The Open Payments Law (formerly the Physician Payment Sunshine Act) requires pharmaceutical and medical device/supply companies to report to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services both direct and indirect transfers of value to certain providers, including physicians, dentists, and optometrists, and to teaching hospitals. Typical direct transfers of value—called covered payments—including consulting fees, honoraria, gifts, entertainment, food, travel, education, and charitable contributions. Industry research awards to the university are reported separately with provider principal investigators identified. Certain unrestricted gifts made to the University and continuing education payments are excluded. Covered payments will be reported on a public website and updated annually. Data collected from August through December 2013 will first be made public in Fall 2014.

This federal law does not require providers to report payments to CMS, but there are steps to being prepared (see insert to right). Due to timing, monetary thresholds, and payment definitions, data published on the CMS website may not match exactly with the activities for which UAB providers must seek advance approval and the financial interests UAB investigators must disclose for purposes of research under the UAB Enterprise Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy.

For more information, visit go.cms.gov/openpayments.