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Healthwise Wins the National Grand ClearMark Award from the Center for Plain Language
*One of 160 nominations across industries,
the Healthwise virtual coaching program takes nation's top honor.*

BOISE, Idaho, July 6, 2010—Accurate and up-to-date health information has little value to consumers if they can't understand it. Healthwise, the nonprofit organization that produces user-friendly health information, has won a national plain language award for an interactive program that makes it easy to learn about how to deal with low back pain.

The Healthwise® Information Therapy (Ix®) Conversation on Dealing With Low Back Pain is the winner of the Original Document: Nonprofit category as well and is the overall grand prize winner. This particular Healthwise Ix Conversation was one of 160 nominations considered from industries spanning health care, government, and energy, among others.



"This was a well done interactive video with a message that provided a good explanation of the problem, an easy flow of information, and great analogies," said Annetta Cheek, chair of the Center for Plain Language.

The Healthwise Ix Conversation is one of 13 multimedia “virtual coaching conversations” that Healthwise has created. These short, interactive programs make it easy for people to learn about complex health issues (Beta Blockers to Prevent Another Heart Attack, for example) and to change their behavior (Quitting Smoking, for example).

Through an engaging use of voice, animation, and storytelling using plain language, each Healthwise Ix Conversation guides the person through a series of questions and provides a custom experience based on his or her answers. For example, the Conversation on Dealing With Low Back Pain uses the animated characters Time, Medicine, and Activity to engage the person and emphasize key points. The Conversation guides and motivates the person to identify behaviors they can change and commit to an action plan.

Take a few minutes to learn more about the Conversation on Dealing With Low Back Pain now: www.healthwise.org/clearmark. Healthwise Conversations are available through organizations that license the product, including Alere, Blue Cross of Idaho, Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare, Health Dialog, Keas, St. Luke's Health System (Idaho), and The Vitality Group.

“Plain language is mission-critical for Healthwise, so our training is ongoing for content developers of all kinds, from writers to editors to multimedia producers to medical reviewers,” said Senior Vice President Karen Baker. “We have developed a dynamic plain language glossary, and we distribute a weekly plain language newsletter to staff as part of our effort to keep health literacy efforts top of mind for everyone involved in product development.”

Healthwise has invested in a company-wide focus on plain language for many years. All Healthwise products are developed with language that consumers can easily understand and use to help them take an active role in their care.

“We are pleased to see our efforts recognized with this award from the Center for Plain Language,” said Baker. “Of course, the true beneficiaries are health care consumers.”

Judges for the ClearMark Awards consisted of a national panel of plain language experts. The group included professors, authors, officials from several government agencies, and experts in design, as well as senior executives from communications consulting firms.

About Healthwise

Healthwise is a nonprofit organization with a mission to help people make better health decisions. More than 112 million times a year, people turn to Healthwise information to learn how to do more for themselves, ask for the care they need, and say “no” to the care that’s not right for them. Healthwise partners with health plans, hospitals, disease management companies, and health Web sites to provide up-to-date, evidence-based information to the people they serve. To learn more about the Healthwise Information Therapy (Ix[®]) Solution, visit www.healthwise.org or call 1.800.706.9646.

About the Center for Plain Language

The Center for Plain Language wants government and business documents to be clear and understandable. The Center is a nonprofit organization, [501(c)(3)] located in the Washington, DC, USA, area. We support those who use plain language, train those who should use plain language, and urge people to demand plain language in all the documents they receive, read, and use. Visit us at www.centerforplainlanguage.org