

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

GREATER SEATTLE-AREA HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS LAUNCH FREE WEB SITE FOR CONSUMERS TO EASILY COMPARE AND SCHEDULE HEALTH CARE

- **Virginia Mason Medical Center, The Everett Clinic, Proliance Surgeons and Qliance first participants to join Carol.com in greater Seattle.**
- **Carol.com's transparency lets consumers know what to expect during office visits and provides price estimates for desired health services.**
- **Participating providers to offer innovative, value-based "care packages" for asthma, back pain, blood and cholesterol management, diabetes and orthopedics, among others.**

SEATTLE — Oct. 1, 2008 — A progressive coalition of local health care providers — including [Virginia Mason Medical Center](#), [The Everett Clinic](#), [Proliance Surgeons](#) and [Qliance Primary Care Specialists](#) — today announced the launch of Carol.com (www.carol.com) for greater Seattle-area consumers. Carol.com is a free online marketplace that empowers consumers to easily compare and schedule health care.

Using [Carol.com](#), Seattle-area residents for the first time can go online to review more than 100 health care services and compare how specific services vary among health care providers. Before making a service selection, consumers can use the Web site to:

- Learn exactly what tests and procedures will be performed at the doctor's office before arriving.
- Review quality data from the [Puget Sound Health Alliance's Community Checkup Report](#).
- Determine estimated costs for health care services prior to receiving them.
- Schedule health care services.

"We are partnering with Carol.com to make health care more approachable for patients," said [Gary S. Kaplan, MD](#), chairman and CEO of [Virginia Mason Medical Center](#). "This is one more way we can set ourselves apart as a leader in the health-care industry. Virginia Mason Medical Center welcomes the opportunity to offer and showcase our doctors and medical programs on Carol.com, and fully believes competing in an open marketplace will lead to greater care delivery innovation, better patient outcomes and improved cost control."

[Carol.com](#) is designed for all people — those with and without health insurance, including high-deductible health plans. The goal of Carol.com and its partners is to provide Seattle-area consumers the transparency needed to make value-based health care decisions; much like the decisions consumers make every day with other goods and services.

"Carol.com is the first initiative and Web site that really starts to pull together, in a localized and personalized fashion, all of the pieces necessary for consumers to take action and become more engaged in their health," Said [Rick Cooper](#), CEO for [The Everett Clinic](#). "It was an easy decision for us to provide greater transparency through Carol.com, especially as consumers are being asked to take more responsibility for managing and funding their health."

Care Packages: Another Health Care First

One of [Carol.com's](#) unique aspects is the care package — a bundle of related health care services. Working with Carol.com, each health care provider creates, markets and sells distinct care packages. Care packages available at launch to greater Seattle-area residents primarily fall within nine categories: asthma; back pain; blood pressure/cholesterol management; diabetes; health and wellness for children, women and men; orthopedics and skin. Additionally, Seattle health care providers have developed innovative packages to deliver consumers new and valuable bundling options for receiving more coordinated care delivery. Example care packages include:

Virginia Mason

- Heart Attack and Stroke Prevention Care Package
- Neck and Back Pain Care Package
- Other Care Packages

The Everett Clinic

- Women's 3 in 1 Wellness Exam Care Package
- Mother and Child Wellness Exam Care Package
- Other Care Packages

Proliance Surgeons

- Care Packages

Qliance Primary Care Specialists

- Care Packages

When consumers schedule a care package, they will know the kind of care they will receive and the base price for that care before an appointment. Additionally, consumers can verify their insurance eligibility for a desired care package. [Carol.com](#) plans to add greater benefit plan integration throughout 2008-2009 to provide consumers more personalized price estimates.

“Carol.com is the first service to connect individuals and families directly to multiple health care providers, while incorporating the realities of a consumer’s health care benefits,” said Tony Miller, founder and CEO of Carol.com. “We’re excited to give people control over how they evaluate, choose and consume health services, and we strongly believe Seattle-area consumers are ready to be active participants in making health care more affordable, approachable and valuable.”

Seattle is the second community in which Carol.com is available. Carol.com launched for residents of Minneapolis and St. Paul in January 2008. The company plans to expand to additional markets in 2009.

About Carol.com

Founded in 2006, Carol.com is an online marketplace where consumers can shop, compare and purchase health care packages provided by a variety of large, medium and specialty medical facilities in their communities. The company focuses on transforming health care by creating a marketplace in which consumers compare health care services from local clinics and hospitals prior to purchase, and health care providers compete for their patronage. The Carol name was taken to honor the trusted family members, friends and associates people turn to when seeking advice or recommendations about health care. “We all know a ‘Carol’ in our lives.”

Keyword Tags

Carol.com, Virginia Mason, Everett Clinic, Proliance Surgeons, Qliance Primary Care Specialists, Puget Sound Health Alliance, Consumer-Driven Health Care, Health Care Packages, Seattle, Puget Sound, Health Care Reform, Consumerism, Health 2.0, Health Transparency.

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