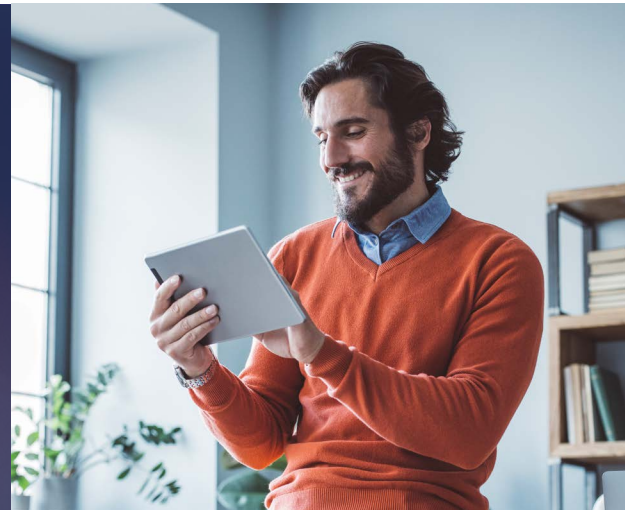


Price Comparison Tool and Future Transparency: What's Next?

Requirements for the No Surprises Act (NSA) have officially been in effect since July 2022.



The most recent requirement for the NSA and TiC (Transparency in Coverage) Rule came into effect on January 1, 2023, the price comparison tool. Effective January 2023, most group health plans and issuers of group or individual health insurance coverage are required to disclose personalized pricing information for 500 shoppable items and services to their participants, beneficiaries, and enrollees through an online consumer tool, or in paper form, upon request.

The price comparison tool is the latest of the many building blocks to meeting all requirements of the NSA and TiC. The next step on the path to transparency compliance is quickly approaching. In 2024, all covered services and items will be required to be included in the price comparison tool. Ensuring your transparency solution in place today is equipped to handle the volume and complexity of this requirement will be critical to meeting future compliance tomorrow.

**Machine-
Readable
Files**

July 2022

**Price
Comparison
Tool for 500
Shoppable
Items**

July 2023

**Price
Comparison
Tool for
All Covered
Services
and Items**

2024

**Future
Transparency
Compliance:
Advanced
EOBs**

Date TBD



A Q&A with Industry Leader, Shawn Evans, About the Price Comparison Tool and Future Transparency Compliance

Overview and Background

With over 25 years of experience in the healthcare industry, Shawn Evans is the CEO of Integrated Payor Solutions, a transformational technology company that provides cloud-based solutions, Encompass+ and Transparency+, that power payor and network businesses.

Encompass+ is the ideal solution for TPAs, ASOs, or networks. A full-stack tech solution, Encompass+ is a claim processing system built on the dynamic Salesforce platform, removing the burden of having to invest in additional IT resources. Employers and providers can access through user-friendly portals, while detailed and customizable reporting means quick comprehension of that data. Transparency+ supports the NSA price comparison tool and can either extend Encompass+ or operate independently. Transparency+ easily fulfills the key components required by the NSA with the adaptability and flexibility to evolve to continue to meet future requirements.

Question 1: With the next enforcement for the price comparison tool to include all covered services and items, are there any foreseeable obstacles plans face with meeting and implementing that requirement?

Evans: “We have already seen the complications with getting this sorted for 500 items from the networks using non-standardized data to the multiple file formats and the lack and or quality of required data elements. All these problems we have seen with the 500 shoppable items will be exponentially more difficult when we are talking about tens of thousands of codes that need to be priced accurately.”

Question 2: What is the creation and implementation of the price comparison tool like and how long does implementation for a group take?

Evans: “Our implementation process launches with a short discovery process that identifies any necessary configurations and adjustments required for the TPA.

The IPS team then quickly sets up a test environment to allow everyone to “touch and feel” how the application will work. In parallel, we work with the TPA’s technical team to build the necessary integrations of eligibility and accumulators and with the TPA’s plan experts to map the health plans into the system. Everything culminates with an application review and live training session. The implementation process can be as short as 6 weeks and can extend depending upon the integration and health plan complexity and quantity.”

Question 3: How does a health plan know if its NSA solution or solutions are built to last?

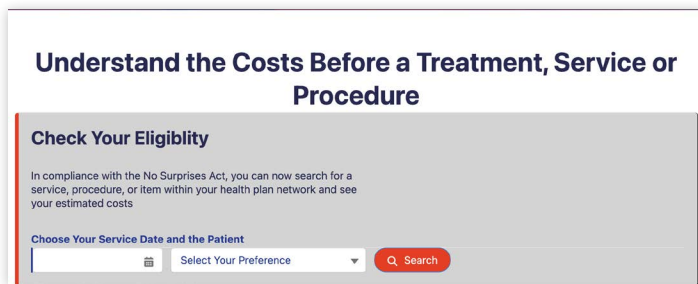
Evans: “The most critical thing to look at is whether the solution you are considering is engineered to comply with where the regulations are going as well as what is currently required. We do this by looking at the future Advanced EOB requirement and reverse engineering the solution. One example is in the beginning with the MRF requirements — they allowed networks to use a percentage of billed charges. If we tried to use this information in a price comparison tool, we wouldn’t be able to accurately calculate an estimated price and cost-sharing. This is why we focused on retrieving and calculating the most relevant costs which was a lot more work in the beginning. However, it was critical to our ability to be in compliance with the next step of NSA compliance.”

Question 4: What do you see coming after in 2024 with Transparency compliance? What’s next?

Evans: “This legislation is considered a success by both political parties in driving down prices and allowing consumers to make informed decisions about their healthcare. They will continue to press for more reporting and disclosures as we are already seeing with the Rx reports that are now required to be sent to CMS annually.”

A Clear Look at Transparency+'s Price Comparison Tool

Transparency+'s Price Comparison Tool empowers members with the ability to search for a service, procedure, or item within their health plan network to see the estimated costs. The estimate is based on the eligibility and benefits as of the date the estimate is created.



The Importance of Member Communication

The overarching goal of the NSA is to eliminate surprise medical billing for patients/members. As effective as the price comparison tool is, it is ultimately only as effective as the members' ability and understanding of how to use it. Ensuring that plan members are not only aware of this resource but also know how to use it is essential to create true price transparency. The better members understand how to use this tool, the better equipped they are to make the best financial and care decisions for their healthcare.

Integrated Payor Solutions has prioritized member and plan communication by providing Transparency+ clients with the following:

- Member-Facing: Frequently Asked Questions
- Member-Facing: How to – Overview
- Member-Facing: How to – Detailed Guide
- Employer Groups & Brokers: What's Coming Flyers
- TPA Communication Plan Including Email Templates

"The tool is a 5 out of 5. Easy and intuitive to use by our members and our internal team."

– IPS TPA Client

"The IPS team understands the payer business as well as we do and have easily guided us through the implementation process."

– IPS TPA Client

Learn More About Transparency+ and Our Price Comparison Tool by Scheduling a Demo

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