

# Predicting the Internet Future

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A recently released report written for the California HealthCare Foundation, *Health e-People: The Online Consumer Experience*, is the second five-year forecast to map the landscape of Internet healthcare. The recent forecast more specifically maps one aspect of Internet healthcare by looking at a very important constituency: consumers.

After describing some of the motivations and behaviors of consumers searching for health information and services online, the report charts market opportunities and projects the progression of health-related products and services online. The report divides online health consumers into three categories: consumers who are well, those who are newly diagnosed with an illness, and those who are chronically ill and their caregivers. The report notes that generally, individuals in each category are motivated by their health status to behave in a particular way online.

The report also forecasts growth in the following four general categories of Internet healthcare products and services:

- **content**: information and services online
- **community**: online support groups and communications networks
- **commerce**: health-related goods and services for purchase
- **care**: healthcare treatment via the Internet

Finally, the report describes the market opportunities created by consumer demand for information and services on the Internet and their progression online. For the complete report, go to <http://ehealth.chcf.org/index.cfm>.

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**Source:** *Journal of AHIMA* 72:2 (February 2001), p.19.

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