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**National Institutes of Health**  
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National Library of Medicine  
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## "The Health Information Prescription"

**Senator Tom Harkin Joins National Library of Medicine and  
American College of Physicians--  
American Society of Internal Medicine Foundation  
to Launch Patient Information Program**

**(Des Moines, IA)**--Doctors often prescribe medication after seeing a patient. But what if that doctor also wants to direct the patient to up-to-date, reliable, consumer-friendly information about a health concern? Under a pilot program to be launched in Iowa April 7th, physicians all over the state of Iowa will be able to do just that.

The American College of Physicians- American Society of Internal Medicine Foundation (ACP-ASIM Foundation) has teamed with the National Library of Medicine (NLM), an arm of the National Institutes of Health, to create the "Health Information Prescription" program. Now, doctors throughout Iowa will have customized [prescription pads](#) that they can use to point patients to first-rate online health information in NLM's MEDLINEplus database .[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)>.

**The kickoff will take place at 9:00 a.m., on Monday, April 7th, at the State Library of Iowa in Des Moines. This event will feature remarks by:**

- **The Honorable Tom Harkin, United States Senator, State of Iowa;**
- **Michael Kienzle, Practicing Physician and Member, Iowa Chapter of the ACP-ASIM;**
- **Whitney Addington, MD, Chair, ACP-ASIM Foundation;**
- **Donald A.B. Lindberg, MD, Director, NLM;**
- **Mary Wegner, State Librarian, The State Library of Iowa**

**In addition, Michael Kienzle, MD, will write Iowa's first information prescription for United States Senator Tom Harkin. Dr. Kienzle will also be on hand after the program to write information prescriptions for members of the press. Refreshments will be served at the program's conclusion.**

Why do NLM and ACP-ASIM Foundation consider this project so important?

"Physicians have always known that an informed patient who takes an active role is a 'better' patient," notes NLM Director Lindberg. "We believe that both patients and their doctors will welcome this additional medical tool -- good medical information -- in their continuing efforts to provide good health care. Medical and public libraries will play an important role in the success of the 'Information Rx' project, just as they have with MEDLINEplus itself," he added. "We look forward to working with the members of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine in this project."

With contents culled from the best public and private health sites on the Internet, MEDLINEplus has information on more than 600 health topics. Under each, patients will find nuts-and-bolts information on symptoms, diagnosis and treatment, current news stories, research studies, clinical trials, helpful graphics and even interactive tutorials. There's detailed but easy-to-read information on thousands of over-the-counter and prescription drugs, too. And MEDLINEplus is also available in Spanish.

Why is it important that doctors steer their patients to MEDLINEplus? Can't they just suggest they do a general Internet search?

"Unfortunately, some patients lack the knowledge needed to find good health care information online," commented the ACP- ASIM's Dr. Kienzle. "Also, they might not be able to guard against marketing schemes disguised as websites."

According to recent research, six million Americans go online daily to search for information about health and disease. Additional findings show that nearly 70 percent of patients nationwide would pay serious attention to a website recommended by their physician.

"Used properly, the Internet can be just as helpful a healthcare tool as the biopsy, the x-ray and the electrocardiogram," observed ACP-ASIM Foundation Chair Whitney Addington, M.D. "That is why I hope that our Iowa doctors will embrace the 'Health Information Prescription' program, directing Iowans eager for good consumer health information to the gold standard, MEDLINEplus. I think they'll find," he continued, "That, used in conjunction with their doctor's good care, information is the best medicine."

The National Library of Medicine is part of the National Institutes of Health, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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# MEDLINEplus.gov

THE WEB SITE YOUR DOCTOR PRESCRIBES

A free, comprehensive, authoritative, up-to-date health information web site from the world's largest medical library, the National Library of Medicine of the National Institutes of Health, with the support of the American College of Physicians/American Society of Internal Medicine Foundation.

## MICHAEL KIENZLE, MD

### Information $\mathcal{R}$

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| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="http://www.medlineplus.gov/cholesterol">www.medlineplus.gov/cholesterol</a>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="http://www.medlineplus.gov/diabetes">www.medlineplus.gov/diabetes</a>             |
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[www.medlineplus.gov/other](http://www.medlineplus.gov/other): (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

[www.medlineplus.gov/druginformation](http://www.medlineplus.gov/druginformation) \_\_\_\_\_

Was MEDLINEplus helpful? Tell us at: [www.foundation.acponline.org/survey](http://www.foundation.acponline.org/survey)

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