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New Network Allows Patient Choice of Any U.S. Pharmacy for e-Prescribing
Weno Exchange LLC obtains provisional patent for new method of routing electronic prescriptions

AUSTIN, TEXAS (July 3, 2012) Weno Exchange LLC, a women-owned start-up, announced the company has obtained a provisional patent from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for their method of routing electronic prescriptions to non-participating pharmacy software systems.

As a result, Weno Exchange (WEX) becomes the first, and *only*, e-prescribing network that enables electronic health record (EHR) vendors to use the WEX e-prescribing network as a switch to route e-prescriptions (eRx) to *any* U.S. pharmacy their patients choose, rather than only to pharmacies within a network.

The method allows EHR vendors to meet the government's "meaningful use" criterion for the eRx module by using traditional switch eRx routing when going to a participating pharmacy, and a default communicator, a secure clinical messaging system, when it is being sent to a non-participating pharmacy. The method also provides an additional benefit of secure online two-way communications between pharmacies and clinics.

WEX uses its own proprietary software for the traditional switch to participating network pharmacies, but uses Weno Healthcare's Weno Mail for the clinical messaging system to non-participating pharmacies. The advantages of using Weno Mail are threefold: the system is free to the users; it meets HIPAA/HITECH privacy and security requirements; and it scales and serves all healthcare provider types and patients for care coordination across the nation.

Prior to WEX's entry into the e-prescribing marketplace, patients were limited to selecting pharmacies whose pharmacy systems participated in the Surescripts e-prescribing network, creating a stronghold on the eRx network market that severely restricted innovation and price competition.

In Spring 2008, the federal government determined e-prescribing to be a more accurate and safer method for patient care, and announced its final rules for e-prescribing. Shortly thereafter, the government rolled out a program of financial incentives and penalties to coax prescribers toward eRx adoption. Naturally, there was a surge in e-prescriptions, rising from 68 million in 2008 to 570 million in 2011.

However, immediately after the federal government's announcement of the new eRx rules and incentive plans, the two large e-prescribing networks in existence at the time, Surescripts and RxHub, merged to form a single entity; Surescripts. That merger essentially placed a monopoly on the e-prescribing network market from 2008 until WEX's appearance on the scene this year.

“This provisionally-patented method paves the way for EHRs to use an alternative switch to route e-prescriptions,” stated Tina Goodman, CEO of Weno Exchange LLC. “Previous eRx network competitors could not get off the ground because they simply could not match the large pharmacy network held by the one company dominating the market. Most EHRs know this, of course, so inevitably their first question to us is ‘how many pharmacies does the WEX eRX network have?’ I really enjoy answering that question with ‘*All* of them -- thanks to our provisionally-patented method!’”

Goodman sees few drawbacks to the new method. “Non-participating pharmacies could refuse to fetch the e-Prescription on the free clinical messaging system,” she says. “But doing so would put them at risk of sending a very negative message to the patient who selected their pharmacy. Clinics, too, can easily see what e-Prescription messages have been handled and those that were ignored. We believe patients, and the healthcare providers who care for them, will embrace the freedom of choice, competitive pricing and innovative technology that WEX offers as the new e-Prescription network in a marketplace formerly devoid of competition. We are also encouraged because the health IT industry has welcomed us with open arms.”

About Weno Exchange LLC (WEX)

Weno Exchange LLC (WEX) is an e-Prescribing network based in Austin, Texas that specializes in routing electronic prescription (eRx) and care coordination standardized messages between trading partners. When established in 2011, WEX was hailed as an innovative competitor in an otherwise dominated e-prescribing network market. WEX utilizes its new patent-pending method, which provides the first and only service enabling electronic prescriptions to be sent to any pharmacy nationwide, regardless of participation in an e-prescribing network. In addition, WEX offers health IT trading partners a simplified process toward eRx certification. WEX also boasts the industry’s highest EHR incentive revenues and pharmacy systems’ lowest transaction fees. WEX’s Screen Assurance program provides data sharing assurance and reporting never before available to health plans and drug manufacturers. For more information, go to www.wenoexchange.com