



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vocantas CallAssure provides hospitals with automated solution for post-discharge patient follow-up

Just released trial data show high acceptance of interactive voice response system, two-thirds of patients prefer automated system

OTTAWA, ON, CANADA - October 11, 2007 - Vocantas Inc., a developer of advanced interactive voice response (IVR) solutions, today announced the general availability of Vocantas CallAssure, an IVR system (IVRS) optimized for use in the healthcare environment. CallAssure uses advanced computer telephony and speech technology to enable clinics and hospitals to more easily monitor patients in the hopes of mitigating adverse effects that are common in recently discharged patients.

Studies have shown that as many as 20% of patients experience adverse events upon release from the hospital. One third of these adverse events lead to at least temporary disability and three percent lead to death. One third of adverse events are preventable and healthcare facilities can play a role in this prevention with comprehensive patient follow-up.

CallAssure has recently completed clinical trials in North American hospital environments with favourable results. The results of the most recent trials were released today in Ottawa as part of the Halifax 7, Canadian Healthcare Symposium, with Dr. Alan Forster of the Ottawa Health Research Institute presenting his findings.

Dr. Forster's study, conducted in Edmonton, Alberta through Capital Health, concluded that by using CallAssure, 88 per cent of the post-discharge work related to telephone monitoring of patients was eliminated, with nurses having to contact only those few patients who required their intervention.

"Patients were keen to participate in the study and were advised in advance of what to expect," says Rinda LaBranche, Clinical Quality Consultant from Capital Health in Edmonton, where Dr. Forster's research took place. "Several carefully designed questions determined if they were having any adverse events and if so, the patient could transfer directly to a nurse at HealthLink Alberta or request a callback. If the patient's verbal response highlighted a significant issue, the system advised them to seek immediate medical attention."

Patients' responses revealed an extremely high acceptance of the automated follow-up system and independent research further revealed that, when asked, two-thirds of patients actually preferred the system over speaking with a nurse. This high level of patient acceptance facilitated effective follow-up by nurses when required.

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“If there are requirements to contact patients post-operatively to assess their condition then an IVRS-based solution such as CallAssure is a feasible and practical solution,” says Dr. Forster.

Often, due to lack of resources, appropriate follow-up by healthcare professionals is not being conducted with recently discharged patients. New accountability regulations across North America will hold medical establishments accountable for post-discharge adverse patient events, and the market is seeking solutions that will reduce nurse workload, costs and potential liability while ensuring that patients are receiving the necessary follow-up. CallAssure responds to this market need with a cost-effective, plug-and-play solution.

The fully customizable IVRS eliminates the up to five manual dials required to reach patients, removing a large amount of unproductive workflow for already busy nurses. Vocantas designed CallAssure based on real calls with nurses so that the resultant data correspond directly with the information that would have been gathered had a nurse conducted the call. As a result, the system asks the right questions, based on the needs of the particular healthcare facility. Vocantas works with hospital administrators to determine the best script for the calls and also determines the appropriate business rules based on patient responses. The course of action during and after the call is up to the facility. Nurses can be contacted with call data via telephone or email and so conduct the necessary follow-up only with those patients who require post-discharge attention. Callers can be transferred to live attendants who can deal with the patient immediately. And even where no further action is indicated, data are collected for statistical trends and patient satisfaction analysis.

CallAssure is easily integrated into existing telephone systems and can either be installed on site or hosted by Vocantas. Vocantas CallAssure strictly adheres to privacy policies in both Canada and the U.S., ensuring that patient information is kept secure and that only the appropriate hospital resources have access to private health information.

CallAssure is a registered trademark of Vocantas Inc. The names of other companies or products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

About Vocantas

Vocantas is a developer of interactive voice response systems (IVRS) that use advanced computer telephony and speech technology to provide its customers with cost-effective customer outreach solutions. The company's easy-to-use, turn-key solutions offer customizable core features and optional enhancements that integrate seamlessly with existing systems. Its products have particular application in the healthcare, education, utilities and customer service environments where they have been proven to increase efficiencies while minimizing operational costs. For more information, please visit www.vocantas.com.



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