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**PARTNERS TELEMEDICINE DEMONSTRATES  
HOW 'CONNECTED HEALTH' CAN IMPROVE PATIENT CARE,  
EFFICIENCIES AND TREATMENT OUTCOMES**

**Data presented at the American Telemedicine Association conference highlight how consumer technology can deliver medical care to the home.**

**BOSTON AND SAN DIEGO, MAY 8, 2006** – Partners Telemedicine, a division of Partners HealthCare, one of the nation's leading integrated health care delivery systems which was founded by Massachusetts General and Brigham & Women's Hospitals in Boston, is presenting several ongoing clinical studies demonstrating the value of telemedicine and 'connected health,' during the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) annual conference this week.

Four presentations highlight the groundbreaking work being done at Partners Telemedicine to advance the use of available consumer technologies and online resources to deliver quality care to patients outside of a hospital or doctor's office.

"We are very proud of the work being done at Partners Telemedicine, that is helping to shape the future of healthcare by creating new ways to deliver high quality, personalized patient care, where and when it is needed," said Joseph C. Kvedar, M.D., founder and director, Partners Telemedicine, and immediate past president of the ATA. "At the same time, our telemedicine initiatives are also working to improve efficiencies and optimize healthcare resources, which have important benefits to ensuring ongoing and effective patient care, today and tomorrow."

**Adherence Initiative**

It is estimated that 50 percent of patients being treated for chronic conditions do not take their medication as prescribed. Partners Telemedicine created an automated system to monitor adherence and provide patients with real-time feedback, without impacting time required from a healthcare provider.

Linking two commercially-available devices – a SIMPill bottle, an electronic medication container which sends a message when opened, and an ambient orb,

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which glows different colors to represent changes in information it receives from the pill bottle – Partners Telemedicine created a way to provide patients with

feedback on adherence. When medication is overdue, the orb glows red; when medication is taken, the orb changes to green. The innovative use of these two technologies to provide real-time feedback can result in changed patient behavior, leading to improved adherence and health outcomes.

### **Online Cervical Cancer Screening**

Worldwide, cervical cancer is one of the most common cancers in women; however, death rates are significantly reduced with screening, such as the pap test. Approximately 60 million specimens are processed annually in the U.S., yet there is an insufficient number of trained specialists to evaluate the specimens.

With Massachusetts General Hospital, the Center for Integration of Medicine and Innovative Technology (CIMIT), and the Department of Defense, a centralized, clinically-accurate and automated cervical screening process was created to address this critical need. Digital images captured by the FocalPoint screening device, and associated patient information were transmitted via the Internet to a secure server, where trained technicians could view the information from their computers and render interpretations. These results were compared, retrospectively, to results from the same specimens, which were evaluated using the conventional screening process. Results from the first phase of this study indicate that this automated screening process may be clinically effective, and increase productivity while maintaining high quality service.

### **Remote Stroke Service**

Fast and accurate diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients is critical to making appropriate treatment decisions to save lives and reduce the disabling effects of stroke. Since 1997, Massachusetts General Hospital stroke specialists and Partners Telemedicine have been working with remote hospitals to provide detailed stroke evaluation, diagnosis and treatment recommendations by leading stroke specialists.

Since 2005, a series of technology innovations now allow specialists to connect from their home or office, with improved equipment and network capabilities. Today, stroke consultations are automatically digitally captured, creating a cost-effective and successful TeleStroke Service, providing prompt access to definitive care to an increasing number of hospitals in Massachusetts.

### **Telemedicine in Cambodia**

Operation Village Health, a program of Partners Telemedicine, is leveraging a growing Internet infrastructure in rural Cambodia to improve the health of remote villagers. Clinical documents, composed by local health workers, are emailed to Harvard-affiliated physicians in Boston for evaluation and treatment recommendations are returned within hours. Digital pen technology and

customized clinical forms are being tested to determine its impact on improving operational efficiency, saving time, reducing errors and improving patient assessment.

Digital pen technology has the potential to decrease time-intensive activities associated with cross-cultural telemedicine programs and enables more complete documentation and improved provider satisfaction.

### **Online Commentary of ATA Events Via Connected Health Initiative Website**

In response to a number of pressing challenges facing our healthcare system, Partners Telemedicine is joining with other leading healthcare and academic institutions and technology companies to implement a set of strategic programs to deliver more patient-centered care, using technologies and resources readily available in the home. The Connected Health Initiative ([www.connected-health.org](http://www.connected-health.org)) is developing new models of healthcare to extend and enhance the patient-physician relationship and achieve improvements in access, quality and the efficient delivery and management of healthcare.

During the ATA conference, meeting attendees are invited to join the Connected Health online community and post their feedback and thoughts about information, data and events taking place at ATA. Visit exhibit booth #635 at the Personal Health and Fitness Pavilion to learn more about the Connected Health Initiative and join the online discussion about telemedicine and connected health.

Along with Partners Telemedicine, founding partners of the Connected Health Initiative also include Brigham & Women's Hospital, CIMIT, Massachusetts General Hospital and Partners Home Care.

### **About Partners Telemedicine**

Partners Telemedicine, Boston, MA, is a leader in the use of technology to deliver quality patient care outside of the hospital or doctor's office. Partners Telemedicine is applying consumer technologies and online resources – such as the Internet, cell phones, digital cameras and sensors – in innovative ways to increase access and improve care for patients when and where it is needed. Partners Telemedicine is connecting leading medical specialists with patients – in their homes, offices and around the world – to better manage and monitor patient health, offer expert second opinions and provide convenient, personalized medical care. Partners Telemedicine, a division of Partners HealthCare, works with Harvard Medical School-affiliated teaching hospitals, Massachusetts General and Brigham & Women's Hospitals. Visit [www.telemedicine.partners.org](http://www.telemedicine.partners.org).

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