

Don Downing recently settled a class action brought on behalf of uninsured patients of BJC Health System. Upon final approval by the Court, the settlement will provide substantial discounts on hospital bills for tens of thousands of past, present and future BJC uninsured patients, and will provide refunds to many uninsured patients who have, from 1999 to the present, paid some or all of their bills. The settlement was preliminarily approved by the City of St. Louis Circuit Court on March 18, 2008. A final approval hearing is scheduled for September 3, 2008.

BJC is the largest healthcare system in the state of Missouri. All eleven of its hospitals are part of the settlement. These hospitals are:

- Alton Memorial Hospital
- Barnes-Jewish Hospital
- Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital
- Barnes-Jewish West County Hospital
- Boone Hospital Center
- Christian Hospital
- Missouri Baptist Hospital-Sullivan
- Missouri Baptist Medical Center
- Parkland Health Center
- Progress West HealthCare Center
- St. Louis Children's Hospital

The following is a brief summary of the settlement. Under the settlement, all uninsured patients of any BJC hospital from 1999 to 2012 will be automatically eligible for a 25% "Self-Pay" discount on their bills for hospital services. In addition, all uninsured patients whose household incomes are less than four times the level of poverty, as defined by the federal government, are also eligible for additional "Charity Care" discounts ranging from an additional 20% up to 100%.

For example, an uninsured patient receiving hospital services in 2008 from a BJC Hospital with household income of \$84,000 or less would be eligible to receive a 45% total discount. An uninsured patient with household income of \$70,000 would be eligible to

receive a 70% discount. An uninsured patient with household income of \$50,000 or less would be eligible to receive a 100% discount.

For those patients who have already received hospital services and have outstanding balances, BJC will automatically apply the 25% Self-Pay discount to those bills. In addition, for those uninsured patients with household incomes less than four times the federal poverty guidelines (currently \$84,800 for a family of four) and who have requested retrospective application of the Charity Care policy discounts, their outstanding bills will be further adjusted to reflect the amount of Charity Care discount to which the patient is entitled. These discounts will be reflected on the billing statements in the billing cycle following final approval of the settlement. To the extent a BJC uninsured patient has already paid more than he or she would have been charged after application of all discounts, the uninsured patient will be eligible to receive a refund of the full amount overpaid.

If you have received hospital services at a BJC Hospital from 1999 to the present and were uninsured at that time, you may be eligible to receive benefits from the settlement. Individual Notices of Class Action and Proposed Settlement are being mailed to many thousands of BJC patients. Notices will also be published in newspapers. Review the Notice by clicking [here](#) (will need document to use for link). The Notice contains important information about your rights and steps you may need to take to obtain benefits under the settlement. Special web sites, toll-free telephone lines, and e-mail addresses are being set up to administer the terms of the settlement. Details will be published here when available.