



Contacts:

Leigh Ann McDonald Woodruff
 (336) 253-3203 leighann@twobpr.com
 Laura Burrows
 (336) 575-6757 laura@twobpr.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DrScore Releases 2009 Annual Report Card on Patient Satisfaction:
 Finds Younger Patients Less Tolerant of Long Waits
*Patients 65 and older are more forgiving when they wait longer to see the doctor.***

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (Feb. 1, 2010) – Sitting in a doctor’s waiting room for long periods of time always decreases patient satisfaction, but seniors are far more tolerant of the long waits than any other age group, according to DrScore.com’s 2009 Annual Report Card on Patient Satisfaction. The report also finds that patient satisfaction overall remains high, with almost 60 percent of doctor ratings at a 10 and the average for all physician ratings at a 7.4, a slight increase from 2008.

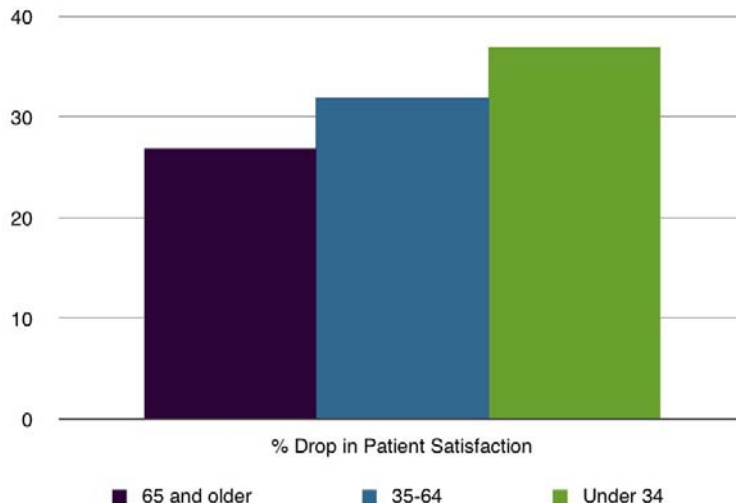
The Annual Report Card is based on the results of more than 64,000 ratings by patients who completed a [patient satisfaction online survey](#) to rate their physicians at DrScore.com during 2009. As in years past, the report card emphasized the importance of wait time on patient satisfaction.

“Younger patients place a greater emphasis on waiting time with regards to being satisfied with their doctor visit, while those over 65 are more forgiving,” says patient satisfaction expert [Steve Feldman, M.D.](#), the founder of the online patient satisfaction survey site DrScore.com. “When we compare average satisfaction ratings for patients who have

waited for the doctor 15 minutes or less to patients who have waited an hour or longer, we find that the longer wait times impact patient satisfaction far more for younger patients (34 and under) than those 65 and older.”

Patients ages 65 and older experienced a 27 percent drop in patient satisfaction when their wait times are longer

Drop in Patient Satisfaction When Wait Times are Longer than One Hour vs. 15 Minutes or Less



than an hour, with their satisfaction rating dropping from an average of 8.4 to 6.1, according to the 2009 Report Card. In contrast, patient satisfaction ratings for those 34 and younger plummeted more than 37 percent from 8.2 to 5.1.

- Ages 65 and over experienced a 27 percent drop (8.4 to 6.1)
- Ages 35 to 64 had a 32 percent drop (8.2 to 5.6)
- Ages 34 and under experienced a 37 percent drop (8.2 to 5.2)

“With this year’s Report Card, we have confirmed once again that there are two issues that can destroy patient satisfaction: long waits to see the doctor or a visit with the doctor that is too short,” Dr. Feldman says. “And if patients experience the two together, the result is extremely negative, with satisfaction ratings close to zero. The good news is that only 3 percent of patients experienced that combination of factors.”

If patients wait for a long time in the waiting room, they may feel that the physician is uncaring, according to Dr. Feldman. “But the reality of the situation may be that the doctor is very caring and had a couple of patients earlier in the day who required special attention. The most important thing is for doctors to explain the reasons for the delay and not make that kind of behavior a habit.”

Dr. Feldman points out that there are steps patients can take to make waiting for the doctor less stressful:

- Try to make the appointment when you have a flexible schedule.
- Try to get an appointment at the beginning of the day or the first one after lunch. “Usually the first appointments of the day are on time because there are no unexpected delays from other patients,” Dr. Feldman explains.
- Bring plenty of reading material or catch up on e-mail via your smartphone.
- If you find that you are routinely waiting for long periods of time in your physician’s office, discuss it politely with your doctor before or after your visit. “It may be that the office staff is not properly calculating the average time it takes to see a patient, thus overscheduling the doctor’s day,” Dr. Feldman explains. “Giving them this feedback is important.”

To provide the best care possible, physicians need patient feedback via balanced, validated, online patient surveys such as DrScore.com. “We doctors often think that great medical care is just about giving patients the right diagnosis and the right treatment,” Dr. Feldman says. “But a great medical experience is really about so much more than that, and many doctors are utilizing the high level of feedback through DrScore.com to actively improve their quality of care.”

###

About DrScore.com

Founded by Steve Feldman, M.D., DrScore.com is an interactive online survey site where patients can rate their physicians, as well as find a physician based on their service level preference. DrScore’s mission is to improve medical care by giving patients a forum for rating their physicians, and by giving doctors an affordable, objective, non-intrusive means of documenting the quality of care that they provide. For more information, visit www.drscore.com.