

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stage 2 Meaningful Use Patient Engagement Initiatives Addressed in Issue Brief; Value of Integrating Patient Education, Engagement, and Interactivity Tools For Hospitals

First of three articles from TeleHealth Services highlights patient education, improved clinical outcomes and the connection to meaningful use requirements

August 29, 2012

Raleigh, NC – With final Stage 2 rules for satisfying Meaningful Use requirements issued by The Centers for Medicare and Medicare Services (CMS) last week, several of these initiatives focus on the predominant theme of patient engagement. The first in a series of three issue briefs from TeleHealth Services examines the role patient education is currently playing in hospitals, and how improved patient engagement will help hospitals better achieve meaningful use requirements.

As the debate about achieving meaningful use continues, many hospitals already are using patient education, engagement and interactivity tools to increase compliance and understanding, enhance care coordination, measure service responsiveness and improve clinical outcomes. These outcomes include reduced readmissions, better post-discharge planning and improved patient-satisfaction ratings. However, even though these practices are proving beneficial to patients, their families and hospitals' bottom lines, they often are not properly coordinated or tracked, nor are they provided needed resources.

According to Diane Moyer, president of the Health Care Education Association (HCEA), a national non-profit, multi-disciplinary professional organization of healthcare educators, most U.S. hospital systems are not flexible enough to capture all the required patient data without extensive documentation by clinicians and time to find and review the notes across disciplines.

"Therefore," Moyer explains in the brief, "valuable information is often not easily or automatically retrievable, is not connected to a primary resource like an electronic medical record, and is not shared among those educating the patients.

This disconnection includes gaps involving patient education and discharge information, particularly as they relate to inpatient and outpatient care."

Beyond improved clinical outcomes and patient satisfaction, the incentive currently driving meaningful use is the government subsidies for implementing the technology and compliance changes. Although compliance is currently primed through financial incentives, non-compliance in the future will be penalized in the form of withheld reimbursements for hospitals, healthcare organizations and physicians who fail to achieve meaningful use in the required timeframe.

"Solving these critical patient-care and cost issues – as well as the new challenges being addressed through healthcare reform – requires a comprehensive, efficient, and collaborative effort between medical providers, hospitals, technology service companies and state and federal government," says TeleHealth President and CEO, George Fleming. "There is much to accomplish, and much that has already been



Interactive patient engagement systems are powerful tools to help hospitals meet meaningful use requirements.

achieved. As we move forward following the recent landmark Supreme Court ruling on healthcare reform, we want to embrace best practices, introduce new and smarter tools, and discuss far-reaching, patient-focused solutions with all relevant parties.”

This article, written by Jodi DeMarco, TeleHealth’s Interactive Brand Manager, examines these topics more closely, and subsequent articles will include interviews with hospitals that are making significant progress with patient education, multi-cultural communication tools and healthcare technology. It’s available for free download at www.telehealthservices.com.

About TeleHealth Services:

With more than 2,500 healthcare clients across the country, TeleHealth Services is the nation’s leading provider of integrated technology and communications solutions for the healthcare market. Combining 50+ years of healthcare expertise and partnerships with industry-leading manufacturers, TeleHealth Services is uniquely positioned to offer a full suite of hospital technology solutions that includes:

- Interactive patient and staff education platforms
- Healthcare grade televisions and accessories
- Bedside patient entertainment solutions
- The latest educational and entertainment content
- Comprehensive design, implementation, and service packages
- Flexible financing solutions

Headquartered in Raleigh, N.C., TeleHealth Services is a division of Telerent Leasing Corporation. Telerent, founded in 1957, operates as a subsidiary of ITOCHU International, Inc. For more information on TeleHealth Services, call 877-432-9076, or visit at www.telehealthservices.com.

Contact:

Matt Barker

Vice President of Marketing

TeleHealth Services

919-772-8604

www.telehealthservices.com