



## National Health Council

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### **National Health Council & WebMD Take Social Networking for Patients to New Levels**

*New WebMD Health Exchange to Give People with Chronic Conditions a  
Powerful Voice in the Arena of Health and Wellness*

(March 9, 2010 – Washington, DC) The National Health Council (NHC) today announced the launch of a new online community with a unique digital access, distribution, and multimedia approach to serve the more than 133 million Americans living with chronic diseases and disabilities.

The WebMD Chronic Disease and Disability Exchange is a social networking capability within the WebMD Health Network of more than 60 million health-informed patients and consumers. The Exchange is designed to bring trusted experts together with the WebMD audience to freely share information in both public forums and private, invitation-only settings.

WebMD turned to the NHC in search of expanding the concept of “health experts” beyond the medical community and medical topics. The NHC brings to the Exchange patient advocates and individuals who deal with the full spectrum of issues around living with a chronic condition, including the social, emotional, financial, and legal aspects that effect one’s life.

The newly-designated WebMD Expert for the Exchange is nationally recognized patient advocate Richard M. Cohen, a former news anchor, *New York Times* bestselling author, and public speaker on the doctor-patient relationship. He is also a cancer survivor living with multiple sclerosis. The universal and moving topics Cohen will delve into include self esteem, intimacy, career, and family.

Premiering in the Exchange will be a videocast and radiocast of Cohen interviewing patients featured in his most recent book, *Strong at the Broken Places*, as well as other people living with chronic conditions.

“Our intent is to bring the highest quality broadcast programming to the patient community and to address in a setting of their peers the real and sensitive topics faced by so many people living with a chronic disease or disability,” explained Marc Boutin, NHC executive vice president and chief operating officer. “Most importantly we want to continue to send the message to people with chronic conditions that you are not alone when facing a life-changing disease or disability. In all that the NHC does, we are focused on Putting Patients First<sup>®</sup> and the WebMD Chronic Disease and Disability Exchange will give people with chronic conditions a trusted, credible, and safe setting to share their concerns, their successes, and their hopes, throughout the digital environment.”

The NHC is working with its membership of leading patient advocacy organizations to broaden the expert voice on the WebMD Health Exchange in order to reach a broad range of patients and their family caregivers. The organizations will be able to share their deep expertise and national and local resources on issues that may not be addressed in the typical medical interaction.

*To access the Chronic Disease and Disability Exchange and the video and radiocasts (starting in April), go to <http://exchanges.webmd.com/chronic-disease-and-disability-exchange>. To learn more about National Health Council and its Campaign to Put Patients First, visit [www.nhcouncil.org](http://www.nhcouncil.org).*

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