

Smart Ways Of Saving Lives – Safety in Healthcare

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NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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The statistics released on medical errors in hospitals can make disturbing reading...

- Preventable errors in the US cause over 44,000 deaths yearly
- Misuse of medication in the US causes 125,000 deaths yearly, 11% of hospital admissions, and 23% of nursing home admissions
- Counterfeits comprise 30% of pharmaceuticals in the developing world, and 6 – 10% in the developed world

According to leading consultant Dr Peter Harrop of IDTechEx, an independent analyst, all of these statistics could be greatly reduced with the use of smart technology, such as RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tags and other low cost solutions.

The technology is here

RFID tags will be used in high volumes in the supply chain to track and trace, to overcome fatal counterfeiting and product diversion, and improve supply chain efficiencies within healthcare.

Already 25 million chipless RFID tags have automatically prevented the wrong dose of just one type of anaesthetic being delivered. A similar “electronic handshake” can be used elsewhere to ensure that single use catheters, RF probe covers and other items cannot be used twice and the instrument will not function if an attempt is made to use them improperly.

The future is near

Not too far in the future we'll see dramatically improved human interfaces, with equipment and packages providing audible alarms, speech, moving colour displays, flashing lights and so on.

Tracking the location of patients, staff, and hospital equipment is central to efficiently and effectively managing the healthcare process. The provision of real time information on the location and status of critical resources allows hospitals to increase revenues, improve efficiency, and increase patient and staff satisfaction.

Some of this technology has been implemented with impressive results – a speaker at the upcoming IDTechEx Smart Healthcare conference (see www.smarthealthcareusa.com) explains how RFID technology was deployed in a Taiwan hospital to contain the deadly SARS virus.

Leading international speakers from companies such as Naval Hospital Pensacola, Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, Hitachi Maxell Ltd and Savi Technology will explore these and other relevant healthcare issues in San Francisco from June 9-11 2004. The conference focuses on case studies and comprehensively covers the needs of users – hospitals, pharmaceutical companies and medical device suppliers.

For full details see www.smarthealthcareUSA.com.

1 Source: USNPC

2 Source: USNPC

3 Source: World Health Organisation

About IDTechEx

IDTechEx is a world leading independent analyst on the development and application of RFID smart labels and smart packaging technologies. In addition to impartial market research reports and two monthly journals, IDTechEx has carried out RFID and smart packaging consultancy across the world, educating users of the technologies and advising on global company strategy. IDTechEx also host the world's largest conferences on these topics in the USA, Europe and Asia each year. For more information about the company, its products and services, see www.idtechex.com.

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