



Center for Health Policy Research and Ethics

College of Health and Human Services
4400 University Drive, MS 2D7, Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Phone: 703-993-9490 Fax: 703-993-1555 Web: chpre.gmu.edu

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Ana English, CEO
CIVHC
950 S. Cherry St., Suite 208
Denver, Colorado 80246

Dear Ms. English,

I write just to let you know just how much I appreciate the WONDERFUL resource your web portal to Colorado's all payer claims data base actually is. As a health economist and policy analyst for over 30 years, and as someone who has frequently testified before state legislators and before the US Congress on how local health systems are performing, I have often struggled to piece together relevant local information. Requests for public testimony rarely come with the time to formally request release of the specific data in question, much less to learn idiosyncrasies within (there are always some) and analytically process the millions of claims necessary to generate the meaningful statistics everyone wants: how much do we spend on health care, how do we compare to others, and if some or all of our costs are higher, why?

CO Health Price Compare, in contrast to every other state's APCD website in this nation (and among the few who actually have an APCD), is a veritable beacon of best practices. The world class interactive map and report generator allows web-based users to produce, with a few cursor moves and mouse clicks, how one county's expenditures compare to reasonable actuarial expectations, to others, and to the whole state, by payer type, and what service lines (e.g., inpatient, ER, professional fees, etc.) are driving any meaningful deviations. At the same time, the data base informs these simple graphical and chart comparisons with the overall relative risk of the counties in question, as well as how comprehensively the currently available data capture health expenditures in each county, i.e., how reliable are the estimates provided. In my experience, data web sites designed to support analytic judgments about health care costs do not get any better than this.

Please keep up the good work, and do what you can to shame other states into emulating your fine example.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Len M. Nichols". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Len M. Nichols, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Health Policy Research and Ethics
Professor of Health Policy
College of Health and Human Services
George Mason University
4400 University Drive
Robinson Hall 8378D (MSN 207)
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-993-1978
Lnichol9@gmu.edu

Cc: Dick Thompson, QHN CEO, Board Member of CIVHC