



Obamacare site gets a commercial double

HealthCare.com will only confuse consumers, activists fear

BY JASON MILLMAN

In just a few weeks, millions of people will be heading to the federal Web site HealthCare.gov to shop for medical insurance when a new open-enrollment period begins. If some of those people wind up by mistake at HealthCare.com instead, well, Jeff Smedsrud is fine with that.

Smedsrud is chief executive of HealthCare.com, which holds a seemingly invaluable piece of Internet real estate these days. And he is looking to make the most of it.

With enrollment in the individual health insurance market reopening Nov. 15, Smedsrud wants people to direct their browsers to HealthCare.com, where they can shop and compare health plans. HealthCare.com — which compares itself with the travel search site Kayak — is touting a choice of 93,000 plans from about 180 insurers across the country, with the opportunity for consumers to enroll online, over the phone or with a licensed agent or broker.

If that sounds a lot like the government's official portal for purchasing health care, that is pretty much the idea. And it does not look that different from HealthCare.gov. Stock photography of smiling people? Check. The promise to help someone find the right insurance plan? Yes.

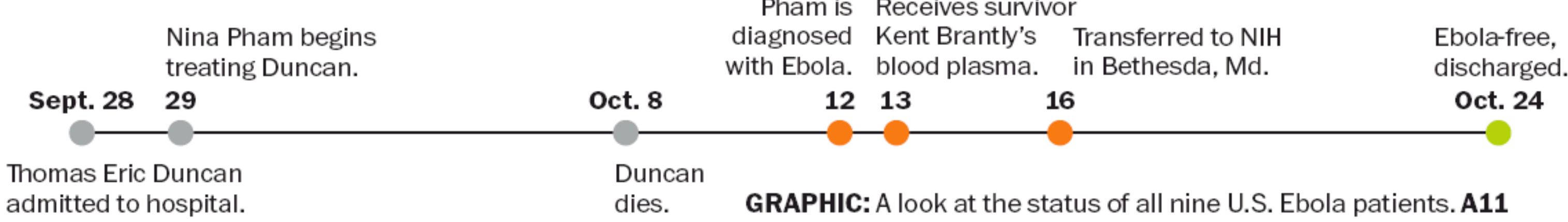
But health-care advocates say there is the potential for massive confusion among consumers trying to find the government's official site. Users who wind up there by mistake could miss out on subsidies that most would receive if they were shopping on HealthCare.gov. And like HealthCare.gov last year, the HealthCare.com site has kinks that it is still working out, including inaccurate information.

After last year's disastrous rollout of the HealthCare.gov site, the Obama administration is promising that this year's enrollment process will be much smoother for consumers, although officials also caution that it won't be perfect.

There are new challenges this year: Some premiums are expected to increase

HEALTHCARE.COM CONTINUED ON A4

THE PATH TO RECOVERY



Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, opens his arms to embrace Nina Pham after the Dallas nurse was declared Ebola-free and discharged from the National Institutes of Health's Clinical Center.

PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crisis rekindles concerns about Russian lab secrecy

BY JOBY WARRICK

She was an ordinary lab technician with an uncommonly dangerous assignment: drawing blood from Ebola-infected animals in a secret military laboratory. When she cut herself at work one day, she decided to keep quiet, fearing she'd be in trouble. Then the illness struck.

"By the time she turned to a doctor

for help, it was too late," one of her overseers, a former bioweapons scientist, said of the accident years afterward. The woman died quickly and was buried, according to one account, in a "sack filled with calcium hypochlorite," or powdered bleach.

The 1996 incident might have been forgotten except for the pathogen involved — a highly lethal strain of Ebola virus — and where the incident oc-

curred: inside a restricted Russian military lab that was once part of the Soviet Union's biological weapons program. Years ago, the same facility in the Moscow suburb of Sergiev Posad cultivated microbes for use as tools of war. Today, much of what goes on in the lab remains unknown.

The fatal lab accident and a similar one in 2004 offer a rare glimpse into a

SOVIET CONTINUED ON A12

Stricter rules on Ebola urged

21-DAY QUARANTINES IMPOSED IN N.Y., N.J.

After returning from Guinea, doctor was active in the area

BY BRADY DENNIS, LENA H. SUN AND MARK BERMAN

Craig Spencer crisscrossed New York City in the days after he returned from treating Ebola patients in West Africa — riding the subway, going for a three-mile run, grabbing coffee on the High Line, bowling in Brooklyn.

And while the 33-year-old doctor notified authorities when he developed a fever and was quickly isolated at Bellevue Hospital Center, his own Ebola diagnosis prompted the governors of New York and New Jersey on Friday to impose a mandatory 21-day quarantine for medical workers returning from the countries hit hardest by the epidemic.

That action all but overshadowed the day's good news: In Washington, a smiling Dallas nurse named Nina Pham hugged President Obama in the Oval Office after being declared Ebola-free by doctors and leaving the National Institutes of Health. And in New York, physicians said Spencer remained in stable condition, while officials fanned out to track down anyone he might have encountered in recent days.

The new quarantine rules, instituted late Friday by New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo (D) and New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie (R), came amid a deepening debate across the country over whether federal restrictions need to be tightened for anyone arriving in the United States from the Ebola-stricken countries of West Africa.

Those in favor of strict quarantines argue that the current federal require-

EBOLA CONTINUED ON A11

More often than not // Police will need a warrant // To search a cellphone

Haiku by Keith Jaasma based on the Supreme Court opinion from Riley v. California

Addressing the Supreme Court with fun

BY ROBERT BARNES

Supreme Court obsessives are among us, and the Internet and social media have set them free. They rhapsodize and criticize, revel in arcana, turn the justices' work into poetry and parlor games.

At a Web site called Supreme Court Haiku, Houston lawyer Keith Jaasma takes hundreds of pages of opinions crafted by the nation's most potent legal minds and reduces them to three lines and 17 syllables.

Ryan Malphurs and a company called GoAnimate are opening the doors of the Marble Palace, famously closed to television cameras, by creating an animated courtroom that looks something like "South Park"-meets-Scotus. Anyone with a computer and a few bucks can re-create Supreme Court arguments — or dream up their own scenarios.

Josh Blackman thinks even high school students can predict the outcome of Supreme Court cases. He and others have created an algorithm to forecast decisions, and they have set up Supreme Court fantasy leagues to let thousands of

SCOTUS CONTINUED ON A5



TODD SPOTH FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Houston lawyer Keith Jaasma decided to use haikus to summarize Supreme Court decisions in part to save time. He posts them at SupremeCourtHaiku.com.

Comic sans comedy: Franken cultivates a boring persona

His conversion to caution epitomizes scripted politics in which the winners take all

BY PAUL KANE

NORTHFIELD, MINN. — Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) broke into a spontaneous impression that recalled his days as a madcap comic. Jumping, waving his arms, running in place, the former "Saturday Night Live" actor was pretending to be his political hero, Paul Wellstone, chasing alongside the late senator's son during a high school cross-country race.

"You can take this guy, you can take him," Franken said, a deadpan rendering of Wellstone's famously hyperkinetic personality.

The crowd roared its approval at a college campus rally last week, a rare moment of bellyaching laughter in an otherwise sober 15-minute reflection on Franken's accomplishments.



Franken

Quickly, he returned to the script, one in which he plays the most boring of U.S. senators. Yes, Al Franken is boring, and tactically so, and because he is boring, he appears well on his way to winning reelection.

It's been this way since the summer of 2008, when a team of Washington political hands took charge of Franken's struggling Senate bid and decided that a kind of strategic boredom was the way to turn him into a serious politician focused on small-bore policy. He won by 312 votes, but only after an extended recount delayed his swearing-in by six months. Since then Franken has worked to perfect the pose of dull but diligent legislator.

The approach has paid huge rewards: Polls show him holding a double-digit lead over his closest opponent in this year's campaign.

And in this play-it-safe political era, Franken is not alone. Risk is not en vogue for senators, at least not those facing competitive reelection challenges.

This election season has been defined

FRANKEN CONTINUED ON A12

IN SUNDAY'S POST

Sugar crash Health advocates and regulators are restricting, vilifying or outlawing everything that is bad for you. What does that mean for candy? Magazine



Making pop real British phenom Charli XCX is out to redefine from the inside a genre that's long been defined by its "weird mystery-like lie."

INSIDE

METRO
Remains are identified
The body found outside a property in Charlottesville has been confirmed as the remains of U-Va. student Hannah Graham. B1

WORLD SERIES
Advantage, Royals
Kansas City takes a 2-1 lead in the Series as its bullpen shuts down the Giants in late innings for a 3-2 win in Game 3. D1