

March, 2004

PATIENT POWERline from the desk of Marie Savard, M.D.

RE: THE INFORMED PATIENT

Dear Friends,

Dr. Savard will be appearing on the nationally syndicated morning talk show, Living It Up With Ali and Jack, speaking about “Making the Most of Your Doctor Visit”, Monday, March 8th. To check on the time and channel in your area please click here

<http://www.aliandjack.com/04.asp>.

I would also like to share with you that Dr. Savard was honored to be the keynote speaker and part of a ground breaking conference sponsored by Johns Hopkins University and American Healthways titled, Defining the Patient Physician Relationship for the 21st Century. Attached is the original press release “PATIENTS, PHYSICIANS REACH CONSENSUS ON EXPECTATIONS, ROLES”, concerning this groundbreaking event. For more information and to receive a copy of the final report, go to <http://www.patient-physician.com>.

PATIENTS, PHYSICIANS REACH CONSENSUS ON EXPECTATIONS, ROLES

Johns Hopkins, American Healthways Publish Results of Unprecedented Patient-Physician Effort to Redefine Relationship

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Feb. 26, 2004 – More than 200 patients, physicians and other health care professionals spent a weekend together last fall listening to voices they don’t hear much these days: each other’s. The result of that gathering—a consensus report called *Defining the Patient-Physician Relationship for the 21st Century*—was released today by Johns Hopkins and American Healthways (Nasdaq: AMHC) with a goal to help improve health care in the United States by focusing attention on the fundamental interaction between patient and physician.

“I was surprised to learn that patients and doctors want the same things,” said Jean Faber, a member of the Outcomes Summit Patient Steering Committee from Verndale, Minn. “We all felt very strongly about the reason we were brought together and believe just as strongly that we were able to create something real and contribute on an even field. I believe our work is a significant step toward lasting change.”

Through a consensus process, patients and physicians identified seven key components of the relationship—Communication, Office Experience, Hospital Experience, Education, Integration, Decision-Making and Outcomes—and made recommendations for improvements within each.

The recommendations reveal that what is a very complex and pervasive issue has many surprisingly simple solutions. For example, patient recommendations include:

- ? Arrive on time for office visits and be sufficiently prepared to ask questions and participate in the decision-making process.
- ? Keep a detailed, personal medical file, complete with lab results and prescriptions.
- ? Take responsibility for owning, maintaining and sharing personal medical records with all members of the health care team.
- ? Assume ultimate responsibility for managing your condition and use self-care opportunities provided.

Physician recommendations include:

- ? Be timely, including scheduled office visits and requests for information via telephone.
- ? Pay more attention to the office environment and staff, understanding the impact this has on patient satisfaction.
- ? Implement a social questionnaire, understanding the role that gender, age, race religion and other non-medical information play in treatment and care.
- ? Be open to education by the patient and remain objective when reviewing outside information—including the use of alternative/nontraditional therapies.
- ? Work with patients to explicitly define and discuss realistic expectations and goals regarding testing and treatment.

“What we have done is define the goals for the patient-physician relationship. It’s going to take a national, collective effort to build the system that takes us where we want to be,” said Z. Elizabeth Hays, M.D., a member of the Physician Steering Committee and a primary care physician at GreenField Health System, a pioneering medical practice in Portland, Ore.

For five months, 21 steering committee members (11 patients and 10 physicians) gathered from around the country with sponsors and moderators, Johns Hopkins and American Healthways, to draft the framework for the Third Annual Physicians Meeting and Johns Hopkins Outcomes Summit held last November in Phoenix.

Defining the Patient-Physician Relationship for the 21st Century sets aside issues of cost, focusing instead on the future perfect, patient-physician relationship. Addressing the costs that may be associated with achieving that ideal, Summit participants agreed, will require time, energy and action from the individual patient all the way up to the highest level of government.

“Johns Hopkins and American Healthways were able to do what had only been talked about for the last decade, which is bring patients and physicians together to be frank about what’s wrong with the system and offer solutions,” said Dr. David Lansky, PhD and president of the Foundation for Accountability (FACCT), a not-for-profit

organization dedicated to improving health care by advocating for an accountable and accessible system where consumers are partners in their care and help shape the delivery of care.

“Studies prove that the best care occurs when doctors and patients communicate their expectations to each other clearly and respectfully, and our health care system will only improve when our society has a candid discussion about what we expect from it,” said Lansky, a participant and keynote speaker at the Outcomes Summit. “The very fact that patients and physicians reached consensus on their expectations of each other is a major milestone.”

Another Summit participant and keynote speaker, Dr. Marie Savard, an internationally known internist, women’s health expert, author and champion for patient rights and responsibilities, called the effort “groundbreaking and long overdue.”

“The emotion and the energy among everyone involved in this effort was palpable and unlike anything I have seen going on anywhere in the country,” Savard said. “It is amazing the progress that can be made when patients and physicians take the time to look at things from each other’s perspective and take steps toward dispelling a lot of the myths out there that keep us from achieving the best possible results.”

Frederick Brancati, M.D., Johns Hopkins University professor of medicine and epidemiology and director of the Johns Hopkins Outcomes Evaluation Program, said the patient-physician relationship was a challenging topic to undertake within a consensus process.

“We knew as we planned this meeting that the patient-physician relationship has been strained by a range of complexities inherent within our current health care system,” Brancati said. “What I found revealing at the Summit was the depth of mutual dissatisfaction with the nature of this relationship, how articulate patients were in expressing their concerns and everyone’s desire to improve how doctors and patients communicate.”

Johns Hopkins co-hosts the annual Summit, which explores topical health care issues and develops consensus on ways to improve health care. American Healthways, which provided seed capital to Johns Hopkins to establish the Outcomes Evaluation Program, also compensates participating clinicians and research faculty from the Johns Hopkins schools of Medicine, Nursing and the Bloomberg School of Public Health for their comprehensive, independent analyses of the effectiveness of a wide range of American Healthways’ outcomes intervention models and their clinical and financial results.

At this year’s Summit, researchers at Johns Hopkins also conducted an on-site survey of Summit participants regarding the impact of the event on individuals and their own relationships with their patients and/or physicians. Follow-up surveys will be conducted during the course of the year.

For more information on improving the patient-physician relationship, or for a free, complete copy of the report, go to www.patient-physician.com.

To Download Dr. Savard's Emergency Health Wallet Card, provided by Aventis, please visit <http://www.diabeteswatch.com> and click on the blue box, Take Control of Your Health.

To learn more about Dr. Savard's health management system, download free forms and a sample letter to your doctor, or to order her books How To Save Your Own Life: The Savard System for managing – and controlling – your health care (Warner Books, Inc. 2000) and/or The Savard Health Record: a six-step system for managing your health care (Time Life Books), visit <http://www.dr.savard.com>.

Don't forget to visit <http://www.mercksource.com> and click on "You and Your Doctor" where you will find all of my most up-to-date forms for managing your health care along with a short video of me explaining step-by-step how you can take charge of your health. By using the information and forms you will learn to how to prepare for office visits, set your target goals, collect and read your medical records and understand your test results. In short – you'll have everything you need to manage your health care right at your fingertips.

Marie Savard, M.D. is an internationally known internist, women's health expert and champion of patient empowerment. She is the founder of The Savard System, dedicated to teaching patients how to manage their own healthcare. She is the author of two highly acclaimed books, How to Save Your Life: The Savard System for Managing-and Controlling-Your Health Care (Warner Books, Inc. 2000) and The Savard Health Record: a Six-Step System for Managing Your Health Care (Time-Life, Inc. 2000). She is working on a book titled Apples & Pears: a Body Shape Guide for Women.

This newsletter is published by Dr. Marie Savard

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