

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
POLICY

Subject: Patient Information and Choice
Document Number: PS-167-0
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POLICY STATEMENT

The SDSMA supports the following principles about patient information and choice of healthcare provider:

1. Greater reliance on market forces, with patients empowered with understandable fee/price information and incentives to make prudent choices, and with the medical profession empowered to enforce ethical and clinical standards which continue to place patients' interests first, is clearly a more effective and preferable approach to cost containment than is a government-run, budget-driven, centrally controlled health care system.
2. Individuals should have freedom of choice of physician and/or system of health care delivery. Where a third-party payer places restrictions on patient choice, such restrictions must be clearly identified to the individual prior to their selection of that payer. Payers cannot obstruct patient choice by excluding a physician from its panel of providers if the patient's physician is willing and fully qualified to meet the terms and conditions of participation as established by the third-party payer.
3. To facilitate cost-conscious, informed market-based decision-making in health care, physicians, hospitals, pharmacies, durable medical equipment suppliers, and other health care providers should be required to make information readily available to consumers on fees/prices charged for frequently provided services, procedures, and products, prior to the provision of such services, procedures, and products.

There should be a similar requirement that insurers make available in a standard format to enrollees and prospective enrollees' information on the amount of payment provided toward each type of service identified as a covered benefit.

AUTHORITY

South Dakota State Medical Association Council of Physicians, 6/3/2022; Affirmed by South Dakota State Medical Association Board of Directors, 6/3/2022.