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Peninsula Health Goes "Live" With Electronic Orders

Orion System's software provides one-click access to patient and drug information

August 19, 2002 – Peninsula Health (Victoria, Australia) has successfully installed and gone live with an advanced web-based order entry system from Orion Systems International.

"Orion's technology puts vital information at doctors' fingertips during the decision-making process," said Skip Lam, Director of Pharmacy at Peninsula Health. "The system connects every aspect of the medication process, enabling physicians to instantly and electronically communicate orders. This alleviates paperwork and documentation problems."

Orion's Soprano™ Order Entry helps reduce preventable medical errors and improve patient safety. The system securely connects all key care providers – physicians, pharmacists, nurses and the laboratory – providing medication management and decision support at the point of care.

"We have undertaken a major project over the past 12 months that has not only achieved our objectives but set our sights on goals that are much further advanced than the modest ones we devised," said Brendon Gardner, Director of Information Management at Peninsula Health.

Most hospital medical errors occur when prescribing drugs due to lack of information about a patient or drug and errors communicated in paper documentation. Soprano Order Entry streamlines communications and paperwork, saves time and effort, and improves the accuracy and clarity of orders. Pharmacists no longer have to transcribe data, attempt to analyse illegible handwriting or duplicate lost orders.

"Spiralling drug costs, adverse drug events (ADEs) and patient safety are only a few of the issues that hospitals must address and solve in the most effective and efficient way," said Michael Craig, Orion's Australia Manager and former pharmacist. "IT is the answer. Computerised order entry systems have demonstrated improvements in patient safety and hospital efficiency and reduced costs. The system enables more time, resource and effort to be put where it is needed most – caring for patients."

Soprano Order Entry pulls up-to-date information directly from the pharmacy system (Stocca in this case) in real time. It only allows doctors access to drugs on the hospital formulary, approved drugs selected and used by the hospital. Once a drug is selected, the system checks for and alerts clinicians about drug interactions, allergy interactions and/or duplicate orders. Electronic drug orders are transmitted to Stocca, enabling quick dispensing of prescriptions.

"Perhaps the greatest issue has been the integration of the e-prescribing component with Stocca. To our knowledge this is the only project in Australia where an electronic orders tool has been integrated with a dispensing system," Gardner said.

With Soprano Order Entry, drug monographs are only a mouse click away. The system integrates Australian Drug Information (AUSDI) and presents this information on screen when a drug is selected. As opposed to using a handbook or searching online in a separate system, all drug information is immediately available at doctor's fingertips.

Soprano Order Entry is a "one-stop shop" for all electronic service requests, and is designed to interface with any of the hospital's existing computerised service order filling systems. In addition to pharmacy orders, Soprano Order Entry enables clinicians to rapidly create and send electronic orders for radiology, laboratory/pathology and allied hospital services. Clinicians can also set up order sets for one or multiple disciplines.

All orders are automatically entered into the patient's electronic health record and electronic discharge summary, which are part of Orion's integrated architecture. Orion Concerto™ Medical Applications

Portal is an overarching umbrella technology that creates a hospital's fully integrated clinical information system.

Concerto integrates all of a hospital's information systems and applications into a single, secure system. It pulls patient data from these systems and presents it in a unified format that is easy to use and understand. As such, clinicians don't have to learn new systems or get used to new computer screens; they all have the same look and feel. Concerto enables a comprehensive online view of patient health or a "virtual patient record". Clinicians can access this information from any network computer, 24 hours a day, with a single logon. Concerto has demonstrated significant return on investment at hospitals worldwide, including 30 percent reductions in costs and administrative work.

"We were searching for a web-based system to meet our communication strategies that would be easy for doctors to use and therefore, quickly adopted," said Lam. "Orion's solution stood out as the clear choice. Our doctors were able to test and comment on the software before it was installed throughout the hospital. And the transmission of electronic drug orders direct to our hospital pharmacy dispensing system has enabled us to dispense medications much more efficiently."

Orion's software was co-developed and tested by clinicians in a tertiary hospital to ensure ease of use and demonstrate the value added to the patient care process.

About Peninsula Health

Peninsula Health covers a population of 290,000 in the local government areas of Frankston, Mornington Peninsula and part of Kingston. Peninsula Health Care Network was established on August 1, 1995 following the Government's review of health services in metropolitan Melbourne. In July 2000, the services and facilities of PHCN were retained in a newly structured Metropolitan Health Service, called Peninsula Health. More information can be found at www.phcn.vic.gov.au.

About Orion Systems International

Orion Systems International is a global leader in information access and interfacing technologies for the health sector. Orion specializes in health integration with software that enhances healthcare systems by improving organizational efficiency and patient outcomes. Orion's new generation technology improves the communications and coordination of care among providers, enabling hospitals and clinical staff to securely access, update and exchange clinical information. Orion's products have been used and trusted around the world for nearly a decade by clients such as Abbott Laboratories, IBM, Harvard University, Philips Medical Systems and McKesson. More information can be found at www.orionhealth.com.