



Vista EHR to assist Katrina victims

There are a number of efforts in planning or already underway to use healthcare IT to assist the victims of the Katrina hurricane. These range from a federal program which has set up a limited electronic prescribing capability in one area, to various commercial health IT vendors who are installing their products at individual refugee sites. The most exciting effort however, is the one now emerging from our own Vista community, where a number of companies and individuals have joined together in a loose coalition to deploy Vista as an electronic health record for the victims.

Involving both WorldVista and Vista Software Alliance members, as well as others familiar with Vista, this coalition is hoping to establish a base system in Louisiana which can be expanded by adding non-destroyed medical data, re-created patient data, and newly-collected patient data. Since in earlier meetings federal

agencies did not offer to support this initiative, the coalition will seek to attract attention at the local level through hospitals, universities, public health officials, and politicians, and then hopefully garner FEMA support.

Coalition members all agree that Vista is the perfect, if not the only, solution that can be deployed quickly and can scale to handle the huge volume of people affected. They hope to establish a few small successes in Louisiana and then pull in resources to expand the effort. What is clear from all of the post-crisis analysis currently going on is that the top-down planning approach to handling the hurricane disaster failed miserably. This bottom-up approach just might be the appropriate solution.

If you are interested in helping out, please contact Roger Maduro at 571-217-6921 or ramaduro@ixis.com

VSA Has a New Board and Officers

VSA recently held elections for a new board. By Organization they are:

- o Richard Elmore, IDX
- o Robert Missroon, DSS
- o Ron Sullivan, InterSystems
- o Scott Shreeve, Medsphere
- o Duncan Pringle, Perot Systems

At Large Directors

- o Claudine Beron
- o Barbara Boykin
- o Roger Maduro
- o Suniti Ponskhe

Officer elections were also held during the first formal board meeting. Barbara was re-elected to the position as Chairman, with Steve Shreeve - Vice-Chairman, Claudine Beron - Secretary, Roger Maduro - Membership, Ron Sullivan - Finance.

New Members

Fidelity and Novell have recently joined. There are several other companies we continue to pursue to bring in to the organization.

Conferences

- September 29-30. 6th Annual eHealth Developers' Summit: The Forum for eHealth Dissemination, Commercialization, and Adoption. eHealth Institute: <http://www.ehealthinstitute.org/Summit/Index.aspx>
- October 15-20. American Health Information Management Association's 77th National Convention and Exhibit. <http://www.ahima.org>
- October 22-26. AMIA Annual Symposium 2005. Hilton Washington Hotel and Towers, Washington, D.C. American Medical Informatics Association: <http://www.amia.org>
- November 8-9. Health Level Seven (HL7) Educational Summit. Hyatt Harborside at Logan International Airport, Boston. HL7: <http://www.hl7.org>
- November 9-11. The World Healthcare Innovation and Technology Congress. Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, D.C. World Congress: <http://www.worldcongress.com/whitc/index.cfm>
- December 9-10. EHR Summit IV. Sheraton Suites, San Diego. Medical Records Institute: <http://www.medrecinst.com/ehrsummit>
- December 12-14. National Conference on Mobile Healthcare 2005. Sheraton, San Diego. Medical Records Institute: <http://www.medrecinst.com/conferences/mobile/2005/index.asp>

In Case You Missed it....

September 14 - VA IT shop under scrutiny

<http://govhealthit.com/article90786-09-14-05-Web>

September 14 - Survey: EHR a tough sell

<http://govhealthit.com/article90792-09-14-05-Web&newsletter%3Dyes>

September 14 – Veterans Affairs: The Critical Role of the Chief Information Officer Position in Effective Information Technology Management. GAO-05-1017T

<http://govhealthit.com/article90792-09-14-05-Web&newsletter%3Dyes>

September - Two to Go

http://www.healthcare-informatics.com/issues/2005/09_05/ed_page.htm

August 24 - Global goal: Reduce medical errors

http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/life/20050824/d_who24.art.htm

August 22 - Revamped Veterans' Health Care Now a Model

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/21/AR2005082101073.html>

August 5 - The GAO issued "VA Health Care: Key Challenges to Aligning Capital Assets and Enhancing Veterans' Care," (GAO-05-429). This report discusses three key challenges: (1) developing information to complete inpatient alignment decisions, (2) improving management of excess property, and (3) determining priorities for purchasing care to improve access. GAO's analysis is based on its prior CARES work, review of CARES documents, and interviews with VA officials.

<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d05429/high.pdf>

August 1 - HHS to offer private physicians 'free' software

<http://www.fcw.com/article89747-08-01-05-Print>

Microsoft and its name game (excerpts from joint VSA-WorldVista press release)

The VistA Software Alliance and WorldVista, non-profit groups, are denouncing Microsoft's choice of the name "Vista" for the new version of the Windows operating system.

VistA is the Veterans Administration's (VA) publicly-available healthcare software. For over two decades, VistA has been used on a daily basis by the VA's 193,000 healthcare professionals to provide healthcare to millions of veterans in 163 hospitals, 135 nursing homes, and 850 clinics. The VistA Software Alliance and WorldVista provide services to hospitals, medical practices, and other healthcare organizations that use VistA.

"The confusion created by Microsoft and its choice of the word 'Vista' is an affront to the people who take care of our nation's veterans," said Barbara Boykin, Chairman of the VistA Software Alliance. "The VistA software enables these caring professionals to provide our veterans with some of the best healthcare in the nation. Microsoft is demeaning their passion and dedication to our veterans by expropriating the

name Vista."

"The timing of Microsoft's announcement is most unfortunate," said Maury Pepper, Chairman of WorldVista. "Microsoft is aware of the VA's use of 'VistA' and yet insists on detracting from the nationwide effort to provide the VistA electronic health record to physicians throughout the country by creating confusion in the IT industry. Our healthcare system has long been in need of a truly affordable electronic medical record, and just as one becomes available, Microsoft has created a huge distraction."

VistA and VistA-Office EHR are an important part of a national effort to fully computerize the nation's healthcare system within ten years. Both Boykin and Pepper agree that Microsoft's use of the Vista name could seriously impede this effort. Microsoft's choice of Vista will cause confusion in the emerging VistA marketplace and fear of litigation among vendors who provide VistA and VistA Office EHR related services, given Microsoft's typically aggressive enforcement of its trademarks.

October Conference Moving Forward

We now have a date for the October VistA community meetings (WV and VSA) Oct 28-29-30 in Washington DC. VSA will work with WorldVista to have back-to-back meetings. This will allow stakeholders from the VistA community to come together and try to move issues forward like the Katrina efforts underway.

The VVSO is still looking for a vendor or organization to host the conference that WorldVista must provide under their contract

We need ideas and your help. If you would like to hear subjects on VistA, please contact Barbara Boykin at 301-980-7847.