

Forthcoming Disclosure of Medical Device Maker Payments to Doctors Will Help Consumers

Written by Grassley Press

Tuesday, 07 December 2010 09:30

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Monday, December 06, 2010

Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa, ranking member of the Finance Committee, today joined the committee chairman in releasing a committee report detailing ties between a Maryland doctor who is accused of implanting hundreds of potentially unnecessary cardiac stents and his ties to the drug company that manufactured the stents. The doctor is said to have accepted payment for at least two social events at his home paid for by the device maker, including a pig roast, and became a paid contractor with the company, Abbott Labs, to promote its stents in China and Japan. Grassley is the co-author of the provisions enacted through the new health care law that will require drug companies and medical device makers to disclose their payments to doctors. The payments will be publicly available on Sept. 30, 2013. Grassley made the following comment on today's report and future payment disclosure.

"It's standard operating procedure for drug and device makers to give doctors honoraria or pay for dinner parties or travel to promote certain products. That's all legal, but it's been disclosed to the public only in limited cases, either voluntarily by the drug companies or as part of lawsuits. For the most part, people scheduled for surgery don't know if there's a financial relationship between the doctor implanting a device and the maker of that device. Starting in 2013, that will change. The public will have access to the financial information. There will be transparency. I hope that bringing this information out of the shadows will help rein in the most questionable cases. It's common sense that doctors should choose medical devices because the devices will help their patients, not because the device makers paid the doctors to give a speech about their product. Also, Medicare and Medicaid can't spare a penny for procedures that aren't medically necessary. Limiting abuse in this area will help program finances.

The Finance Committee report released today is available [here](#).

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An article in the Baltimore Sun, which broke the Maryland stent story, on today's report is available [here](#) .

A series of articles about Grassley's work on payment sunshine is available [here](#) .