Virtual Healthcare?

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VIRTUAL HEALTH CARE?
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Healthcare, a $1.1 trillion business in 1998, is the single largest sector in the US economy with an estimated annual growth rate of 7 percent for the next five years. The healthcare industry in general has not been a leader in adapting to and using e-commerce technologies. However, different sectors within this industry have adopted varying e-commerce strategies in recent years. This move has significant implications for both the business of healthcare industry and for the population of patients it serves.

This research presentation is based upon a systematic examination of the healthcare industry, its increasing reliance on technology, and its move towards e-commerce. By using contemporary real-life examples, it critically examines the trend of the use of e-commerce technologies in the healthcare industry and the multiple issues that this generates. It pays particular attention to the potential pitfalls of e-commerce, especially in the light of the recent public debates on patient rights. It suggests that informed citizen input is vital to the future of "virtual health care."

Outline of Research Presentation

1. Introduction: What is e-Commerce?
2. Limits: What e-Commerce Cannot Do
3. Resources: Healthcare on the Web
4. Warning Signs: Do's and Don'ts of Electronic Health Care
5. Dollars and Sense: Cost of e-Commerce
6. Beyond the Bottom Line: Ethical Issues in Healthcare e-Commerce
7. Little Brothers Are Watching You: Privacy of Patient Records