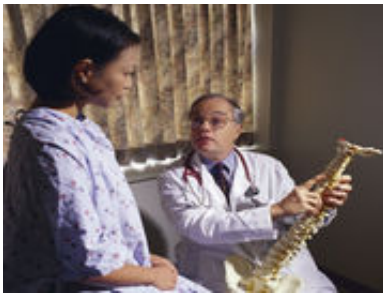


Patients lack understanding of spinal surgeon compensation

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(HealthDay)—Patients have a lack of understanding about spine surgeons' compensation, according to a study published in the Nov. 1 issue of *The Spine Journal*.

K. Linnea Welton, M.D., from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues questioned [patients](#) who had undergone an orthopedic spine surgery using a 12-question survey. Patients were queried regarding their impressions of reimbursement to orthopedic spine surgeons.

The researchers found that patients understood which procedures resulted in the greatest reimbursement to a spine surgeon, but erred with respect to the magnitude of reimbursement, often overestimating reimbursement. Most respondents also believed that surgeons were

provided extra compensation for care in the immediate postoperative period and for postoperative clinic visits. Most patients felt that [spine](#) surgeons were compensated appropriately, with only 3 percent considering surgeons to be overpaid and nearly one-quarter considering them underpaid.

"The study demonstrates patients' lack of understanding about physician compensation and provides an insight into the value patients place on the care they receive," the authors write. "By delineating patient impressions of the present reimbursement scheme for [orthopedic surgeons](#), researchers and policymakers can better determine whether these compensation strategies are effective in relaying consumer values or if they require closer consideration during this period of [health care reform](#)."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the medical device industry.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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