

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

**We have created this collection of FAQs to help you to better understand what is contained in Sierra View Medical Center's Charge Description Master (CDM). If, after reading this collection and reviewing the CDM you still have questions, feel free to complete and submit an Appointment Request for Charge Description Master Review to [jblack@sierra-view.com](mailto:jblack@sierra-view.com).**

Question: What is a Charge Description Master (CDM) and what is it used for?

Answer: A CDM, also known as a "chargemaster", is a set of individual line items that are charged for various services that a patient may receive when visiting our facility.

Question: Are all prices housed in the CDM?

Answer: Not all prices are housed in our CDM. Most pharmaceutical prices are not listed as they are calculated based on dosage specific criteria.

Question: Why are your charges different compared to other places I go for outpatient services?

Answer: Charges are based on costs. For rural hospitals, such as ours, it sometimes costs us more to obtain supplies, hire personnel, etc. Larger facilities with more service lines usually have greater purchasing power, and can negotiate reduced prices for costly supplies and services. The larger hospitals with more services also can "spread" their costs over more areas, thus making their overall costs less per item.

Question: Whom in your organization can I discuss the prices with?

Answer: Our Director of Revenue Integrity will be available to discuss pricing on an appointment only basis.

Question: How are your prices determined?

Answer: Charges are based on our costs of providing the service, our financial commitments, and our overall mix of services (high costs associated with specialty services generally result in higher institutional costs, which can have a broad effect on charges). Specific factors affecting our charges include labor costs, facility and facility improvement costs, technology expenses, the competitive marketplace and the number of uninsured Californians treated by this hospital.

Question: Why does your facility have two prices; one for inpatient and one for outpatient?

Answer: We have only one price, and it is charged consistently, regardless of payor type.

### **Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)**

- Question: Where can I see the cost for each charge in your CDM?  
Answer: The cost is not part of the Chargemaster document and we are not required to publish this information.
- Question: Why can't I have a copy of your CDM?  
Answer: You can download the machine readable file that is housed on our website. Although we must caution you, the CDM is complex and extensive. Sierra View prefers to allow consumers to review this document with trained facility staff to ensure an appropriate level of understanding, but it is certainly not required.
- Question: Why do I have to make an appointment to discuss the CDM? Why can't I discuss it right now?  
Answer: The CDM is a very complex, extensive document with over 200 pages. There are limited people in the facility that can accurately and appropriately discuss its contents. There are certain to be questions and we want to help clarify some of the technicalities in the document. Making an appointment will ensure that you get the time and attention that is needed to answer your questions.
- Question: Can I talk to you about getting my bill lowered?  
Answer: Any discussions about this should be directed to the Patient Accounting department, where they have the proper personnel to assist you.
- Question: Whom can I talk to about questions I have about charges on my bill?  
Answer: You can contact the Patient Accounting department at 559-791-3970.
- Question: How can I get an estimated charge amount for a specific procedure?  
Answer: You can contact one of our financial counselors at 559-788-6143 or 559-788-6002 and they would be happy to provide you with this information.
- Question: Will I be able to determine what my out of pocket costs will be by reviewing the CDM?  
Answer: No, only the charges are contained within the CDM. Your out of pocket costs will be determined by your insurance plan's copayments and deductibles, or charity care status.