

Consumer-Driven Health Care Options Expand In Central Oregon

by Bend Weekly News Sources

New Private, Membership-Based Medical Office Coming To Bend in January

Everyday, consumers make spending choices based on the level of personalized service and attention they want to receive. Flying first class versus coach, selecting a private health club membership versus using the community fitness center, choosing private school versus public education, lodging at a motel versus a five-star hotel, joining a country club versus using public golf courses—the list goes on.

A new trend in membership-based physician practices is emerging in the United States and while many consumers are delighted by the option, some are questioning the added cost for more personalized service in health care. On the other hand, physicians are questioning the ethics behind the insurance industry's volume-based approach. Doctors nation-wide are facing declining insurance reimbursement rates, forcing them to see more patients in order to keep their medical practices open. Many are finding they can no longer afford to see Medicare patients, resulting in a huge gap in the Nation's healthcare system.

A local Bend physician is introducing an alternative. Board certified Internist Rich MacDonell, MD, has founded My MD, a private, membership-based medical practice that will significantly reduce his patient volume allowing him to offer more personalized service and attention. My MD patients will pay an annual fee that will provide them with:

- 1). 24-hour direct phone access;
- 2). same or next day appointments; and
- 3). minimal to no wait time for office visits.

Unlike other local physicians who have recently transitioned to more private office practices, Dr. MacDonell will continue to accept standard insurance for basic medical services and welcome Medicare patients.

"I became a physician because I wanted to make a difference in people's lives," says Dr. MacDonell. "As my practice grows, I'm finding that I have less time to spend with my patients and that's not the way I want to practice medicine. My MD will provide the financial stability necessary to offer my patients the time and attention they expect."

My MD, currently known as Bend Internal Medicine, will officially launch in January 2007 and is located at 339 SW Century Drive, #103 Bend, OR 97702. My MD membership is open to adults over the age of 18 for an annual fee of \$2,500 per year. Patients may elect to pay annually or monthly through electronic debit. For more information call 541-322-6869, or visit www.mymdbend.com.

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