

# AIDS Experts in U. S. and Europe Turn to Centra Software to Fight AIDS in South Africa

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LEXINGTON, Mass. (December 1, 2004) – Not many doctors make house calls anymore. In South Africa, where a quarter of the population carries the HIV virus, millions of people living far away from hospitals need to see a doctor. Doctors, like Massachusetts General Hospital's Bruce Walker, a 15-year veteran of the fight against AIDS in Africa, have devised a way to bring their knowledge to the battlefield in South Africa, even if they cannot physically be there, through the use of Web collaboration solutions developed by Centra Software.

Walker and his colleagues in the world's leading hospitals and medical research centers are providing hosted biweekly Web collaboration calls with their counterparts at six South African hospitals and universities to share best practices and AIDS treatment strategies to combat the disease - including prevention of mother-to-newborn transmission of the virus, supporting the focus for World AIDS Day 2004, which seeks to raise awareness about, and help address, the many issues affecting women and girls around HIV and AIDS.

Up until April 2002, President Thabo Mbeki's governments did not accept what everyone knew to be true, that HIV causes AIDS. This resulted in South Africa's lack of medical staff trained to treat the disease.

"Without the biweekly calls, the only way to disseminate this much information would be to go to South Africa for six months at a time," Dr. Walker said. "And even then, no single doctor has all of the knowledge that we do as a group. The biweekly calls allow us to work together and bring in specialists to discuss treatment strategies with frontline caregivers halfway around the world."

The biweekly conference calls are conducted using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), with each attendee only needing one phone line to verbally participate in the discussion and see visual aids, such as X-rays, diagrams and case histories. With little more than a phone line, a desktop PC and user's manual, remote village caregivers have direct access to some of the best AIDS doctors in the world. Walker's team also records the bi weekly sessions using Centra's Knowledge Center, making the sessions available for playback to caregivers who might have missed a session. Additionally, as the country ramps up its fight against AIDS and new caregivers are hired, these recorded bi weekly meetings are used as a library of expertise that can be tapped 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The project's collaboration system was developed by Gary Olson, an associate dean of research at University of Michigan, who said that without Centra, they would have had to spend substantial time and money to build out a network infrastructure – time and money they couldn't afford to waste.

"Since Centra software is easy to use, local doctors and researchers have been able to use Web conferencing to train remote caregivers in rural villages, which enables them to spend more time in the field caring for the sick," Olson added.

"Effective education and knowledge on how to prevent the spread of HIV and manage complicated treatments are key elements to combating this epidemic," said Centra CEO Paul Gudonis. "We are proud

of the work these doctors and researchers are doing and hope that our contribution has positive impact on both infected and affected people in the fight against HIV/AIDS.”

The project currently includes three local universities and six South African hospitals, including Durban Hospital, the only university to train black doctors during apartheid, and St. Mary’s Hospital, which is renowned for its pediatric and neonatal care. More than 25 other institutions are expected to sign on, vastly expanding the range of the project’s outreach in a nation that has only recently begun to address the epidemic.

#### About Centra Online Collaboration Solutions

Based on best practices gained while working with more than 1,200 leading organizations worldwide, Centra’s four solution areas – Centra for Enterprise Application Rollouts, Centra for Sales Effectiveness, Centra for Collaborative Learning, and Centra for Customer Acquisition – automate and facilitate the planning, execution and evaluation phases of mission-critical online business initiatives. By adopting these solutions, leading organizations around the globe have significantly lowered costs and increased productivity and revenue.

#### About Centra

Centra specializes in solutions that increase productivity and lower operational costs for global corporations, government agencies and universities through software and services for online business communication and collaboration. With Centra, organizations introduce new products, rollout enterprise applications, increase sales effectiveness and efficiently train people around the world, speeding time-to-market, while growing revenues and reducing travel and communication costs. Using Internet-based networks and reliable voice-over-IP, Centra solutions can be deployed as on-site software or through its ASP service. Currently available in 12 languages Centra is supported by value-added partners, including Documentum, Siebel, PeopleSoft and SAP. Organizations across every major industry and market sector choose Centra, including Wyndham International, Weyerhaeuser, Underwriters Laboratories, BMW and Stanford University. Headquartered in Lexington, Massachusetts, Centra serves a worldwide customer base throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia and Australia. For more information, visit [www.centra.com](http://www.centra.com).

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