
EPRESCRIBING PERSPECTIVES

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1. Pre-HIMSS Announcements You May Have Missed

Every year, the Healthcare Informatics and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Annual Conference takes over the hotels, restaurants and convention center of a warm-weather city, infusing millions of dollars into the local economy. This event also tends to be the “trigger point” for the exchange of billions of health care dollars.

What makes the conference such a driver aren't the miles of giant exhibits, noteworthy speakers or practicality-based educational sessions, although they're surely contributors. The reason why much of health care information technology (IT) revolves around this singular event is the fact that the decision-makers of every health care IT company attend it. For just one airfare and a few nights in a hotel, a company can meet with dozens of prospective vendors or partners, often in casual environments.

Hospital systems either do their research for the next budgeting cycle or validate their buying decisions at HIMSS. Companies educate existing and potential clients about their products. Exhibitors and marketers plan around this event, sometimes a year in advance. For many of the companies that exhibit here, the single largest line item in their marketing budget is HIMSS.

If you plan to attend next year, we recommend you make appointments in advance, to meet with those you wish to do business. Furthermore, you'd be wise to conduct the meetings in the companies' exhibits so they can demonstrate their technologies or pull in more junior subject-matter experts ... and grab chintzes for your staff or the kids.

Because of the magnitude of this event, companies generally make announcements immediately prior to it -- even if made deals months earlier -- giving them momentum and something to talk about. You may not have caught them all. Here's a summary of ePrescribing-related announcements that were made in preparation for HIMSS:

- On February 19, Allscripts announced a TouchWorks agreement with the State University of New York, and expansions with Holzer Clinic, Gallipolis, Ohio; Advocate Healthcare, Chicago, and Facey Medical Foundation, Southern California. TouchWorks is Allscripts' electronic medical records application that automates prescribing, dictation, charge capture and lab orders, and allows users to view lab results, provide patient education and document clinical encounters.

- On February 18, SureScripts announced the addition of three new software technology companies to its network: MDanywhere, an emerging Web-based health care solutions provider; Mobihealth, Inc., a suite of mobile applications; and Medicware, an electronic medical records company.

- On February 11, RxHub announced agreements with MobiHealth Inc., Arlington, Va.; Phytel Inc., Dallas; RxRight, Markham, Ontario; and SafeMed Inc., a San Diego-based startup. RxHub's network gives prescribing clinicians access to patient drug history and formulary data. AdvancePCS, Express Scripts and Medco Health Solutions founded the company in 2001.
- On February 10, DrFirst announced a partnership to port its electronic prescribing product, Rcopia, to the PatientKeeper platform. DrFirst has a suite of outpatient products, including electronic prescribing. The PatientKeeper platform connects mobile devices with hospital information systems and supports a broad range of mobile applications, including clinical results, charge capture, mobile dictation, drug references and more. "We're strong believers in spanning the continuum of care," DrFirst president John Bartos told ePrescribing Perspectives. "We believe that the walls between the hospital and outpatient will continue to crumble."
- On February 10, A4Health announced that it has met new security requirements in Ohio that call for dual authentication of pharmaceutical orders within the hospital setting using a solution from SAFELINK Corporation (NASDAQ: SFLK), a developer, marketer and integrator of biometric security solutions. The first phase is scheduled for deployment to more than 500 users at Mount Carmel East and West, and St. Ann's of Columbus, Ohio. The Ohio Board of Pharmacy has broader authority than boards in other states, and has traditionally favored biometric authentication.
- On February 4, SureScripts and McKesson announced an agreement to link pharmacists to the SureScripts network through McKesson's Pharmaserv, its pharmacy management system. Eventually, McKesson will also link its clinical products to SureScripts.

2. ePharma Summit to Highlight Electronic Prescribing

After a hiatus, pharmaceutical manufacturers are taking a new look at electronic prescribing. An example is that ePrescribing is the featured topic at this year's ePharma Summit, which will be held May 10-12, 2004, in the Wyndham Philadelphia Franklin Plaza.

The keynote speaker is Kevin Hutchinson, President and CEO of SureScripts. Mr. Hutchinson's address, "Ready or Not: Gearing Up for the Expansion of ePrescribing," is just one of a number of presentations on the topic that is the feature of this electronic newsletter.

Also giving a featured presentation are Jeff Taylor, director, lead regional operations, Aetna and Michael Ross, vice president, strategic businesses, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. Their presentation is "Everything You've Ever Wanted to Know About eRx's Impact on Prescribing Practices and Quality, We Decided to Ask." Among other topics, this presentation is sure to explore the highly publicized electronic prescribing study that found no increase in formulary compliance using an ePrescribing system, as highlighted in the November 10, 2003, issue of ePrescribing Perspectives (<http://www.pocp.com/2003november10.htm>). According to Mr. Taylor, they did some additional drill-down on the study, and will be sharing results at the conference.

A highlight of the event may be the panel discussion, "What Role Should Pharma Play in ePrescribing and the Point of Care?" The panel will feature Craig Richardson, vice president connectivity, strategic customer relationships, Johnson & Johnson; Yin Ho, director and team leader, eBusiness, Pfizer; David Kibbe, director, health information and technology, American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP); Mark Bard, President, Manhattan Research and Michael Barrett, leading health care consultant. Anthony J. (Tony) Schueth, managing partner, Point-of-Care Partners, LLC, has been selected to moderate the discussion.

Some other topics that might be of interest include: eCME, the evolution of pharma marketing, online health from the patient's perspective, legal issues related to privacy and security practices for online marketing, consumer marketing, CRM and online patient-physician communication. There are also four preconference workshops.

To learn more about the event or register, click here (<http://www.iirusa.com/epharmasummit/Index.cfm/Link=1/newsection=yes/prioritycode=P1000EPP>)

3. Pannier Affiliates with Point-of-Care Partners, LLC

Point-of-Care Partners, LLC, a growing eHealth consulting firm focused on electronic prescribing, recently announced the affiliation of Patrick Pannier, an independent health care consultant. Mr. Pannier has more than 15 years of experience in successfully managing systems and software at leading health care technology organizations.

"Pat and I have been involved in eHealth and ePrescribing before the terms were even coined," said Tony Schueth, managing partner of POCP. "His experience and background complement the rest of the team, and I couldn't be more delighted to have him join us."

Prior to becoming an independent consultant, Mr. Pannier was vice president, operations, at Serve You Pharmacy Benefits, where he successfully managed the staff and business of a pharmacy benefits company that was growing at a rate of 20% per month. Before that engagement, he was a product line manager at Misys Corporation's former Sunquest division, where he was responsible for inpatient and outpatient pharmacy software and clinical alerting systems, among other things.

From 1993 to 2000, he served as product/business development manager at National Data Corporation (NDC) in Atlanta. There, he successfully managed the life cycle of product development for various pharmacy products, including electronic prescriptions, adjudication, durable medical equipment (DME) processing, and new programs. He also negotiated new business opportunities and conducted due diligence on acquisitions and partnerships.

For more information about Mr. Pannier, visit the Point-of-Care Partners Web site (www.pocp.com) and click on the "team" button.

ABOUT US

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