

The Ratings Guy Rates Health Plan Websites



In the quest for enhancing consumer sovereignty and improving online experiences, The Ratings Guy evaluates every sort of website imaginable. Categories include all conceivable aspects of daily living from travel and food (even a dedicated "spicy foods" channel) to shopping and pets. Health and wellness rounds out the offerings.

This week, The Ratings Guy published their Top 20 Health Plan websites. Let's learn a bit about The Ratings Guy before we launch into The List.

The mission of The Ratings Guy (which is actually a husband-and-wife tag team) is "to help consumers get to the great sites sooner." Their criteria focus on trust, quality, and experience for consumers online. Ratings are generated through a health care survey panel of 200,000 households that represent the top 190 major metropolitan markets in the U.S. Households were asked about their level of satisfaction with their own health plan's website. Plans that scored highest landed on the list.

For this process, 230 plans were studied of all types (e.g., HMO, PPO, POS, FFS, and other non-specified types). Many criteria were assessed including: ability to check claim status on-line, on-line physician directory, clinical quality ratings for physicians, patient satisfaction ratings for physicians, cost of services provided by physicians, clinical quality ratings for hospitals, patient satisfaction ratings for hospitals, cost of services provided by hospitals, treatment options for different conditions, and health communities to share information.

Behind The Ratings Guy are John Morrow and Katherine Harman Morrow. John was an SVP of HealthGrades. He was also part of HCIA (now, Solucient), so he knows a lot about health care (and, apparently, has a keen interest in spicy foods). Katherine essentially lives and organizes life for herself and her family on the Web, having lived internationally for many years.

Now that you understand a bit about The Ratings Guy, it's time to unveil their Top 20 Health Plan Websites. They are (drumroll, please):

[Anthem BC/BS New Hampshire](#)

[AV-Med Health Plan](#)

[Bluegrass Family Health Plan](#)

[California Foundation for Medical Care](#)
[Deseret Healthcare](#)
[Geisinger Health Plan](#)
[Group Health Cooperative](#)
[Health Alliance Plan of Michigan](#)
[Healthcare Management Administrators](#)
[Health First Health Plans Inc.](#)
[Kaiser Foundation](#)
[KPS Health Plans](#)
[Mayo Management Foundation](#)
[MESSA](#)
[MetroPlus Health Plan](#)
[Motion Picture Industry](#)
[OSF Health Plans](#)
[UCare Minnesota](#)
[Unity Health Insurance](#)
[Wisconsin Education Association](#)

While there are a few of the usual (high-quality) suspects known for IT expertise, such as Kaiser, Anthem and Mayo, there are a few surprises. Check out the smaller plans like Unity Health, serving greater Madison, Wisconsin. It goes to show that size doesn't matter when developing a consumer-focused website. Focus on customers does.

Health Populi's Hot Points: We'll be seeing lots more health ratings "experts" emerge from outside of health care, a sign that we're well into the New Retail Health world. They will use expertise gained and customer-friendly criteria developed in giving praise to Target, Costco, Four Seasons hotels, and ING Direct as lenses over consumers' experiences with health system touch points. Health care seller, beware: the health report card markers are a'comin'....and consumers will consider some of them as trusted intermediaries.
