

We claim:

1. A computer system for use in medical case management comprising:
 - a user interface selectively operable in a guided mode for experienced users and a structured mode for inexperienced users, said user interface enabling the input of information identifying a patient, a description of at least one medical condition of said patient and a proposed treatment for said medical condition;
 - a database for storing a topical library of medical information;
 - means for searching said topical library to identify medical information relevant to the medical condition and proposed treatment entered via said user interface;
 - means for enabling a user to access, via said user interface, medical information identified by said searching means to assist the user in assessing the appropriateness of said proposed treatment; and
 - an expert system including a rules database for supplementing the assistance provided by said searching means, said expert system being accessible by said user interface for providing a recommendation as to the appropriateness of said proposed treatment based on information entered via said user interface and rules recovered from said rules database;
 - said expert system facilitating the input of information via said user interface in said structured mode by dynamically generating questions in response to previous answers provided by the user to enable the expert system to make said recommendation; and
 - said expert system facilitating the input of information in said guided mode by providing a predefined questionnaire enabling the user to decide which questions to answer to obtain said recommendation.
2. A computer system in accordance with claim 1, wherein said expert system is responsive to the information entered via said user interface and rules recovered from said rules database for providing a recommendation as to whether said proposed treatment should be certified for coverage by an insurer.
3. A computer system in accordance with claim 2 wherein said expert system includes means for analyzing a plurality of different medical conditions entered via said user interface, said expert system factoring each of said medical conditions into a recommendation as to whether or not the proposed treatment should be certified for coverage by said insurer.
4. A computer system in accordance with claim 2 wherein said expert system includes means for providing said user with an explanation of the logic it used to make a recommendation.
5. A computer system in accordance with claim 1 wherein said expert system includes means for providing said user with an explanation of the logic it used to make a recommendation.
6. A computer system in accordance with claim 1 wherein said expert system includes means for suggesting alternatives to said proposed treatment.
7. A computer system in accordance with claim 1 further comprising:
 - means for providing a user interaction file that maintains a record of the medical condition and proposed treatment entered by said user, the medical information identified by said searching means and accessed by said user, and the recommendation made by said expert system means.

8. A computer system in accordance with claim 7 further comprising:
 - means for retrieving said user interaction file during a subsequent session involving the case management of a patient to which said user interaction file relates;
 - wherein said expert system considers information in the retrieved user interaction file before making a recommendation as to a new proposed treatment for said patient.
9. A computer system in accordance with claim 1 further comprising:
 - means for providing a user interaction file that includes a record of a guided or structured dialog with said user, including the medical condition and proposed treatment entered by said user, the medical information identified by said searching means and accessed by said user, and the recommendation made by said expert system means.
10. A computer system in accordance with claim 9 further comprising:
 - means for retrieving said user interaction file during a subsequent session involving the case management of a patient to which said user interaction file relates;
 - wherein said expert system considers information in the retrieved user interaction file before making a recommendation as to a new proposed treatment for said patient.
11. A computer system in accordance with claim 1 wherein said searching means include means for providing context sensitive assistance to said user by generating a key word search through said topical library in response to information entered by the user.
12. A computer system in accordance with claim 11 wherein said topical library contains synopses of said medical information, said system further including means for enabling a user to access either a synopsis or a full record of medical information identified by said searching means.
13. A computer system for use in medical case management comprising:
 - a user interface for enabling the input of information identifying a patient, a description of at least one medical condition of said patient and a proposed treatment for said medical condition;
 - a database for storing a topical library of medical information;
 - means for searching said topical library to identify medical information relevant to the medical condition and proposed treatment entered via said user interface;
 - means for enabling a user to access, via said user interface, medical information identified by said searching means to assist the user in assessing the appropriateness of said proposed treatment; and
 - an expert system including a rules database and being accessible by said user interface for providing recommendations as to the appropriateness of said proposed treatment and as to whether said proposed treatment should be certified for coverage by an insurer, based on information entered via said user interface and rules recovered from said rules database.
14. A computer system in accordance with claim 13 wherein said expert system includes means for analyzing a plurality of different medical conditions entered via said user interface, said expert system factoring each of said medical conditions into a recommendation as to whether or not the proposed treatment should be certified for coverage by said insurer.