VHI Helps Consumers Compare Outpatient Procedures by Location and Charges

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SOURCE Virginia Health Information

RICHMOND, Va., June 5, 2012 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The power of choice is of great value when having an outpatient test or surgery. Virginia Health Information **(VHI)** today has empowered Virginians with information previously unavailable to consumers with publication of their **Outpatient Procedure Information**. Based on three years of data, the report explains the type of procedure, how often it is performed at each place and charges. **VHI's** goal is to help patients make better informed health care choices.

VHI collects outpatient information from hospital outpatient departments, licensed ambulatory surgical centers and doctor offices across Virginia. Consumers can search for local facilities and choose from ten different routine types of procedures. **VHI** chose these procedures because they are frequently performed, their real or perceived risk to the patient and variation in the amount charged for a procedure. Information is available on:

- Breast Surgery
- Facial Surgery
- General Laparoscopic Procedures
- Hysterectomy
- Liposuction
- Colonoscopy
- Gall Bladder Removal
- Hernia Repair
- Knee Surgery
- Gynecological Procedures

"Many surgeries no longer need an overnight hospital stay. **VHI** wants to help consumers learn about common procedures and realize that charges and experience in doing the procedure vary based on where the procedure is performed," says Charles Frazier, M.D., **VHI** Past President and Chair of **VHI's** Outpatient Task Force. This is important as better results are often linked to more experience in performing the procedure.

The report notes that charges for procedures may be twice as much or more than what health insurance companies may pay. To help consumers get a better idea of their costs, **VHI** includes the average amount that health insurance companies "allow" for some of the outpatient procedures. If you need to know more about your expected costs, always talk with the facility or your doctor before you have your procedure.

Michael T. Lundberg, **VHI's** Executive Director notes, "This information explains what the procedure is, why you would need it, the risks and healing time you might go through. **VHI** then adds specific information on those doctors and places doing the procedures."

Virginia Health Information (VHI) is the nonprofit organization that businesses, consumers, the Commonwealth of Virginia and health insurance companies go to for health information. **VHI** publishes reports and consumer guides on health insurance, hospitals, HMOs, nursing facilities, physicians and other topics at www.vhi.org. To find the latest updates on health care data and statistics, find and like VHI on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vahealth.

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