



PITTSBURGH, March 23, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- With spring allergy season upon us, UPMC Health Plan recently launched the new smartphone-enabled UPMC AnywhereCare, an easy-to-use platform that allows patients to receive high-quality care from emergency room professionals 24 hours a day and with reduced copays – all from the comfort of their own home or office. Using the video camera on a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer, patients age three and older with a variety of non-emergency symptoms ranging from sore throats and upper respiratory illnesses to back pain and seasonal allergies, can be seen face-to-face by a health care professional who will assess the symptoms and recommend a personal treatment plan, just like a traditional in-office visit.

But unlike most doctor's offices, AnywhereCare is available anytime, anywhere, with health care professionals always on call. And the service is provided without the typical time needed to schedule a health care appointment or the additional hassles of

traffic or parking.

"UPMC members and patients now have access to a UPMC physician, 24 hours a day, seven days a week through their computer or mobile device," said Kim Jacobs, vice president of consumer innovation at UPMC Health Plan. "Consumers are seeking convenient and high quality care, when and where they need it. Using AnywhereCare, patients can initiate a visit with a UPMC physician without traveling to an office or taking time off of work. AnywhereCare visits are low cost, typically about half the cost of a health care plan copay, and they allow patients within Pennsylvania to be cared for by UPMC clinicians in their homes, at work, or on the road."

"Patients couldn't be more pleased with this very convenient, personal and high-quality health care option available to them," said Dr. Bruce Rosenthal, medical director of AnywhereCare. "Patients receive care similar to the house calls physicians made years ago except that they don't have to make an appointment and the provider can see patients at any time. We recommend downloading the app and registering for AnywhereCare ahead of time and while you're feeling healthy, for added convenience the next time you need care."

Since the launch of the smartphone-enabled app in November 2016, satisfaction with AnywhereCare has ranked highly among consumers, with patients rating the overall experience 4.8 out of 5.

The average wait time for AnywhereCare services is just over six-and-a-half minutes, a much shorter wait time than a typical physician's visit and without the travel time.

Following each patient evaluation, if needed, health care professionals are able to send prescriptions directly to the patient's pharmacy so that treatment can begin immediately.

"The platform allows patients to use technology to be seen by doctors more quickly," said Jacobs. "AnywhereCare also helps to free the backlog in doctor's offices, urgent care facilities, and hospital emergency rooms and allows doctors to spend more time with patients who suffer from chronic conditions. Nearly 90 percent of patient issues are resolved during the AnywhereCare virtual visit and do not require follow-up care."

UPMC AnywhereCare is available for all patients within Pennsylvania, regardless of whether they are UPMC Health Plan members. The cost of an AnywhereCare visit is between \$10 and \$49, depending on insurance coverage. Medically-appropriate prescriptions, if needed, must be paid separately by the patient. If a prescription is needed, it may often be a low-cost or generic prescription.

The app is available for free download on smartphones or tablets via the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store by searching for "UPMC AnywhereCare." A desktop version is also available at <https://myupmc.upmc.com/anywhere-care/>.

About UPMC Insurance Services Division

The UPMC Insurance Services Division is owned by UPMC (University of Pittsburgh Medical Center) a world-renowned health care provider and insurer based in Pittsburgh, Pa. As a provider-led organization that is part of an integrated health care delivery system, the UPMC Insurance Services Division is committed to providing its members better health, more financial security and the peace of mind they deserve. The UPMC Insurance Services Division partners with UPMC and community network providers to produce a combination of knowledge and expertise that provides the highest quality care at the most affordable price. The UPMC Insurance Services Division – which includes UPMC Health Plan, UPMC WorkPartners, *LifeSolutions*, *UPMC for Life*, *UPMC for You*, *UPMC for Kids*, and Community Care Behavioral Health – offers a full range of group health insurance, Medicare, Special Needs, CHIP, Medical Assistance, behavioral health, employee assistance and workers' compensation products and services to more than 3 million members. For more information, visit www.upmchealthplan.com.

About UPMC

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