

Theodore R. Kulongoski



Governor
NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 20, 2005

Media Contact:

Holly Armstrong, (503) 378-6169

Anna Richter Taylor, (503) 378-6496

Governor Kulongoski Unveils Transparency Information for Oregon Hospitals

Reporting system will help Oregonians become better health care consumers

(Salem, OR) – Governor Ted Kulongoski today announced the release of health care quality information on Oregon hospitals, the first time such information has been made publicly available. The release of this information tomorrow at 10 a.m. marks a first step in Oregon toward a nationwide effort at publicly reporting health care quality information. Health care consumers who want to compare their choices and better understand what they are getting for their health care dollar can use this information.

“There is a need to increase transparency in the health care system so that Oregonians can be better consumers. We can do this is by making the right information available in order to challenge the health care system to improve the quality of health care services and to help Oregonians understand what they are getting for their health care dollar. The information released today is a step forward in this process” said Governor Ted Kulongoski.

The initial presentation on the state website provides quality measures for 12 selected health care procedures and conditions statewide, such as heart bypass surgery. The measures include volume, or counts, for surgical procedures where a link has been demonstrated between experience and better outcomes and in-hospital death rates, or mortality, for selected procedures and conditions. While hospitals regularly report the data used in this project to the state, today marks the first time the information is being

made available to health care providers and consumers with the intent of promoting quality outcomes for all Oregonians.

To make this first step possible, the Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research and the Oregon Health Policy Commission have worked collaboratively with an impressive array of representatives with expertise in assessing health care quality.

“Tremendous thanks go out to the great number of individuals and organizations that lent their expertise to shape this project, including representatives from the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, the Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation, the Oregon Business Council, individual Oregon hospitals, physicians, and other interested stakeholders” said Bruce Goldberg, MD Administrator, Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research.

This effort complements other efforts both nationally and statewide, including the work done by the Oregon Association for Hospital and Health Systems to post hospital charge information on their website, www.orpricepoint.org. Next steps will be to continue to improve upon the data released today, expand the data made available, and further engage the health care community to ensure that the data is useful and is translating into improved health care services.

Today’s release is a small representation of the information a consumer might use in evaluating health care services. Consumers are encouraged to talk with their health care providers and seek out additional resources, many of which are noted on the state’s new website.

The new information will be available July 21, at 10 a.m. at: <http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR/> where the link will be listed under the "What's New" banner.

Members of the Oregon Health Policy Commission and the Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research will provide an overview of the information and be available to answer questions on Thursday July 21 at 1:00 p.m. in the State Capitol, Hearing Room D.