



Virtual second opinion website appeals to patient preferences

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In the final rule released in October 2014, CMS decided against reimbursement for secondary interpretations of images, but despite this development, some have been using the second opinion concept to appeal to patient preferences.

SecondOpinions.com caters to patient preferences

As the name suggests, SecondOpinions.com provides medical second opinions in all areas of medicine to patients. The twist on this time honored tradition is the fact that the reports are provided electronically and so are available to patients around the world. The United States and Canada are the website's biggest source of customers, but it is expanding.

In using their website I noticed three ways in which SecondOpinions caters to important patient preferences.

1. **Price:** Hospital prices, especially for imaging, have been in the public crosshairs for years. This trend will only increase as more and more patients purchase high deductible health plans that place more of the financial burden on them. Yet it still remains difficult for most patients to get accurate imaging cost estimates before their exam which can lead to sticker shock and delayed payments. SecondOpinions provides clear information on the cost of each report by modality and by type. This means that patients know how much they can expect to pay before making their decision.
2. **Convenience:** Our primary care research shows that patients value convenience over virtually everything else. Patients using SecondOpinion do not have to leave the comfort of their own homes to receive their report. All patients need to do is upload the image to SecondOpinion's secure servers from a digital source (CDs, flash drives, cloud storage etc.) and wait until they receive a notification with a secure, HIPPA compliant, link directing them to their report.
3. **Choice:** Choice is an inherent part of consumerism. SecondOpinions embraces this fact by providing patients with the board certification, medical school, residency, fellowships, and subspecializations of the radiologists. The consumer is then able to select the radiologist they prefer and order a consultation from the physician of their choosing.

Participate in our research

Is patient steerage hurting your volumes? Are your competitors advertising their prices to patients? Have you gained market share by catering to patient and physician preferences? If so, then we would love to speak with you for our upcoming national meeting research on becoming the provider of choice. Our study will focus on strategies to appeal to the referring physician and patient consumer.

Feel free to reach out to me at BanjoS@advisory.com to participate in our research.