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Firm takes the pain out of medical paperwork

Nashville Business Journal - August 10, 2007 by [Erin Lawley](#) Nashville Business Journal

After his parents died from cancer in 2006, health care professional Christopher Parks struggled to understand the medical paperwork piling up around him.

It moved him to take action.

Parks hired a developer in Denmark and began working nights and weekends on MedBillManager, a Web-based application to help consumers make sense of medical paperwork.

Now Parks is taking his company, change:healthcare, to the market full time. He left his day job at Global Healthcare Exchange (GHX) and moved the company into offices in Hillsboro Village at the beginning of August.



Todd Stringer, Nashville Business Journal

Change:healthcare co-founder (left) Christopher Parks with co-founder and COO Robert Hendrick

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Change will launch the most powerful version of MedBillManager on Aug. 12.

"Unlike the unproven start-up, we have been doing this for a year and signed some big agreements," says Parks.

MedBillManager lets patients enter information for up to 12 people from the stacks of paper that accompany medical visits - bills, insurance statements and explanation/statement of benefits forms - into an easy-to-follow Web page that calculates what is owed, what has been paid and any remaining account balance.

The program tracks health care activity and spending at doctors offices and pharmacies in a bank-registry format with graphic elements, such as pie charts, that show where health care dollars are going.

It also allows users to anonymously compare their health care spending to what others have spent for similar services and alerts them to places they can save money next time around, such as a local store-based clinic.

"In the financial aspects of health care, the user or patients are really left in the dark," says Banu Ozden, CEO of SmartMedicalConsumer, a New York-based company that provides analysis and management of health care bills and EOBs to help consumers spot billing errors.

"I went through, first hand, the struggles and troubles of medical bills," says Ozden.

"Most people don't understand the language of insurance and medical bills," says Patsy Kelly, president and founder of Nashville-based Med Bill Review Services Inc., which is partnering with change:healthcare. "It is very difficult."

Kelly's company, which assists consumers who need hands-on assistance with their medical bills and claims, is using the MedBillManager application for its clients and is a referral destination for any change:healthcare customers who need extra help - such as dealing with insurance appeals.

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Annual subscriptions to MedBillManager cost \$24.95.

Robert Hendrick, company co-founder and chief operating officer, says change:healthcare's market is the some 37 million privately-insured individuals in the U.S. who make up the bulk of the nation's health care expenses, as well as the roughly 37.5 million Medicaid and 39.7 million Medicare enrollees.

Hendrick and Parks declined to give revenue figures or the company's subscription base, but said they will announce funding within the month.

Change:healthcare is also partnering with nonprofit organizations. The non-profits promote the product to their members, who can subscribe at a discounted rate of \$19.95, and a portion of subscription money goes back to the organization.

For change:healthcare, such partnerships can be lucrative: The National Multiple Sclerosis Society's Mid South Chapter, a partner, has about 7,200 members; if they all register at \$20 per person, that equals \$144,000.

Parks hopes the pilot with that chapter will lead to an agreement with the National MS Society, giving the company access to the some 400,000 people in the country with MS, which could add up to \$8 million in subscriptions.

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