



# Moving Toward Radical Change in Healthcare

## June 2011: Healthcare Consumerism in Action

The Patient Friendly Billing Project is a collaborative endeavor spearheaded by the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA), with support from the American Hospital Association, the Medical Group Management Association, providers, and other interested parties to promote clear, concise, and correct patient-friendly financial communications. The initiative's report Consumerism in Health Care – Achieve a Consumer-Oriented Revenue Cycle, offers this picture of what health care can become with a focus on the patient and the industry's willingness to embrace radical change.

### MORNING

Jack will visit his internal medicine doctor to follow up on a sinus infection. (Jack has previously chosen his primary care physician and hospital based on price and quality information accessed on the Internet.) At the time Jack made the appointment, which he did on the physician's secure website, he updated his medical file with a description of the symptoms from his persistent sinus problems. He also updated his insurance and address information, and received an electronic message that he will owe a \$25 co-payment for the visit.

After Jack's exam, his doctor determines that he does have a sinus infection and needs an antibiotic. She checks Jack's medical history through the electronic health record (EHR), which alerts her to a potential adverse medical interaction, recommends generic alternatives, and details pharmacy costs for the drug. The physician sends an e-prescription for the generic antibiotic to the pharmacy. Before leaving the doctor's office, Jack uses a kiosk to schedule a sinus CT scan that evening at the hospital, and receives driving instructions, information about what to expect during the CT scan, and an estimate of the amount he is expected to pay at the time of the CT scan.

### AFTERNOON

Jack calls his wife to tell her that he will be late because he is getting a CT scan on his way home from work. When he arrives that evening at the hospital, the receptionist greets Jack by name. She recognizes him from her screen, which shows photographs of all patients registered for procedures that evening. The hospital's information system automatically re-verifies his eligibility, benefits, deductible status, and co-payment requirements. After Jack's CT scan, the radiologist checks his notes, which were entered via voice dictation as he reviewed Jack's scan. He emails a follow-up note to Jack's internal medicine physician and electronically signs the EHR; this action automatically posts real-time transactions to the physician and hospital billing systems and sends electronic insurance claims to Jack's health plan with diagnosis and procedure coding validated as consistent with EHR documentation. The claims are adjudicated, and within seconds the physician and hospital receive electronic payments. Jack pays his obligation with a debit card from his health reimbursement account, which immediately adjusts his balance. Jack picks up his prescription at the pharmacy on his way home.

***For more information visit  
[patientfriendlybilling.org](http://patientfriendlybilling.org).***

