



News Release

For immediate release

## **HealthyEmail™ Launches, Providing Free Tools and Software to Address Problem of Email in the Healthcare Industry**

*Group plans Capitol Hill event and nationwide effort to demonstrate practicality of secure email in the healthcare industry*

DALLAS – Feb. 18, 2003 – HealthyEmail™ a non-profit organization created to maximize the potential of email use in the healthcare industry, announced its launch this morning. The organization is addressing the increasing problems involving physicians' email communications with patients, hospitals, insurers and other doctors, particularly where sensitive patient information is involved.

As part of this initiative, HealthyEmail announced that it is providing two-year licenses of an award-winning email encryption program, ZixMail™, and other e-messaging educational tools free of charge and without obligation to all physicians in the United States and their office staffs. Any doctor in the U.S. can go to [www.healthyemail.org](http://www.healthyemail.org) and download guidelines, educational materials and policies established by HealthyEmail, as well as the encryption software, for themselves and two other people in their office.

As a follow-up to the launch, HealthyEmail will stage an event on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., February 27 for members of Congress, their staffs, and key executives in the healthcare industry. The demonstration will show how practical the use of secure email is in the healthcare industry and how the introduction of the technology will make email safer for patients and doctors. Plans are also in development whereby HealthyEmail will be donating computers to facilities in several communities nationwide in early Spring 2003. The purpose of the donation will be to increase connectivity between physicians and their patients using the HealthyEmail guidelines, secure messaging software and the messaging portal.

HealthyEmail is guided by a multi-disciplinary Advisory Council, comprised of experts from every aspect of the medical industry – leading physicians, risk management and regulatory experts. A complete list of the Advisory Council is available on the organization's Web site. HealthyEmail is bringing physicians, payors, hospitals, pharmacies, manufacturers and other healthcare organizations together to develop best-in-class guidelines regarding email communications for adoption by the healthcare industry.

-more-

“HealthyEmail’s formation comes at a fortuitous time for the healthcare industry,” said Stacy Smith, HealthyEmail executive coordinator. “There’s a critical mass that’s built up to drive the adoption of email as an every day tool in healthcare. Patient expectations, organization-specific solutions, state and federal regulations, and available technology on this point have all intersected in a way that cries out for a program like HealthyEmail.”

Ms. Smith cited recent studies that show that patients want to be able to communicate with their doctors through email, such as a Harris Interactive study wherein 90 percent of people currently online said they would like this option, and that their choice of doctors in the future could be influenced by whether or not they could communicate with a doctor via email. “HealthyEmail makes it possible for physicians to securely send private information to their patients, insurers, hospitals or anyone else. It also allows patients or others to whom they disclose their email address communicate with them.”

“Currently, half the population in the United States uses email, and yet only 15 percent of physicians use email regularly to communicate with their patients,” said Advisory Council member Dr. Daniel Sands, clinical director of electronic patient records and communication, CareGroup Healthcare System and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; as well as an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. “Obviously we need more of this technology in healthcare, not less; and it’s important that any way we can get this technology out there, we should. Patients follow our instructions better if they have them in writing in an email communication. They can get more information from us and they can review it later. When they walk out of the office or they hang up the telephone, they forget half of what we tell them.”

Another catalyst for the HealthyEmail initiative stems from state and federal regulations, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), which requires physicians to safeguard sensitive health information sent via electronic networks, which includes email, by April 2003. In addition, the ever-increasing problem of conflicting policies, procedures and incompatible technologies for secure email communications are adding additional costs and inefficiencies throughout the industry. HealthyEmail aims to solve these problems by providing guidelines, software and infrastructure to the healthcare industry.

The potential benefits of email adoption by healthcare practitioners are even greater in rural settings.

-more-

“In rural healthcare, patients sometimes have to travel great distances to see their doctor,” said Advisory Council member Dr. Joseph Scherger, Florida State University College of Medicine. “So, email allows for questions to be answered and information to be shared without that difficult travel. Another dimension is that a rural doctor can communicate with the specialist in the city by email. The doctor-to-doctor secure communication is another powerful part of this tool.”

Noting the changing consumer landscape, Dr. Scherger added, “I believe that if healthcare practices are not offering an email option, they will not be attractive to an increasing number of patients. Having secure email and the ability to communicate at the patient’s convenience is going to be critically important. It’s like a bank not having an ATM machine or online banking – what would happen to that bank? I see the same for healthcare if it doesn’t adopt these new tools.”

Once the encryption program is downloaded, physicians and their staffs can communicate securely with patients, other providers and payors even if the people they are emailing do not have secure email capabilities. “The software doesn’t replace the user’s existing email program, but instead adds the secure capabilities to the existing email program in a seamless fashion,” said Advisory Council member Daniel Nutkis, a vice president with Zix Corporation. “Patients can also avail themselves of the HealthyEmail service once their doctor registers. People who want to communicate with their physician’s office can register on the HealthyEmail Web site to have one central messaging portal to communicate with all of their health professionals, provided they are registered in the HealthyEmail program.”

Patients should contact their caregiver to determine if they are registered and for details on the HealthyEmail program.

The HealthyEmail program will provide resources that health professionals may use to educate themselves, their patients and partners about the benefits of email, including guidelines, policies, patient pamphlets and more, as established by the HealthyEmail initiative. As the program evolves, more and more educational materials and policies will appear on the Web site for interested members of the healthcare industry. The initiative also anticipates studying related subject matter such as reimbursement of physician/patient consultation via email and integration of email and the patient Electronic Medical

-more-

Record. These findings and others will help determine what additional material and services should be provided through the initiative. HealthyEmail has also established a "Friends of HealthyEmail" for individuals and organizations interested in helping to promote the initiative and adoption of its policies, patient educational material and the secure email application. For more information on the program, contact HealthyEmail at 866-251-4949.

The HealthyEmail Program is supported by two million licenses of the award-winning desktop email encryption software ZixMail™ and the ZixPort™ service for the HealthyEmail Message Center™, provided at no cost by Zix Corporation.

### **About HealthyEmail**

HealthyEmail, Inc. is a Dallas-based non-profit organization created to maximize the potential of email use in the healthcare industry. The organization is addressing the increasing problems involving physicians' email communications with patients, hospitals, insurers and other doctors, particularly where sensitive patient information is involved. The organization is guided by a multi-disciplinary Advisory Council, comprised of experts from every aspect of the healthcare industry – leading physicians, risk management and regulatory experts. For more information, go to [www.healthyemail.org](http://www.healthyemail.org).

###

*NOTE TO EDITORS: For reference, the video news release on this announcement can be accessed at [http://www.prnewswire.com/broadcast/10438/10438\\_press.html](http://www.prnewswire.com/broadcast/10438/10438_press.html).*

### **Contacts:**

Mike Breslin  
Ketchum (for HealthyEmail)  
[mike.breslin@ketchum.com](mailto:mike.breslin@ketchum.com)  
(214) 259-3438