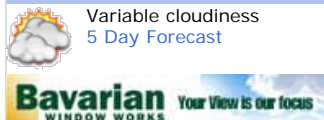


TODAY: H 29 / L 20
Variable cloudiness
5 Day Forecast



BAKING SUPPLIES, HEALTH PRODUCTS & MORE
845 WEBER ST. N., WATERLOO
519-888-7115

Country Bulk Inc.

CLICK HERE

The Record.com

Today's Paper

Thursday, July 15, 2010

My subscription | Order photos | Contact us | About us | Traffic

Search The Record | Search the Web **GO**

Advanced Search | Full Text Article Archive

Find a Local Business **GO**

Search Goldbook.ca

HOME | NEWS | SPORTS | BUSINESS | LIFE | ARTS | FAITH | OPINION | VIDEOS | CELEBRATIONS | OBITS | JOBS | AUTO | CLASSIFIED | RENTALS

Waterloo Region | Canada/World | Canada Wire | World Wire | Blogs | Facebook | Twitter | TV listings | Movies | Consumer Guides

Bus ads tout cross-border cures: U.S. firm lures patients south

July 14, 2010

BY JOHANNA WEIDNER, RECORD STAFF

WATERLOO REGION — Patients tired of waiting for knee surgery may find an alternative on the back of a bus.

Advertisements are appearing on Grand River Transit buses for a U.S. company called MediBid, which offers bids for medical services in the United States and overseas, including speedy knee-replacement surgery. Calling itself “the marketplace for medicine,” MediBid gives patients a platform to get cash-price quotes for services or surgeries.

“We give that immediate access,” said Lacey Clifton, marketing and communications director for MediBid. The Delaware-based company has offices across the U.S. and in Toronto.

Knee replacements were picked as the focus of the Ontario advertising campaign with the website replacemyknee.ca, she said, because that’s an issue that touches a lot of people.

“The waiting list for orthopedics is very long,” Clifton said. “We’re trying to help give them other options.”

For those coping with the pain and the expense of being away from work, the wait for knee surgery at an Ontario hospital can seem far too long. However, recent data shows this area has some of the shortest waiting lists for knee replacement surgery in the province, and well below the provincial target.

But some people want faster service, and MediBid offers just that.

“They would have immediate access. We don’t have a wait list,” Clifton said. “What we offer is the choice and access.”

The company opened to U.S. patients in January, and Canadian patients at the beginning of June, when an advertising campaign began in a small number of Ontario cities.



Melissa Tait/Record staff

An advertisement for an American medical services company is seen on the back of a Grand River Transit bus.

Email story

Print

Choose text size

Report typo or correction

More Stories

- Top court upholds Internet luring conviction
- Bus ads tout cross-border cures: U.S. ...
- Thefts from vehicles prompt familiar ...
- Ontario auto insurance rates to drop ...
- Ombudsman to look into complaints about ...
- Bones found in February remain mystery
- Motorcyclist crashes after hitting dog
- Police investigate attempted robbery ...
- Toronto police make arrest in cemetery ...
- Blundell to hang up his lederhosen

DailyWeb TV.com

Take It and Make It - Concord Food

Classified | Community | Daily Photo

your classifieds.ca

Photo of the Day

Place Your Classified Ad

- Births
- Jobs
- Real Estate

Real Estate

We dare you to compare insurance rates

Whccis.ca

flyerland.ca

Local money-saving flyers and coupons

save time, save money

Featured Businesses

Chicopee Ski and Summer Resort
Your Year-Round Sport & Outdoor Recreation Family Resort.

Heritage Pet & Garden Counter
Pet Foods & Supplies, Garden Supplies. Buy in Bulk & SAVE \$

ServiceMaster Clean
Our Business is Keeping Your Business Clean!

Radical Stitches

To get a bid, patients pay a membership fee. For one procedure request, patients pay \$25. Or there are packages for a certain number of requests over six or 12 months, with the most expensive at \$99 for 12 requests in a year.

Doctors and medical facilities pay fees to use the service, too.

People create a profile and post a request for care, such as a consultation, surgery, a new form of cancer therapy or even an annual checkup. Then the patient gets a list of practitioners, including their location and credentials, to pick from. The patient then asks certain doctors for a cash-price quote. When the patient accepts a bid, the rest is arranged between the two.

Potentially, a person could get knee surgery right away.

"Of course it's not right for everybody," Clifton said.

The average price for knee-replacement surgery in the United States is \$12,000, she said.

Payments are arranged between a patient and the doctor, and most likely are not eligible for government reimbursement.

Securing out-of-country funding from the provincial Ministry of Health is a rigid process, said spokesperson Andrew Morrison, and "it all hinges on prior approval."

Patients need to apply, usually through their doctor, before getting the services, and five criteria must be met for provincial funding.

Among the criteria: the service is not performed in Ontario or, if it is offered here, it must be needed more quickly to avoid death or significant irreversible tissue damage. The procedure needs to be done at a hospital or licensed health facility, it cannot be part of a trial or experimental study, and it must be accepted as medical practice in Ontario.

Wait times for knee-replacement surgery in Ontario are reasonably low and far better now than a few years ago. When the province started to focus on reducing medical wait times in 2007, Morrison said, the average wait for knee-replacement surgery was 321 days. This year the average wait is down to 176 days, just under six months and below the target of 182 deemed by doctors to be a reasonable period.

"We're doing well," Morrison said.

Locally, the wait times for knee surgery are even better. Grand River Hospital is among the best hospitals in the province when it comes to the shortest wait time for knee-replacement surgery. The Kitchener hospital's wait time was 77 days between March and May this year, compared to 106 for the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network.

"We're pretty pleased with the reduction in wait times here," said Sandra Hanmer, chief executive officer of the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network.

She said there may still be the perception the wait is long for knee surgery because only a few years ago it was much longer. Across the province, the wait has been cut by 255 days in the past decade. As part of the province's wait time strategy, current wait times for a host of medical services are posted on their website www.health.gov.on.ca.

Hanmer said people should have a choice about where to get medical care, but making sure services are available here within a reasonable time is their priority.

"Our focus will always be on trying to improve local access."

Of course, some people don't want to wait.

The Health Ministry doesn't track companies offering out-of-country service to Ontario residents, Morrison said, but they do pop up regularly. The province does have agreements with U.S. facilities for certain treatments where a lower high-volume price is negotiated, such as for a certain cancer treatment, diagnostic imaging, residential addiction treatment and bariatric surgery.

jweidner@therecord.com

Your Corporate Identity Specialists.

Dragonfly Chiropractic & Wellness Centre
Transform your life with Network Spinal Analysis! RMT, Orthotics, Nutrition & More.

Ponds & Patios
Malaysian Koi, Aquatic Plants, Pond Installations, Seasonal Maintenance & More

Matlow, Miller, Harris, Thrasher LLP
Strength, Experience, Dedication, Compassion, Trust & Results!

3 FREE + 0 HST
window upgrade and home improvement special

CLICK HERE



Beverly Hills
HOME IMPROVEMENTS
www.beverlyhillshome.com

Hamilton • Brant • Niagara • London
Halton • Waterloo-Wellington • GTA

Magazines

- Grand Magazine
- Rex Magazine
- Most Magazine

Consumer Shows

- Jewellery, Fashion & Accessories Show
- ArtWorks Show & Sale
- Total Woman Show
- Grand Lifestyle Show

33 27 8 6

Lottery Results

Daily Horoscopes

Local Singles

freedateconnection.com

> Advertisement <

BEVERLY TIRE & AUTO

Visit www.beverlytire.com
For a location near you!

DID YOU KNOW...

That in addition to being leading experts on tires and tire care, we also provide full mechanical services to help keep your vehicle running in top condition.

2009 CRATES
Dinned

READER'S CHOICE

Best Tire Shop
Best Tire Service

CLICK HERE

SPECIAL FEATURES		
This could be you contest	Situation critical	Readers' Select

		
Proud magazine	Technology Spotlight	Email coupon alerts
		
On the cutting edge	Extraordinary People	40 under 40
		
War Memories	Record Blogs	Job Board
		
TV Listings	Movie Listings	Community News
		

TheRecord.com

Site Specific

- [About Us](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Site Map](#)
- [Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Advertise With Us](#)
- [Become A Carrier](#)
- [My Subscription](#)
- [Work For Us](#)
- [Corporate Sales](#)

Local Info

- [LocalWork.ca](#)
- [LifeNews.ca](#)
- [GottaRent.com](#)
- [HomeFinder.ca](#)
- [Flyerland.ca](#)
- [Wheels.ca](#)

Regional Sites

- [BramptonGuardian.com](#)
- [DurhamRegion.com](#)
- [InsideHalton.com](#)
- [InsideToronto.com](#)
- [MyKawartha.com](#)
- [NiagaraThisWeek.com](#)
- [Simcoe.com](#)
- [YorkRegion.com](#)

Affiliates

- [InsuranceHotline.com](#)
- [Save.ca](#)
- [Workopolis.com](#)
- [Toronto.com](#)

Partners/Daily Newspapers

- [The Guelph Mercury](#)
- [The Hamilton Spectator](#)
- [The Toronto Star](#)
- [The Waterloo Region Record](#)
- [DailyWebTV.com](#)
- [MyHolidayHomeRental.com](#)
- [OurFaves.com](#)
- [Goldbook.ca](#)

