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Medica First Health Plan to Create Mobile App for Comparing Health Care Costs

Cruising Main Street Medica on iPhone Now Possible

MINNETONKA, Minn. – Medica today became the first health plan to launch a mobile application to help consumers compare cost information for a variety of medical procedures. The app, based on the Web site MainStreetMedica.com, is available at the iPhone App Store.

Medica is making the mobile app available as the demand for consumer health information is exploding. According to an analysis published by Manhattan Research in February 2009, more than 10 million U.S. adults use mobile devices for health information. That's not surprising as consumers are paying a greater share of their health care. Meanwhile, the trend toward better informed, empowered consumers helps promote market-based reforms and greater competition.

MainStreetMedica.com was launched several years ago to provide consumers with access to comparative pricing information about physicians and facilities. The site allows users to compare costs on common procedures at hundreds of clinics and facilities. The prices on the site are based on the health plan's in-network contract rates with providers in its Medica Choice® network.

Both the Main Street Medica mobile app and the Web site are available to all consumers, not just Medica members. iPhone users can download the mobile app at: Medica.com.

“MainStreetMedica.com is a proven resource for consumers who want to know how much a medical service or treatment will cost before they have a procedure,” said Rob Longendyke, Medica senior vice president of marketing and corporate communications. “With the launch of this mobile app, we are answering the call to make that information available to people when and where they want it.

“Until recently, consumers had little or no access to comparative information about physicians and hospitals. Without transparency like actual cost information, market forces can't work. Given a level playing field, consumers will do to health care what they have done throughout the rest of the economy – make choices based on their values. Empowering consumers with the tools they need to make value-based decisions will stimulate health care to be more efficient, effective, affordable and accessible.”

About Medica

Medica is a health insurance company headquartered in Minneapolis and active in the Upper Midwest. With nearly 1.5 million members, the non-profit company provides health care coverage in the employer, individual, Medicaid, Medicare and Medicare Part D markets in Minnesota and a growing number of counties in North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Medica also offers national network coverage to employers who also have employees outside the Medica regional network.

Medica has the highest accreditation status, Excellent, from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA®) for its Minnesota Medicaid HMO plans and commercial health plans in Minnesota and North Dakota. Medica's vision is to become the community's health plan of choice, trusted for its integrity, respected for its service, and admired for its commitment to innovation and efficiency.

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NOTE: A graphic of the Main Street Medica app is available by contacting Greg Bury.

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