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PRESS RELEASE

JACK SHAPIRO:

**Don't Complain About Prescription Costs
If You Haven't Shopped Around**

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April 13, 2004

Rising costs of prescription drugs are a major concern to Americans and a hot political issue this year, according to Jack Shapiro, healthcare marketing consultant, futurist, broadcast journalist and public speaker. Unfortunately, too many Americans do not "shop around" for the lowest prices available.

"VIAGRA and similar drugs for erectile dysfunction are terrific examples of what you can save by shopping around," Shapiro reports. Erectile dysfunction drugs are often not reimbursed by health insurers and patients must pay for all or most of this cost out-of-pocket.

Shapiro notes: "In one of our studies, buying VIAGRA in-store was about 10% more expensive than buying it on-line from the same chains. But you have to shop very carefully: on-line prices between chains could vary by as much as 15%; in-store prices between chains could vary by as much as 18% in a given geographic area. Here's the most stunning difference: the greatest price disparity for the same quantity and same strength of VIAGRA was 29% higher when you compared the least expensive chain's on-line price to the most expensive chain's in-store price."

"The higher the quantity of the same strength, the more you could save on-line with some services," Shapiro remarks. "Pharmacists and physicians may differ on this point," Shapiro comments, "but you might save as much as 50% if you can get a 100 mg. tablet of VIAGRA and just cut it in half if you really only need 50 milligrams."

"It's not just VIAGRA," Shapiro comments. "Similar or even greater stunning differences exist with other drugs," he notes. This was especially true with generic vs. brand alternatives and chains vs. independent pharmacies. To find out more about what Jack Shapiro has learned, please contact:

jack@jackshapiro.com

Also, be sure to listen to Jack this Friday as he will be discussing "The Crisis of the Underinsured" with CBS MarketWatch Senior Columnist, Chuck Jaffe, on Friday, April 16, 2004 from 11:15 a.m. until 11:40 a.m. on Chuck's show, "MoneyLife" on WBIX,

Boston (1060 AM). The show can also be heard on the internet (check the web site for details: www.WBIX.COM).

Millions of Americans may not realize that when it comes to health insurance, they are actually undersinsured: they are paying higher premiums, deductibles, and co-pays and receiving less coverage.

In addition to 44 million Americans without any type of health insurance, at least 70 million others are underinsured. Examples would include: little or no pharmaceutical coverage; surgical procedures, anesthesia, and lab services not covered by insurance; children and spouses actually excluded from an employee's healthcare benefits; employees or dependents excluded due to a pre-existing condition and higher premiums deductibles and co-pays for everything.

The principal reason for this problem is the rising cost of healthcare causing employers to provide less coverage as well as shift as much of the cost of healthcare to employees as possible. As recently as 1980 there was less than a 50% chance than an employee with a family would be required to pay anything for health insurance coverage. But currently, with annual costs of health insurance for a family at approximately \$7,000 per year, more than 80% of employees with families pay a share of insurance costs and that contribution is rising every year. Tremendous variations exist from state-to-state: while employees pay approximately 25% of health insurance costs nationwide, this ranges from less than 20% in Michigan and New York to more than 30% in Louisiana and New Mexico.

ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW, SPEAKING APPEARANCE, OR AN ARTICLE FROM JACK SHAPIRO ON THESE TOPICS:

- . Who are the underinsured?
- . What's driving up the cost of healthcare?
- . What can people do to save on healthcare costs?
- . How important is healthcare as an issue in the next election?
- . Why is ours the "Healthcare Economy?"
- . What's the future for employer provided healthcare?
- . Tomorrow's breakthroughs in biotechnology and surgery: will we be able to afford them?
- . Why are so many people turning to "alternative" healthcare?

THIS MAN KNOWS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE

Jack M. Shapiro is a healthcare marketing consultant, futurist, broadcast journalist and public speaker. He includes among his clients major pharmaceutical and insurance companies, advertising agencies, hospitals and manufacturers of medical equipment supplies and devices. Often quoted in the healthcare industry, general business, and lay publications, Jack has been a frequent guest on national television (ABC, NBC, MSNBC, CNBC, FOX, PBS and abroad on BBC and ITN) and radio as a commentator on healthcare trends and politics in the United States and overseas.

From 1997-1999, he was the host of “MEDI-POLITICS,” a nationally-syndicated radio show focusing on the politics and future of healthcare as well as key legal and ethical issues. The show reached more than 40 markets in 26 states and an audience of 31 million people.

Jack has spent more than 35 years in the healthcare field, both in the U.S. and abroad. Before forming his successful research and consulting company, he held high-level management positions in marketing and market research with healthcare giants such as Wyeth and Pfizer.

He is currently writing a book about the future of American healthcare based on his long experience in the healthcare industry, in-depth interviews with leading experts who appeared on his radio show as well as on-going poll results generated by his market research company.