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**TELEHEALTH MAKES TVS USER-FRIENDLY** [E-mail to a Friend](#) [Print](#) [User](#)

**TeleHealth makes TVs user-friendly**  
June 30, 2009 | Eric Widlund, Managing Editor



RALEIGH, NC – TeleHealth Services is out to prove that the television is an important healthcare tool.

The Raleigh, N.C.-based company recently announced a deal to provide its TIGR on-demand video education and entertainment system to Timpanogos Regional Hospital in Orem, Utah. The interactive patient education system not only gives patients a wide range of on-demand services, such as movies, television shows and games, but also allows healthcare providers to direct educational content to the patient.

"Digital technologies are very new in hospitals," says TeleHealth CEO George Fleming, who notes that 80 percent of the nation's hospitals currently don't have video on-demand services. "And when you're talking about staying happy, getting educated and staying connected in the hospital, this is the type of technology that should be used."

Timpanogos, part of HCA's MountainStar family of hospitals, recently expanded to 105 beds, including a 20-bed intensive care unit and 48 private medical, surgical and pediatric patient rooms. Hospital officials said they chose to implement TIGR to give patients more access to entertainment offerings and staff more chances to educate their patients about important medical images.

"It is our strategy to use technology to improve patient care and assist employees," said Sandy Ewell, Timpanogos' chief clinical officer. "We are encouraged by the possibilities that are now available with the TIGR system. Providing Timpanogos with this innovative technology will benefit the facility and enhance family and patient education. In addition to providing education, a patient can access our C.A.R.E. Channel, which contains beautiful images and music to help with relaxation and pain management."

According to Fleming, educational videos form the backbone of the TIGR system. They not only provide patients with a chance to become better educated about their medical issues, but allow administrators a chance to direct educational content to staff as well.

"One of the biggest things right now is getting people to wash their hands," he said.

That philosophy is shared by Michael O'Neil, Jr., chief executive officer of GetWellNetwork, Inc., a Bethesda, Md.-based provider of interactive patient solutions in the hospital setting. O'Neil sees the development of interactive care as the foundation of "meaningful use" – a key component of President Barack Obama's efforts to improve the nation's healthcare system through the use of IT.

"This has a direct impact on a patient's engagement in care," he said. "It's less about chasing the dollars and more about going the last mile to the patient's bedside."

O'Neil says GetWellNetwork is focused now on providing services to hospitals, but it has launched a research institute to explore expanding those services to rural clinics and even homes. Like Fleming, he views interactive tools as a way to follow up with patients after their discharge from a hospital, as well as to help encourage healthier lifestyle habits.

"We are now at a more exciting time than ever," he said. "We need to leverage that momentum by asking, 'How can we help patients be healthier?'"

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