

ICA Healthcare Solution To Improve Patient Health through Information-Sharing

By Michael Dinan
TMCnet Editor
September 3, 2008

In the latest twist on how IT is said to improve healthcare, officials at a Nashville-based company that creates unified electronic health records say they're finding a way to bring together different doctors to improve patient care and "outcomes."

Officials at Informatics Corporation of America say the merging of enterprise and so-called "health information exchange" models creates opportunities for improvement.

"Increasingly, optimal care delivery, particularly for patients with chronic diseases, requires a multi-specialty team of healthcare providers, with coordinated services and processes both inside and outside the hospital setting," said Gary M. Zegiestowsky, the company's chief executive officer. "Technology that facilitates all these touch points for the patient and ensures connectivity among providers is the backbone for exemplary care."

ICA, as Zegiestowsky's company is known, says it's developed a solution – called Health IT – that allows clinicians to access, evaluate and act upon patient information across disparate systems. The solution was developed by physicians and "informatics" professionals at Vanderbilt Medical Center, and is now being used at Bassett Healthcare's enterprise of five hospitals and 27 clinics in Cooperstown, New York.

Health IT makes care easier to deliver, is scalable and integrates clinical systems across treatment settings, according to the company. It's also accessible anywhere with Internet connectivity, and ensures secure interoperability of clinically relevant data and information.

According to industry insiders, the healthcare industry's internal communications also stand to improve with the introduction of speech-based solutions.

Using the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center as an example, industry insiders are preparing to deliver a free Webinar that examines how the solutions are enhancing customer satisfaction, increasing productivity and bolstering emergency response and event notification processes.

Register here for "Productivity Powered by the Human Voice: a Case Study on Speech-Based Solutions in a Dynamic Healthcare Environment."

The Webinar will be held at 1 p.m. Eastern on Tuesday, Sept. 9. The event is sponsored, in part, by Nuance (News - Alert), a Burlington, Massachusetts-based speech and imaging solutions provider.

According to Jeff Cunningham, chief technology and strategy officer at ICA, a solution that's based on IT should ease collaboration among healthcare providers, particularly since patients often undergo treatment at more than one physical location.

“Powerful advances in biomedical informatics are now enabling all the physicians treating a patient to access that patient's longitudinal record and confer on treatment decisions,” Cunningham said. “As doctors and hospitals become more closely aligned in the delivery of care, the role of technology becomes a vital asset in raising the overall quality of care.”

Don't forget to check out TMCnet's White Paper Library, which provides a selection of in-depth information on relevant topics affecting the IP Communications industry. The library offers white papers, case studies and other documents which are free to registered users. Today's featured white paper is *The Compelling ROI Benefits of Contact Center Quality and Performance Management Technologies*, brought to you by Voice Print International (News - Alert).

Michael Dinan is a contributing editor for TMCnet, covering news in the IP communications, call center and customer relationship management industries. To read more of Michael's articles, please visit his columnist page.