

MSDSonline SIGNS SUPPLY AGREEMENT With Novation

In an effort to help healthcare facilities improve operational efficiencies and meet strict compliance regulations, MSDSonline has signed a supply agreement with Novation, the supply company of VHA Inc. and University HealthSystem Consortium.

MSDSonline is providing its electronic-based material safety data-sheet services and solutions to VHA and UHC members at discounted prices. VHA is a network of community-owned healthcare organizations and their physicians; UHC is an alliance of academic medical centers and associate members.

The agreement includes three MSDS services — MSDSadvantage, BinderView, and Compliance — all of which aim to create process efficiencies, while lowering

the cost of complying with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration's hazard communication standard and patient-safety requirements from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

"The services offered by MSDSonline enable VHA and UHC members to lower the cost of managing compliance programs while promoting a safer working environment for providers and their patients," says Bill Woodward, product manager at Novation, which manages about \$17 billion in annual purchases for more than 2,300 VHA and UHC members.

"We're making the process of accessing and managing these compliance-critical documents as simple as possible," says Greg Buchholz, president of MSDSonline. "By leveraging the efficiencies of today's Internet technologies, we can offer our MSDSadvantage service at an affordable price. Now any healthcare-related company can have an easy and efficient MSDS compliance system at its fingertips."

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Greg Buchholz

ePocrates To Collaborate With Express Scripts on HANDHELD FORMULARY INITIATIVE

ePocrates has agreed to incorporate the formulary information of Express Scripts Inc., a national pharmacy benefits manager, into the ePocrates Rx Formulary drug reference guide, a handheld software application combining clinical and formulary data.

This new relationship with Express Scripts enables physicians to receive handheld information that aims to help control drug spending, while helping avert medication errors at the point of care.

"Providing physicians with handheld formulary and clinical data can eliminate hours spent on the phone with the pharmacist and also enhance patient safety by enabling physicians to easily check dosage and safety information at the time of prescribing," says Richard Fiedotin, M.D., ePocrates' VP of business development. "It also benefits consumers, since lower co-pays can lead to significant cost savings, especially for patients with chronic medical conditions."

"Like most physicians, I often don't have time to check a formulary book or desktop computer formulary when I am seeing patients," says Bruce Deschere, M.D., a physician who participated in a prior pilot program. "Now I can save money for my

patients since I am checking formulary status while I am using my ePocrates drug reference guide for clinical purposes. And patients don't have to wait around at the pharmacy, while the pharmacist is trying to call me for a cost-effective alternative."

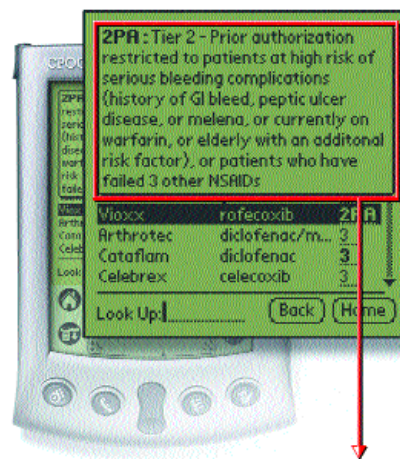
ePocrates Rx Formulary is expected to be rolled out on a regional basis with Express Scripts, with coverage expanding over the next several months.

Physicians using the product can have instant access to their patient-benefit plan and drug-coverage information. The information in ePocrates Rx Formulary is updated frequently through the ePocrates' proprietary AutoUpdate feature.

"Our key objectives in forming a strategic alliance with ePocrates are to improve customer service, enhance patient safety, and help reduce pharmacy spending for our clients," says Agnes Rey-Giraud, VP and general manager of e-business at Express Scripts. "With its broad user base, we are hopeful that ePocrates will quickly achieve broad distribution of formulary information to physicians in order to help us achieve these objectives."

More than 190,000 physicians use ePocrates Rx, which contains data on safety topics such as indication-specific dosing, adverse reactions, and drug interactions. A

study conducted last year, showed that physicians using the ePocrates drug reference can potentially avoid one to two adverse events per week. The study also showed that the ePocrates Rx handheld electronic drug-reference guide saved time for physicians and also improved the physician-patient relationship.



Customized pop-up windows deliver drug specific information such as benefit design or treatment guidelines.

Drugs.com RELAUNCHES DATABASE, Seeking to Expand Its Reach

Moving to position itself as the Website of choice for those seeking information on approved pharmaceutical treatments, Drugs.com LLC has relaunched a searchable database of more than 24,000 prescription and OTC drug descriptions.

The site, which targets healthcare professionals and consumers, is powered by Micromedex, a member of the Thomson Healthcare Information publishing group, and Multum Information Services, a Denver-based specialist in solutions for the growing problem of adverse drug events. Features include a patient-care guide, also provided by Micromedex, and a drug interactions search facility, supplied by Multum.

The Website offers a user-friendly interface with intuitive search processes on an extensive database that will be updated regularly. According to Drugs.com executives, the company wants to be seen as the "Google" of the pharmaceutical field.

The site attracts thousands of consumers and healthcare professionals each day, and the company expects to invest about \$20 million during the next three years to expand the Website's reach.

Drugs.com is exploring partnerships and e-commerce opportunities with such Web players as Amazon.com, Drugstore.com, Overture.com, Yahoo, and others.

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URAC Partners With Security Firms for WEBSITE ACCREDITATION

URAC has reached provider partnerships with Exodus Communications Inc., a leading hosting provider, and METASes, a security assessment company. Under the agreements with Exodus and METASes, applicants to the URAC health Website accreditation program, can obtain fixed prices for basic security assessments, which are required under the accreditation standards.

URAC's Website standards constitute the first-ever comprehensive, independent accreditation program for health Websites. The standards emphasize the importance of Website security when dealing with sensitive personal health information.



Garry Carneal

"One goal of the URAC accreditation program is for consumers to feel confident that accredited Websites have taken the necessary measures to protect their personal information," says Garry Carneal, URAC president and CEO.

"The URAC Health Website Accreditation program is the first real opportunity for health sites to demonstrate that they meet high standards of quality and accountability," says Lisa Gallagher, senior director of healthcare security initiative for Exodus.

Patrick McBride, METASes co-founder and executive VP, says, "Healthcare companies need to demonstrate that confidential customer information is sufficiently protected."

Follow up

DISPENSING SOLUTIONS INC., Santa Ana, Calif., creates custom programs addressing the prescribing, tracking, and dispensing needs of the medical professional. For more information, visit dispensingsolutionsinc.com.

DRUGS.COM, with corporate headquarters in Delaware, is a public information service Website dedicated to providing the most comprehensive OTC and Rx pharmaceutical information available today for consumers and healthcare professionals in the U.S. For more information, visit drugs.com.

EPHYSICIAN INC., Mountain View, Calif., improves patient care and practice efficiencies through clinical handheld services. For more information, visit ephysician.com.

EPOCRATES INC., San Carlos, Calif., is a handheld physician network, enabling point-of-care access to clinical information. For more information, visit epocrates.com.

EXODUS COMMUNICATIONS INC., Santa Clara, Calif., is a leader in high-end, Internet outsourcing, providing managed hosting services for enterprises with mission-critical Internet operations. For more information, visit exodus.net.

EXPRESS SCRIPTS INC., St. Louis, is an independent, full-service pharmacy benefit manager. For more information, visit express-scripts.com.

METASES, Cornelius, N.C., is a provider of network and Internet security solutions. For more information, visit metases.com.

MSDSONLINE, Chicago, develops e-solutions for the management of material safety data sheet documents. For more information, visit msdsonline.com.

NOVATION, Irving, Texas, is a supply-cost management company that serves the needs of two national healthcare alliances. For more information, visit novationco.com.

PHYSICIANS WORLD/THOMSON HEALTHCARE, part of Thomson Corp., a Secaucus, N.J., based company, improves healthcare worldwide through education, communication, research, products, and services. For more information, phone 201-271-6000, or visit pwcg.com.

URAC, Washington D.C., also known as the American Accreditation HealthCare Commission, is a nonprofit charitable organization that seeks to establish Website standards for the healthcare industry. For more information, visit urac.org.

Publications Planning Tool AIMS TO SPEED ADOPTION of Therapeutic Breakthroughs

Physicians World/Thomson Healthcare has launched MessageMatrix, a service that could speed the clinical adoption of new therapeutic advances.

While scientific conferences and peer-reviewed journals are the most respected media through which to present data on new therapies, it has been shown that findings limited to isolated publications, even based on breakthrough research, do not reach the majority of physicians as quickly as they should.

Using MessageMatrix, Physicians World can help researchers disseminate their findings to a broader audience of clinicians, both nationally and globally.

MessageMatrix is a Web-based, customized service that maps data from clinical studies against the relevant medical conferences and journals. It also helps track the development and submission of manuscripts — an especially intricate process when more than one clinical group is involved.

"Clinical investigators have a variety of opportunities through which to share important findings with their peers," says Kevan H. Chambers, general manager of Strategic Solutions Group at Physicians World. "But making the most of those opportunities means reaching out to the right journal or congress, with the right data, at the right time."

Dispensing Solutions and ePhysician Partner to AID PHYSICIANS WITH ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING

Dispensing Solutions Inc. has formed a partnership with ePhysician Inc. to connect DSI's Dsystem software with ePhysician's application suite, ePhysician Practice, enabling physicians to prescribe electronically via handheld computers. Under the agreement, DSI's Dsystem communicates in real time with ePhysician Practice, which allows DSI's participating physicians to seamlessly dispense in-house, electronic prescriptions, to transmit prescriptions, as well as track manufacturers' samples on a wireless PDA through the use of the combined platforms. The first installations using the integrated systems were scheduled for December 2001.

The agreement also states that ePhysician and DSI are representing each other exclusively in sales to customers interested in integrated dispensing solutions over the next two years.

"The match is ideal," says Richard Wolpaw, DSI co-founder and CEO.

DSI is a pharmaceutical management services company offering an array of products and services for virtually every type of medical professional, healthcare organization, health insurer and/or pharmacy.

ePhysician is a leading provider in the integrated point-of-care solutions and services industry.