Several leading surgeons in Los Angeles announced on June 16, 2016, a digital healthcare platform that allows patients to access high-quality, on-demand surgical care, and gives surgeons more time to provide that care. Prime Surgeons (www.primesurgeons.com) gives direct online access to a network of elite master surgeons whose patients include top athletes, celebrities and successful professionals, with the goal of improved patient outcomes and fair and transparent pricing.

Gil Tepper, M.D., F.A.C.S., founder and head of spine surgery of Prime Surgeons, is passionate about improving patient care and giving control of healthcare delivery back to the surgeons. Dr. Tepper is a Board-certified orthopedic spine surgeon and an LA area Super Doctor since 2011. He has more than 25 years of experience and is a leader in the most advanced spine surgery techniques. Medical care regulations and healthcare policy changes led him to this business model, which is unique in the United States, but based off of similar models found globally.

“There are many healthcare factions in the United Sates, and they are not aligned,” Tepper said. “With healthcare changes that have included greater cost containment, regulations and changing economic conditions, the healthcare delivery system has become convoluted, and the patients cannot always get to the champion surgeons. Once they do, they don’t have control over all of the parts of their surgical care, nor do the surgeons.”

“As we move to a two-tier healthcare system in America, those seeking top-level surgeons are being forced to go outside of their care systems, often overseas, to get the care they need,” Tepper said. “We want them to know they can have on-demand access to surgeons who will coordinate all of their surgical care and recovery, not unlike systems in Canada or Israel, for example. We are offering a preferred program with a higher level of care for those who want it, regardless of how they are paying for it.”

Tepper said Prime Surgeons is an on-demand service that cuts through the red tape of bureaucracy and current healthcare delivery methods to make the process more consumer-friendly and sophisticated at the same time. “Now, patients search the web for surgeons, or ask friends or family, but the best surgeons don’t always have the best websites or marketing. You can’t always find the champion surgeons.”

Prime Surgeons is an independent physician association, and patients are able to find the best surgeon for their specific need, visit the Prime Surgeons website and web app and communicate directly with their surgical team. Tepper said each surgeon will have control over their surgery area of expertise. They will be able to schedule surgeries and put in follow-up care that is best for the patients and choose which doctors and care providers with whom they wish to work, such as anesthesiologists. All of this care is transparent and visible to the patient.

Tepper has a track record in healthcare delivery innovation. In 2004, he opened and ran his own hospital, all while continuing to perform complex surgeries. The Miracle Mile Medical
Center, also in Los Angeles, is a full general hospital with the exception of an emergency room. It operates as an LLC, and the physicians are limited partners who have a financial interest in the hospital.

**A Team of Champions**

Tepper has spent the past year raising funding for the proprietary software platform and recruiting a leadership team that includes: Daniel Kelly, M.D., co-Founder, Ron Kvitne M.D., Chairman of Sports Medicine and David Ghozland, M.D., Chairman of Gynecology.

- Dr. Kelly is a Board-certified neurosurgeon with over 20 years of experience and is a leader in the latest minimally invasive techniques in neurosurgery. He is not only considered one of the top neurosurgeons in the US but also internationally recognized in his specialties.

- Dr. Kvitne is a Board-certified orthopedic shoulder and knee surgeon who has over 30 years of experience. He is a team surgeon for leading Los Angeles professional sports teams including the LA Lakers, LA Dodgers, LA Kings, LA Angels and Anaheim Ducks.

- Dr. Ghozland is a Board-certified gynecologic surgeon. He is a leader in the latest minimally invasive techniques in gynecological specialties, particularly in robotic gynecologic surgery.

“We are putting together a network of qualified experts, the champions, the surgeons' surgeons who have agreed to high standards in terms of access, concierge care in a fully transparent environment, with comprehensive pricing for all healthcare dealers involved,” Tepper said. “There will be no surprises for the patients.”

**How It Works**

Prime Surgeons is focused on providing patients with excellent surgical outcomes that minimize recovery time and enable patients to quickly return to their quality of life. “Patients want to be with someone who they can trust and who takes care of them as if they are the only patient,” Tepper said. “We want to do this in a conscientious, value-driven way with expedience first, and make our service procedure-specific with champion surgeons who provide great results.”

To access the surgeon network, patients visit Primesurgeons.com, where they answer a series of questions about their condition and health history. They can choose from three levels of service: basic, VIP and concierge, Tepper said. At the basic level, members receive access to Prime Surgeons network and guaranteed appointments within two weeks of scheduling. At the concierge level, they receive global access to the Prime Surgeons network, a personal concierge assistant, access to their surgeon and staff 24 hours a day, seven days of the week, and on-demand scheduling of appointments.

Patients are given the exact costs of surgery up front. “We will serve cash-paying and out of network patients, as well as offer custom programs,” he said.

**The Future of Surgical Care**

With changes in health insurance and care, many patients are not receiving the care they need in a timely manner. “Healthcare is becoming so regulated, and it’s difficult for patients who need to wait for care and for surgeons who cannot do what they love to do, because they are on the phone with insurance companies, or waiting for nurses’ availability, for example,” Tepper said.

Tepper said it is a good time to roll out this new healthcare delivery model, beginning in Los Angeles. During the initial launch of Prime Surgeons, the company is starting with various surgery specialty areas, such as orthopedics, sports and spine, and gynecological robotics.

“Eventually we will go into urology, ENT (ear, nose and throat), and begin neurosurgical specialties for spine and tumors,” Tepper added. “We are going to start, get some traction, perfect our web platform and logistics and hope to expand to key cities like San Francisco, Dallas, Houston, Philadelphia and New York City.”