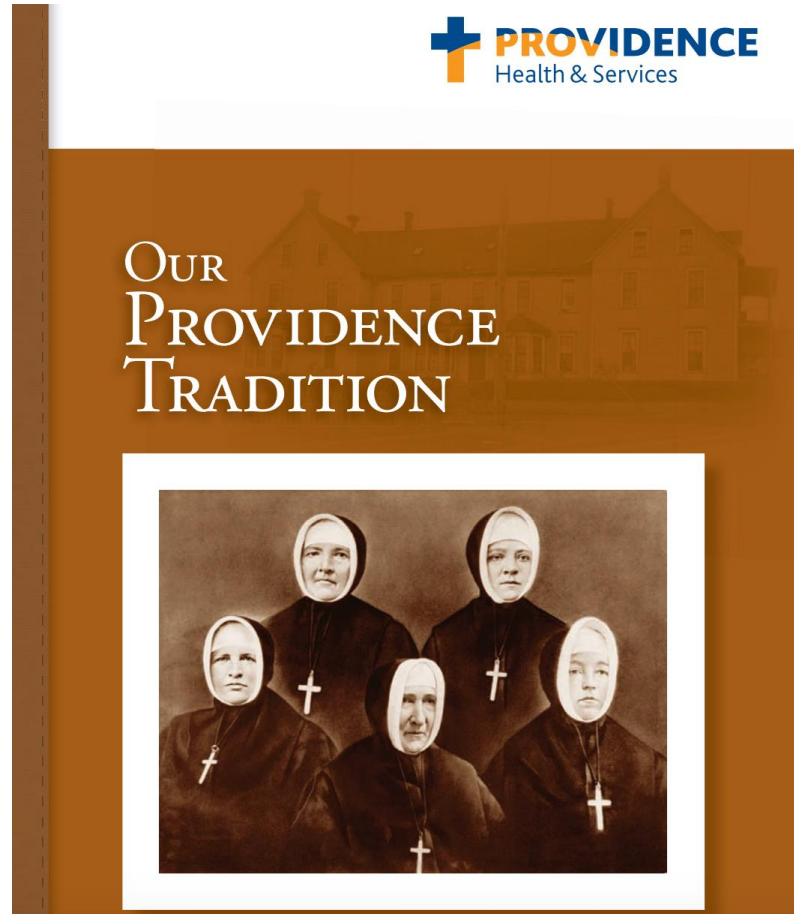
ECONOMIC RULES OF THE DYSFUNCTIONAL MEDICAL MARKET

1. More treatment is always better. Default to the most expensive option.
2. A lifetime of treatment is preferable to a cure.
3. Amenities and marketing matter more than good care.
4. As technologies age, prices can rise rather than fall.
5. There is no free choice. Patients are stuck. And they're stuck buying American.
6. More competitors vying for business doesn't mean better prices; it can drive prices up, not down.
7. Economies of scale don't translate to lower prices. With their market power, big providers can simply demand more.
8. There is no such thing as a fixed price for a procedure or test. And the uninsured pay the highest prices of all.
9. There are no standards for billing. There's money to be made in billing for anything and everything.
10. Prices will rise to whatever the market will bear.

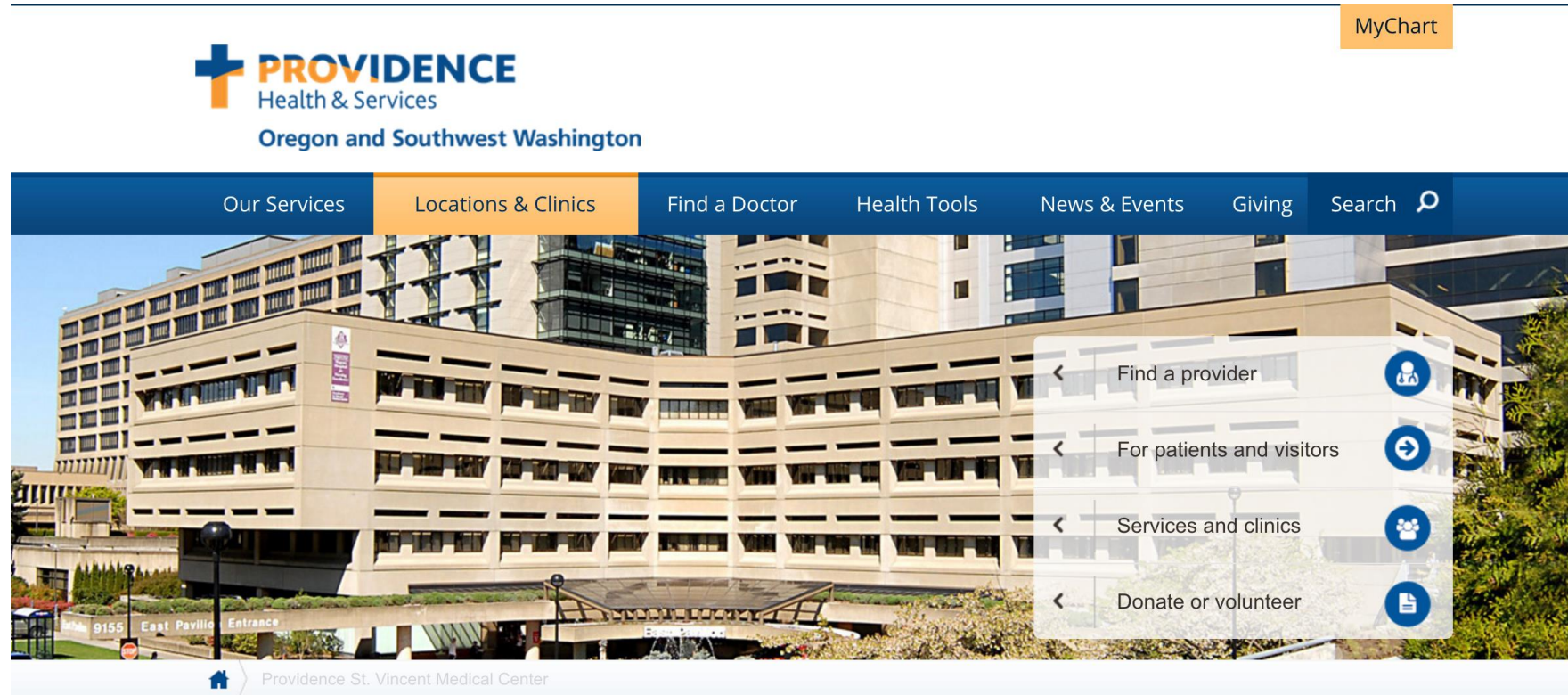
An insurer pay \$110,000 per infusion



Then



Now



Providence St. Vincent Medical Center

Contact us

Is this a hospital or a hotel quiz



Docs Oath



Fellowship Pledge

Recognizing that the American College of Surgeons seeks to exemplify and develop the highest traditions of our ancient profession, I hereby pledge myself, as a condition of Fellowship in the College, to live in strict accordance with its principles and regulations.

I pledge myself to pursue the practice of surgery with honesty and to place the welfare and the rights of my patient above all else. I promise to deal with each patient as I would wish to be dealt with if I were in the patient's position, and I will set my fees commensurate with the services rendered. I will take no part in any arrangement, such as fee splitting or itinerant surgery, which induces referral or treatment for reason other than the patient's best welfare.

Upon my honor, I declare that I will advance my knowledge and skills, will respect my colleagues, and will seek their counsel when in doubt about my own abilities. In turn, I will willingly help my colleagues when requested.

Finally, I solemnly pledge myself to cooperate in advancing and extending the art and science of surgery by my Fellowship in the American College of Surgeons.

Upgrades – Femtosecond Laser

Cost \$500,000. At the 2011 International Conference on Femtosecond Lasers in Ophthalmology physician presented a “hypothetical break even scenario.”

Laser Cataract Surgery



Laser Cataract Surgery – Precise and Reliable

New Drug

DUEXIS

Generic Name: ibuprofen and famotidine tablets

“What is the most important information I should know about DUEXIS?”– Horizon Pharmaceuticals

- Duexis is a combination of ibuprofen (800 mg) and famotidine (26.6 mg)
- Both are off-patent and can be bought OTC
- Ibuprofen 200 mg tablets = 1000 tablets for \$13.99
- Famotidine 20 mg tablets = 50 for \$9.85
- One month supply of Ibuprofen (800 mg) = \$5
- One month supply of Famotidine (20mg) = \$6

- Duexis (with free coupon) for one month:

- \$2319

Ambulances, ER Docs, Even Neonatologists – Private Equity/Out of Network

Since the 2008 financial crisis, private equity firms have increasingly taken over public services like emergency care and firefighting, often with dire effects.

When You Dial 911 and Wall Street Answers

By DANIELLE IVORY, BEN PROTESS and KITTY BENNETT JUNE 25, 2016

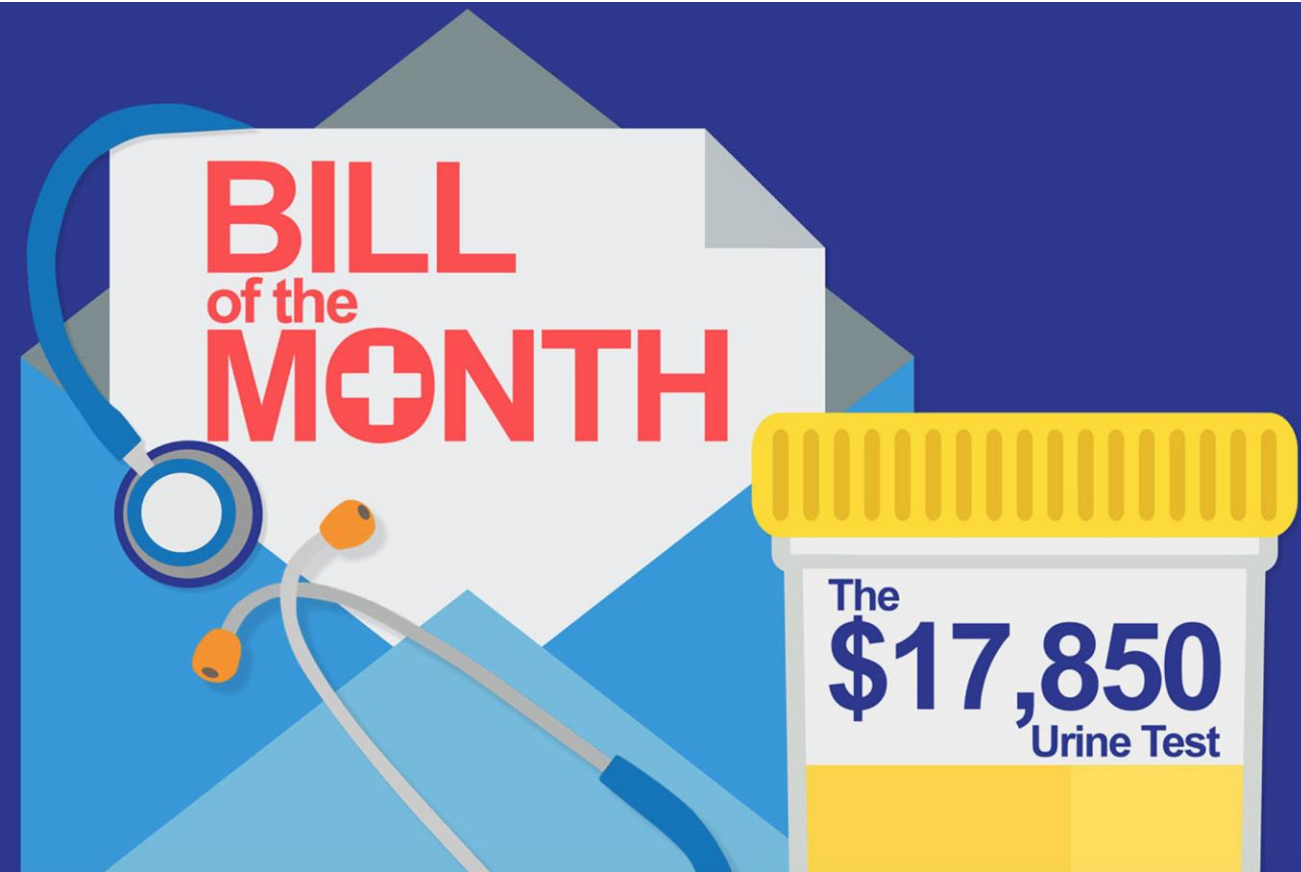


**Today Business
Considerations Govern Much
of Our Health Care. Patients
Need Protection**

‘UVA has ruined us’: Health system sues thousands of patients, seizing paychecks and putting liens on homes



BILL OF THE MONTH: 18,000 Urine Test



\$500,000+ for 13 weeks of dialysis



\$28,000 Throat Swab



SHELBY KNOWLES FOR KHN

BILL OF THE MONTH

For Her Head Cold, Insurer Coughed Up \$25,865

What Can Be Done?

LOTS!

Everyone Has Power
To Do Much More

Increasing Patient-Client Activism: If You See Something Say Something



Antoinette Newell of Schenectady, N.Y., and Dr. Barry Lindenberg have seen a sudden rise in the cost of digoxin for her heart. Stewart Cairns for The New York Times

Patient Education: At the Doctor's Office

- If you need a blood test or radiology scan, ask which are a good deal. Press your doctors for high value radiology centers.
- Have you blood and other tests sent in your network. Avoid hospital labs. Jerry Solomon's Vit D tests: \$17 versus \$774.
- Simple procedures can cost different amounts depending on where they're done. Hospital versus Outpatient Clinic.

Patient Education: At The Hospital

How to Save Money at the Hospital

Going to the hospital can be scary—but medical bills can be even scarier. To avoid unnecessary expenses, here are 5 actions you can take during your hospital stay.



Patients: Avoid Financial Surprises in Hospital

- When checking in: Don't sign the form that says you'll pay for whatever your insurance doesn't cover. Add "so long as it's in my insurance network."
- When told you're going to stay over: Ask about admission versus "observation status." Jim Silver's \$2300 story.
- When in the bed: Beware of drive-by doctoring.
- Say no to equipment

Bundling or Contracting Prevents Abuses

The New York Times

Where the Frauds Are All Legal

Welcome to the weird world of medical billing.



By Elisabeth Rosenthal

Ms. Rosenthal, a journalist and physician, is a contributing opinion writer.

Dec. 7, 2019



1269



A New Patient Bill of Rights

- No referral to Collections, while bills are under dispute.
Limits on seizures and liens.
- Insist on accurate provider directories
- Emergency Services – Should be no implied consent. Ground and air ambulances Now all out-of-network in many regions.
Big problem with rural hospitals closing.

Informed Financial Consent

Accurate estimates of cost for patients. This happens in France and Australia. Extremely useful for most of medicine, which is elective.

No Surprise Bills Even Generated – Do Better than Current Laws

A standardized medical bill in English that patients can read and assess for accuracy.

Transparency: A Great Start, Not A Solution

Chargemasters in Patient Friendly Format

Prices of Tests and Drugs on Order Sheets

Accurate Provider Directories

Clear Benefits, No Gaming Allowed

Drug Prices. Need Political Action...at State or Federal Level.

- Laws Against Prescription Drug Price Rises: Ohio, Utah, Maryland, California and Counting...

Cities, counties and schools sidestep FDA foreign drug crackdown, saving millions



Does Your Hospital Delivery Luxury or Care? Can We Develop No Frills Hospitals?



We, The Patients

