

Poster Session IV

Poster #14

Nonmedical Out-of-pocket Expenses Incurred By Families of Children Undergoing Orthopaedic Surgical Intervention

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Purpose: To calculate the nonmedical out-of-pocket expenses (NOOPEs) incurred by families during the hospitalization of their child following an orthopaedic surgical intervention.

Theoretical Framework and Background: Using Donabedian's triad, increased attention must be paid to the adequacy of healthcare insurance and other payment schemes to cover necessary healthcare expenditures to help ensure that quality of care is delivered. Virtually no public or private health plan covers the entire array of healthcare costs. Little attention has been placed on the magnitude that NOOPEs has on a family's well-being. NOOPEs include costs that are directly attributed to the family's healthcare needs including travel, parental food and lodging, dependent care, diminished parental wages, and incidental expenses. Expenses exceeding 10% of a family's income are considered to constitute economic burden. Anecdotal information suggests that in such incidents, families choose to delay or forgo medical care. Although NOOPEs are incurred by virtually every family with a hospitalized child, there is virtually no information that specifically addresses the scope or impact of NOOPEs on family life.

Methods: This prospective, descriptive study uses a sampling frame consisting of families (N=50) whose children are hospitalized for orthopaedic surgeries and is stratified (2 x 2) by admission type (planned or unplanned) and location of the family's home (local or distant) to the facility. Families complete an expense diary to capture the NOOPEs they have incurred. Descriptive statistics and ANOVAs for key variables will be calculated. Common themes related to family life, stressors, and coping strategies will be reported.

Results: Final results are pending but will be available prior to the conference date.

Conclusions and Implications: The economic toll created by NOOPEs has the potential to significantly inflate the total costs families must bear. Healthcare workers and policymakers must gain a better understanding of these realities and their potential impact on families.