**Analysis of Website-Related Feedback from the**

**MHDO Consumer Advisory Group**

Overview: MHDO sought input from members of the MHDO Consumer Advisory Group on desirable features of the forthcoming Health Compare Maine website. Members were asked to:

* Choose favorite consumer-oriented websites, including those related to health care services or other topics;
* Describe a typical visit, including purpose, length of visit, and how they arrived at the site (e.g., Google, favorites); and
* Identify features they liked and disliked, and why.

Summary of MHDO Consumer Advisory Group Input: Consumer Advisory Group members reviewed four health care-related websites, five shopping websites, and one restaurant review website. Visit goals included browsing, more purposive information gathering, and selection-related activities. Members appreciated website features that made it easier to gather desired information, compare options, and to make a decision. They especially flagged the importance of measures or other information (e.g., comments) that provided them with meaningful information. By the same token, they especially did not like measures that were problematical for various reasons, including measures that did not address important quality considerations as well as content that did not meet personal information needs.

The following tables elaborate on this summary, providing a range of specific input to inform the development of Health Compare Maine. Table 1 summarizes the websites that the MHDO Consumer Advisory Group reviewed. Table 2 summarizes the characteristics of visits to favorite websites, including the goals of the visits, their length of time, and how they arrived. Table 3 summarizes website features that group members liked (e.g., content, navigability) and disliked (e.g., problematical measures).

**Table 1**

**Websites Reviewed by Name and Type**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Website Name | Type |
| Health | Other |
| Amazon |  |  |
| Consumer Reports Websites on Doctors and Hospitals |  |  |
| eBay |  |  |
| HealthGrades |  |  |
| Home Depot |  |  |
| Physician Compare |  |  |
| Restaurant Website Reviews |  |  |
| TrueCar |  |  |

**Table 2**

**Overview of Characteristics of Visits to Favorite Websites**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Visit Goals | Visit Length | How Arrive |
| To:* Browse/Compare products for selection/Decide on whether site worth a return visit
* Choose among 3 doctors
* Gather information on restaurants in a travel destination; products for possible purchase (e.g., specifications, costs, quality, consumer satisfaction); medical issue, e.g., father needed attention
* Provide input on a physician
* Save time
* Select a restaurant that would meet my needs and group needs, buy a car
* Selecting a physician from among 3 choices; a specialist; a hospital
 | * Restaurants: 60 minutes over 3 visits
* 15-30 minutes on a shopping site
 | * Favorites
* Google
 |

**Table 3**

**Website Features: Liked and Disliked**

|  |
| --- |
| Features |
| Liked | Disliked |
| * Choice of items (shopping site)
* Color: Good use of highlights
* Comments are included (suggestion: comments should be moderated to prevent unfair criticism; should help providers improve)
* Comparisons: Easy because of navigability, grid and color highlights
* Content: Comprehensive--no need to go to similar sites for info
* Decision support, e.g., consumer-friendly info that makes deciding easier, can narrow choices for comparison purposes, finds car at best price per user criteria
* Drilldowns for in-depth information
* Easy task completion/achievement of end goal
* Information, e.g., on which restaurants have discussion boards; health care websites—info on licensure, malpractices, errors, data sources
* Measures need to be meaningful (see cons on measures0
* Overall, pleasing to look at
* Quality ratings: easy to use (restaurant site)
* Referrals/links to related sites
* Transparency on review contributors
 | * Information limited, e.g., HealthGrades: does not include comments
* Information not current
* Measures problematical, e.g. HealthGrades metrics have validity issues (some physicians with poor quality have received good grades); limited in scope (nothing on errors, disciplinary issues)
* Information does not address specific individual needs, e.g., accommodations for special needs, disabilities, etc.
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