



Getting a Second Opinion Long Distance

By Aine Cryts

Whether a patient finds herself in St Louis, Mo, Ogunquit, Me, or even, Edinburgh, Scotland, she can seek a second opinion from **SecondOpinions.com**. The site, the creation of **Michael Yuz, MD, MBA, founder and CEO, has been up and running since May 2013.**

As part of USARAD.com, a subspecialty radiology and teleradiology company, the goal of SecondOpinions.com, says Yuz, is to deliver a web-based service that connects patients all around the world with top American board-certified physician experts, including radiologists—and it does so in a way that's affordable without sacrificing the quality of the service.

When patients are looking for a second opinion from a SecondOpinions.com radiologist, their images are uploaded to the secure site. Those images arrive at SecondOpinions.com's server, at which time an order is generated and the images are sent to the appropriate radiologist for a diagnostic reading. Once the radiologist sees the images and interprets them, the report is available immediately. The patient receives a notification with a secure link to the report and everything is HIPAA-compliant, says Yuz.

He notes that almost every patient has their images on disk—and those images can be read by SecondOpinions.com's radiologists, regardless of the PACS system where they were generated because the software used by his radiologists recognizes DICOM data.

When a patient wants a second opinion with a physician who is not a radiologist, it works a little differently, says Yuz. Patients visit the site, enter a questionnaire, then they can upload medical records, imaging studies, laboratory results, dermatology results, and more. Patients can then choose the times when they would like to speak with a physician and the patient is then connected with the physician for a consult by phone or video chat, says Yuz.

In terms of what a patient pays for the services provided, the cost varies. For example, the interpretation of an MRI is more expensive than other exams. Yuz notes that the price a patient pays also depends on the specialty of the physicians. While patients can pay for individual consults by credit card, SecondOpinion.com, which also offers memberships for individuals, families, and companies, has the ability to bill insurance companies.

“Our service is very affordable and is available 24/7, and we provide very quick service,” said Yuz, who notes that SecondOpinions.com is JCAHO-accredited. In a time when credit and identity fraud is on the minds of many consumers, Yuz reiterates that SecondOpinions.com is secure and HIPAA-compliant. He notes that patients are required to authorize that the images and medical records they upload are their own images—and they have to confirm this on many occasions on the site. “We’re doing everything we can, just like in teleradiology, which is the backbone of USARAD.com,” said Yuz.

Of particular interest to US patients, all of SecondOpinions.com’s physicians are board certified and most are fellowship trained, according to Yuz, who notes that, for international patients, second opinions are considered—technically—not a “practice of medicine.” In fact, he says, many countries allow American doctors without a formal license to practice, as is the case in the Middle East.

Also in terms of geography, Yuz notes that most of the traffic that comes to SecondOpinions.com is from the United States and Canada, which is a very important market for his business. He caters to both English-speaking and non-English speaking countries—in particular, his native Russia— and has partnered with several international distributors that have automatic translation services set up for those who use SecondOpinions.com’s services.

“Through the growth of the Internet, there’s an opportunity to reach out to billions of people [with SecondOpinions.com],” said Yuz. “Everybody loves American doctors, who are the best trained and specialized, so it’s important that we reach out globally.”