



## spotlight on health care

### Online Doctor Visits Benefit Doctor And Patient

(NAPSA)—Busy work and school schedules may not leave much time for the complications of the upcoming cold and flu season, but a new Web-based healthcare communications tool can save time and help balance overextended family schedules.

Through MyDocOnline™ Connect, patients can use the Internet to schedule an appointment with their doctor and even conduct a confidential online consultation for some types of non-urgent medical care, such as allergy symptoms, upper respiratory infections, and sore throats. Patients may also use this online consultation, also known as an Online Doctor Visit (ODV), to follow-up on chronic conditions—high blood pressure, high cholesterol, underactive thyroid—for which they have been under long-standing treatment with their physician.

The MyDocOnline Connect technology addresses a significant issue the healthcare community is facing today—the balance between patient and employer demand for improved access to convenient, high quality medical care and physician pressure to reduce the costs associated with that care.

“Patients want more information, more access, more convenience and more control over their healthcare. And even though they are looking for answers online, they still look to doctors as their trusted source,” said Dr. Keith Argenbright, founder of MyDoc Online service and vice president of business integration. “Our online tools help patients establish a safe and convenient way to interact with their doctor’s office, and most importantly, take a more proactive role in their health.”

#### How It Works

Those who have used the technology report that the Online Doctor Visit is easy to use because it was developed by nurses and doc-



**An Online Doctor Visit makes high quality healthcare more accessible and efficient.**

tors focused on patient satisfaction. The patient logs onto MyDocOnline Connect and is led through a series of questions such as description of the condition and how long symptoms have persisted. The patient’s responses to these queries are submitted to the physician’s office where a nurse reviews them before forwarding to the doctor. The doctor then responds to the patient with comprehensive written treatment instructions. During this process, the physician could require an in-office visit and physical examination if the conditions do not meet the criteria for an Online Doctor Visit. Patients typically pay for their service through online credit card processing, which may be reimbursable from insurance providers that participate in offering MyDocOnline Connect’s services.

In addition to the benefits of the ODV, patients can receive broadcast messages from their physicians regarding business hours, request prescription refills and access medical information from trusted sources including Harvard Guide to Family Medicine. Doctors can also use it to get lab results, provide referrals and confirm insurance eligibility for their patients.

More information about the service is available at [www.MyDocOnline.com](http://www.MyDocOnline.com).