Learning Objectives

1. Explain why and how the Philly Health Costs and the PriceCheck tools were developed.

2. Describe the impact of these tools to population health in the Greater Philadelphia Region.

3. Describe the role of technology is playing and is forecasted to play for patients in our health care system.
What is Philly Health Costs?
Why is everyone talking about health care costs now?

Cumulative increases in health costs, amounts paid by large employer insurance coverage, amounts paid for cost sharing and workers wages, 2006-2016

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Truven Health Analytics MarketScan Commercial Claims and Encounters Database, 2006-2016; Bureau of Labor Statistics. Seasonally Adjusted Data from the Current Employment Statistics Survey (April to April) 2006-2016; * Get the data; * PNG
“IT FEELS GREAT THAT THIS IS OVER FOR ME AND MY FAMILY. BUT THIS ISN’T JUST ABOUT MY BILL… I DON’T FEEL ANY CONSUMER SHOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS.”
Meet our community
Lots of people have billing problems.

Far fewer are willing to take action and help us report their stories.
We also are grateful to doctors and health systems that help us.
Patients don’t try to find out prices because they don’t realize it’s worth doing.
Patients who do try to get prices in advance frequently get the run-around.
Patients are forgoing recommended care and medicines because of cost.
Patients are baffled by things that make sense to hospitals and insurers.
Some patients do want to be better consumers.
The tools at their disposal often are ineffective.

The burden is on patients to minimize cost and fix errors.
The big lesson:

We need to make it okay to talk about health care costs.
Further reading

*Increases in cost-sharing payments continue to outpace wage growth*, Kaiser Family Foundation, https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/brief/increases-in-cost-sharing-payments-have-far-outpaced-wage-growth/#item-start


*Have a high-deductible insurance plan? Knowing the cash price could save you money*, by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 2/21/18 http://www2.philly.com/philly/health/health-costs/high-deductible-insurance-plan-price-transparency-philly-health-costs-20180221.html

*One MRI is $1,000 more than another. That’s just the start of Philly’s health-care pricing mysteries*, by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 2/20/18 http://www2.philly.com/philly/health/health-costs/philly-health-costs-prices-for-health-care-vary-widely-20180220.html


*She had a colonoscopy without anesthesia – but it was on her bill anyway*, by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 3/7/18 http://www2.philly.com/philly/health/health-costs/colonoscopy-anesthesia-medical-billing-error-20180308.html

Further reading

*She was quoted $351 for a breast MRI. Then she was charged $4,650,* by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 3/15/18
http://www2.philly.com/philly/health/health-costs/she-was-quoted-351-for-a-breast-mri-then-she-was-charged-4650-20180315.html

*Mounting health costs a financial vise for boomers nearing retirement,* by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 5/18/18

*His insurer approved an MRI, then denied it. He forked out $2,340 in cash,* by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 3/21/18
http://www2.philly.com/philly/health/health-costs/mri-prior-approval-20180321.html

*Two echocardiograms, same hospital, drastically different prices: $339 and $3,484,* by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 8/9/18

*A night of pain sent them to the ER. A surprise bill added to the misery,* by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 5/2/18

*When medication prices are unaffordable, patients travel abroad for a better deal,* by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 7/27/18
http://www2.philly.com/philly/health/health-costs/high-drug-costs-buying-foreign-medications-20180727.html

*For this family, the flu’s final gut punch was a $887 testing charge,* by Sarah Gantz, Philadelphia Inquirer 4/11/18
http://www2.philly.com/philly/health/health-costs/flu-test-cost-400-20180412.html