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EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

The Nurse is In (...Your Phone)- Wireless-Enabled Health Condition Management

Paul Hedtke describes LifeCOMM, the Qualcomm Health and Life Sciences initiative exploring cell phone-based health care technologies and services for individuals. Paul also contributed to a recently published book Mobile Persuasion: 20 Perspectives on the Future of Behavior Change (Stanford, 2007).

How many minutes did you spend with your health care provider last year? What if your cell phone became part of your health care program and helped you get more out of those minutes and provided follow-up?

Led by the Baby Boomer demographic, consumers are demanding a more holistic set of health services than the health care industry can provide while keeping costs down. Qualcomm's LifeCOMM initiative is weaving together the technologies, industries and services to bridge the gap between the increasing demand for health services and the health care industry's ability to deliver.

Join Paul Hedtke September 25 for an in-depth look at LifeCOMM's technology solution and business strategy. Register today.

People Are Mostly on Their Own
"We all depend on the health care system for our health care," notes Paul Hedtke, Senior Director of Business Development who is one of the driving forces behind LifeCOMM. "But even patients with chronic conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes interact with the health care system for no more than a few minutes per year. The rest of the time, you're on your own to implement the therapy your physician has prescribed and usually to manage lifestyle issues as well. LifeCOMM is all about giving individuals tools to help them do those things in between visits to their healthcare professional.

"The value in these solutions lies in providing continuing education to individuals about their condition and providing highly-personalized, day-to-day assistance in managing their therapy. It's easy to come up with a product that nags people to take a pill, but that's not a solution that's going to have much impact on people's health."

LifeCOMM

The goal of LifeCOMM is to develop and provide wireless health solutions that will augment limited healthcare resources:

- ***The capacity and cost of the U.S. health care system**
- ***Providers' ability to provide follow-up faced with rapidly expanding demands:**
  - **Aging demographic**
  - **The rise of health and wellness consumerism**

Condition Management Tools
LifeCOMM's goal is to create health condition management tools for specific conditions like diabetes and hypertension. A critical part of the solution is the "assistant" function, which monitors various biometrics through a mobile device and uses that information to provide daily alerts, education, advice and coaching to the individual.

There are two components to the assistant function. To deliver a service the consumer can afford, most of the help will be provided by a virtual assistant, which is implemented in software. Then, there are live clinicians, who will provide an element of human touch. The live assistant also serves as a necessary backup to the virtual assistant since he/she is trained to extract information and provide medical advice.

Getting Patients to Use It
What would it take for someone to *want* an "in-hand" assistant helping them manage a condition they have? Personalization.

"One of our big challenges lies in making the solution compelling for the individual," says Paul. "It has to be a solution that a person will embrace and continue to use. If the assistant knows about

you, your health and behavioral traits at a given time – and not just about high blood pressure or asthma in general – we believe you'll be more likely to engage the solution and benefit from it."

How do you personalize a solution like this? Use a cell phone to collect biometric and other vital information to build a profile of the individual's health state and behavior. Types of information gathered could include blood glucose level, heart rate, body temperature, caloric intake, physical activity and regular behavior. Based on this profile, the virtual assistant can monitor, inform, remind or prompt individuals to follow their therapy regimen, or, when necessary, escalate issues to the live assistant.

But the question we really need to answer is, "What works for you?" The virtual assistant needs to learn about you and use your profile in the same way that a live assistant would. That way, you'll actually respond, your condition will improve, and you'll perceive value in it.

The LifeCOMM Business Model

LifeCOMM started out as a vision of delivering health services into the hands of the people who have a need. The MVNO (Mobile Virtual Network Operator) business model was selected as the implementation approach.

"The approach is to partner and leverage existing products and services to create the entire value chain," explains Paul. "In the diabetic example, we've partnered with a blood glucose meter manufacturer that will provide the meter hardware that will be integrated into the handset. In addition, the manufacturer will create awareness among its customer base and the physician population about the new solution."

"We're also partnering with a handset manufacturer and several clinical software developers. A disease management firm will provide the live assistant function. Retail pharmacies and other health products distributors will serve as sales channels."

To realize its vision, the LifeCOMM team has:

***Developed a number of go-to-market concepts**

***Built a detailed business plan**

***Established business relationships with companies in industries including:**

- **Medical devices**
- **Health services**
- **Wireless device and service platform suppliers**
- **Health and medical products retailers**

The team is currently in the process of standing LifeCOMM up as a separate company. "Qualcomm is playing the role of founder and investor, and we're bringing in other investors from the venture capital and private equity communities for the initial rounds of LifeCOMM's funding."

"Seventy million people in the U.S. – the Baby Boomers – will soon create a strain on the health care system. Health care professionals have little time to spend with you now – and no time or incentive to provide follow-up services – and that situation will only get worse as the population ages and presents with more chronic conditions. We believe that these tools can help bridge that gap while also generating new forms of revenue for the wireless and health industries."