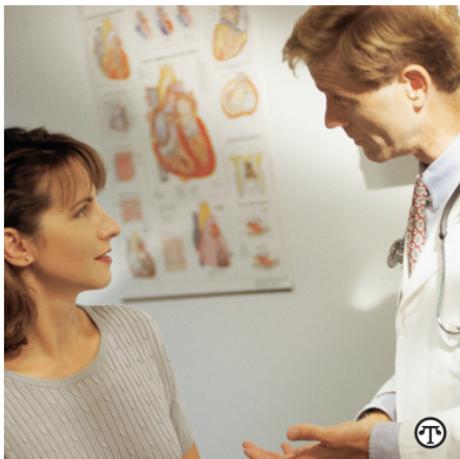# The Value Of Knowing

(NAPSA)—It's a question many have considered: If you had the ability to learn whether you had terminal cancer, a brain tumor or Alzheimer's disease, would you want to know? Furthermore, would you really want to know enough that you would pay for tests out of your own pocket? If your answers are "Yes," then you are not alone. Research from Siemens Healthcare and Harris Interactive shows that the vast majority of Americans—92 percent—agree that "the value of knowing exactly what is wrong with their health is as important as having access to a doctor in the first place" and nearly four in five Americans (78 percent) would want to have a test done to diagnose a disease, even if there is no treatment or cure available.

Why? "In my experience with patients, they want to know the status of their health so they can plan for themselves and their family's life in the best way possible," said Gregory Sorensen, M.D., CEO of Siemens Healthcare North America and board-certified neuroradiologist.

In the ongoing debate over health care reform and cost control, the voice of the consumer is often missing. Siemens' research shows that, despite the fact that Americans across the country are tightening their belts during this sluggish economy, 66 percent would even be willing to pay out of their own pockets for tests to diagnose a serious illness.

"There is simply a rational, financial and emotional value to knowing what's wrong when you feel sick," continued Dr. Sorensen. "The survey findings show clearly that Americans want to know exactly where they stand when it comes to their health."

While medical testing and imaging such as MRI and CT scans have come under scrutiny as the nation examines health

Most people want to know the state of their health, bad or good.

care expenditures, the study actually shows that more than eight in 10 Americans (83 percent) agree that even if medical technologies and tests are expensive, they save money by helping doctors to get to the right diagnosis more quickly. Additionally, almost nine out of 10 Americans (87 percent) believe that ruling out a condition or illness can save money in the long run, by avoiding costly and unnecessary treatments.

"Americans have great faith in the benefits of medical testing and imaging as a means to a correct diagnosis," said Dr. Sorensen. "As a physician, I know that, effectively used, diagnostic tests can help more efficiently manage health care expenditures while providing patients with knowledge and peace of mind—as well as the best possible care."

As the health care debate continues, it's clear that Americans simply want to be in the know about their health whether it's for reasons that are practical, emotional, fiscal or otherwise. It's also clear that medical diagnostic equipment, among the best and only tools available to give doctors and patients the knowledge they seek, can save money in the long run. That's something, doctors say, you can bank your health on.