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**Topin & Associates Survey Shows a Dramatic Shift
in the Physician-Patient Conversation**

CHICAGO, Ill., March 13, 2013 — Today's patients are more informed, more proactive, and more in control than ever, which has made the doctor-patient conversation challenging for physicians, according to results of a research study conducted by [Topin & Associates](http://topin.com) (topin.com). The Clipboard ConversationTM study reveals that because the age-old doctor-patient relationship is changing dramatically, the marketing of health care brands needs to change as well.

"Specialists find themselves answering more questions, countering misleading information patients find online, and even justifying their treatment recommendations," says Al Topin, president of Topin & Associates.

The exam room conversation between a doctor and a patient—where everything from initial symptoms to therapy and compliance is discussed—is a vital part of the treatment process. The difference is that now the patient is no longer passively listening. Topin's study shows today's patients are more opinionated and demanding of their physician's time.

"The current physician practice is just not set up to handle the extra time these patients demand," notes Topin. "Physicians in our study admit they need help in strengthening the bond they have with their patients and improving the doctor-patient conversation. Pharma may be well positioned to provide that help."

The Clipboard ConversationTM study (named after those whom physicians described as "clipboard patients" who come armed with clipboards full of information) combined insights from an advisory panel with a quantitative study issued to patients. The advisory panel comprises specialty physicians, nurse practitioners, and patients. The panel provided unique insights into the exam room and how patients prepare for their health care visits. Topin & Associates then initiated a quantitative study of patients ages 50 to 73—specifically the Baby Boomer generation—to compare the panel's insights with patient expectations.



The Clipboard Conversation™ study revealed a number of findings useful to brand marketers:

- Physicians feel unequipped to provide the level of information, time, and attention patients need today.
- Patients want physicians to spend more time with them and feel negatively when they are not able to get more time.
- Patients are comfortable bringing disease or drug information they've found online to their doctor appointments.
- Patients' trust in physicians is no longer a given; they are not compelled to follow physician advice.

Topin & Associates compiled the insights and data into a 60-minute presentation, which identifies and characterizes the changing nature of physician-patient relationships; the impact of that change on pharma brands; and what brand teams can do to support the needs of their providers. For more information about the Clipboard Conversation™ study, visit clipboardconversation.com.

About Topin & Associates

Topin & Associates is a full-service health care marketing communications agency based in Chicago. Founded in 1982, the agency offers strategic planning, global branding and positioning, creative development, and tactical implementation to help clients achieve their business objectives. Topin & Associates applies the Pepper Logic™ approach — a set of guiding principles unique to the agency — to deliver product, service, and brand campaigns with impact. To learn more about the agency's Pepper Logic™ process or the Clipboard Conversation™ presentation, go to topin.com or call Al Topin at **312-645-0100**.

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