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## Physician–Focused Web Site Classification Scheme

**Lisa E. McCartney, BS\***  
**Sanuj Ravindran, MD\***

\* Thomas Jefferson University

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## Physician–Focused Web Site Classification Scheme

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**This chart is an updated version of what appeared in the September 1999 *Health Policy Newsletter*.**

The retrieval and dissemination of information to modern physicians has been revolutionized by the World Wide Web (WWW). Veteran health care organizations and innovative health information companies use the WWW to offer medical information and services in a comprehensive, condensed and facile package. Particularly attractive to physicians, these applications can increase the cost effectiveness of medical practices by summarizing the burgeoning health care advancements to make knowledge processing and application more efficient. The Office of Health Policy at Thomas Jefferson University developed a physician-focused Web site classification scheme to (1) determine the Web sites that are most comprehensive and relevant to physicians; (2) establish a comparison across Web site packages to allow the physician to evaluate the best package for his or her needs; (3) familiarize individuals with the scope of medical information available via the WWW; and, (4) provide physicians with criteria that can be used to rate new and revised Web site packages. By reviewing the literature and assessing different physician behavior patterns, several criteria were selected to measure the value of a Web site package. The table below details the three Web sites that most completely met all of the criteria (also listed). However, with the rapidly changing WWW, Web site packages will be born, merge and die. This physician-focused Web site classification scheme provides physicians with criteria that can be used to evaluate these packages into the future.

**Comprehensive Health Portals Itemized by Selection Criteria**

Portals		Healthon/WebMD www.webmd.com	Medscape www.medscape.com	Mediconsult/Physicians' Online www.pol.net
Mode of Connection	Hardware Needed	Computer w/ Internet Access	Computer w/ Internet Access	Computer w/ Internet Access
	Software Available	Web-based	Web-based	Web-based or PDL Software
	Included in Fee	Additional Fee	N/A	Additional Fee
	Membership Fee	\$29.95/ month	Free	Free
	Secure e-mail Account	Yes	Yes	Yes
Continuing Medical Education	CME On-Line?	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Access to Associations and Specialty Organizations	Yes	Yes	Yes
Practice Management Tools	Guidelines & Pathways	No	Yes	Yes
	Employment & Recruiting	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Referral Services	Yes	No	No
	On-Line Insurance Verification	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Claims Processing	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Claims Status	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Lab Orders/ Results	Yes	No	No
	Personal Organizer	Yes	No	Yes
	Create Your Own Web Site	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Dictation and Transcription Services	Optional	No	No
Clinical Management Tools	Links to Medical Databases	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Access to On-Line Textbooks	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Links to Peer-reviewed Journals	Yes	Yes	Yes
	On-Line Purchasing of Books and Medical Supplies	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal Financial Management Tools		Yes	Yes	Yes
Customization Capabilities	Specialty-specific Information Available	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Information Further Customized for Individual Needs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Patient Resources	Disease-specific Information	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Patient Support Resources	Yes	Yes	Yes
Medical News	Peer-reviewed Journal Articles	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Federal/government publications	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Medical Meeting Planning	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Medical News Headlines	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social Information	Current Events	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Travel	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Lifestyle	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Special Consumer-Focused Site</i>		Yes <a href="http://my.webmd.com">http://my.webmd.com</a>	Yes <a href="http://CBS.Healthwatch.com">http://CBS.Healthwatch.com</a>	Yes <a href="http://www.mediconsult.com">www.mediconsult.com</a>

**About the Authors**

Lisa E. McCartney, BS, is Assistant Project Director for the Office of Health Policy, Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University. Sanuj Ravindran, MD, graduated from Jefferson Medical College in 1998. He is currently a second year resident in internal medicine at Strong Memorial Hospital, University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, NY.