Physician Payments Sunshine Act

The Physician Payments Sunshine Act is a 2010 United States healthcare law to increase transparency of financial relationships between health care providers and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Hopkins et al., analyzed physician reported industry payments received by neurosurgeons over four consecutive years as defined by the Physician Payments Sunshine Act (PPSA). All board-certified neurosurgeons on three widely used Physician Rating Websites (PRWs).

Data was collected on average rating, number of ratings and composite ratings. Demographic, training-related and practice-related data were also collected. Each physician was identified and matched to their individually reported payments from the PPSA database.

Receiving higher amounts of industrial payments had no correlation to average PRW ratings, however was associated with receiving higher composite PRW ratings (p = 0.0389). Higher composite ratings (p = 0.0389), decreasing age (p = 0.005), being male (OR 1.7960, p = 0.005), completing a fellowship (OR 1.3310, p = 0.0085), having a more complete profile (OR 1.1121, p = 0.0057) and speaking more languages (OR 1.1253, p = 0.03802) all were correlated with receiving more total monetary payments. Training at a top 25 residency program was predictive of being in the bottom quartile of total monetary payments received (OR 1.676, p = 0.0002).

Patient experience as defined by PRW ratings are likely not strongly influenced by industry related monetary payments, however some relationship may exist. Further study is needed to determine the true relationship between industry related monetary payments and the patient experience ¹⁾.

1)

Hopkins B, Yamaguchi JT, Cloney MB, Shlobin NA, Dahdaleh NS. Effects of the physician payments sunshine act on the patient experience and perception of care amongst neurosurgeons: A comparative study of online PRW ratings and industry payments. Clin Neurol Neurosurg. 2018 Dec 11;176:127-132. doi: 10.1016/j.clineuro.2018.12.008. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 30557766.

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