



PROJECT RED AND ASTHMAPOLIS

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The Southern Piedmont Beacon Community in North Carolina is working with two innovative technologies in the pursuit of its community's goals of reducing readmissions; reducing emergency department utilization; and improving the chronic management of asthma, diabetes, and congestive heart failure. These two technologies are Asthmapolis and Project RED with its virtual discharge advocate "Louise."

Asthmapolis is a technology that combines a GPS tracking device with a mobile smartphone application. These technologies engage the patients where they are through a combination of text reminders and educational content along with the ability to track rescue inhaler usage when it happens and where it happens. Aggregated usage patterns are then provided to the patient in the form of weekly e-mail and portal reports. These reports summarize usage patterns and allow the patient an opportunity to evaluate the number and location of actual triggers and determine if specific locations or activities result in an asthmatic episode. Through the alerting, tracking, and monitoring capabilities, Asthmapolis provides a patient the opportunity to more fully engage in following and managing their condition.

Specifically, the North Carolina Beacon Community is working with Asthmapolis to target the pediatric population. Our efforts will be to determine whether younger patients become more interested and engaged in their asthma care through the use of mobile technology and how a parent or caregiver can assist in monitoring and tracking rescue inhaler usage through reviewing the weekly usage reports. If you are interested in learning more, check out the Web site and link to the smartphone, app. www.asthmapolis.com or <http://asthmapolis.com/mobile>.

Louise is a virtual discharge avatar that provides customized, interactive discharge education directly to the patient before hospital discharge. This avatar is the product of Engineered Care (San Francisco, CA), a company that has developed Project RED from a project initiated by Boston Medical Center. RED stands for *Re-Engineered Discharge*. This process is focused on implementing a coordinated discharge process to ensure that the patient has received the right discharge education and is more fully prepared for his/her discharge. One aspect of this project involves the creation of a discharge care plan that includes a reconciled list of discharge medications, disease-specific education, other important discharge instructions, and dates and times of any necessary follow-up appointments with primary care or specialist providers.

Incorporating this "tool" at the bedside ensures that all necessary discharge education is provided to the patient at the patient's prescribed pace while integrating health literacy assessment checks and teach-back methodology. Louise interacts with patients through questions and touch-screen responses. The patient chooses to move at his/her own pace with pauses in education determined by the patient's selected response of a willingness to proceed. Patients can also choose to

include family members or other support persons in the educational process. Teach-back methods are used to ensure that the patient is clear regarding medication instructions and other discharge-related information. The patient is provided a paper copy of the discharge care plan, which is used throughout the interaction with Louise. This care plan becomes a living document after discharge with areas for notes and other reminders a patient may need after discharge.

After interacting with Louise, the patients' responses are uploaded to a server that, in turn, provides a report to the nurse or discharge planner regarding incorrect responses or areas where the patients directly indicated that they need additional direction or clarification. This technology allows the nurse to provide focused education or instruction to the patient based on the assessed need of the patient. If you are interested in learning more, check out the sites <http://www.engineeredcare.com/> and <http://www.bu.edu/fammed/projectred/>.

The use of these two technologies, Asthmapolis and Project RED, are geared toward engaging the consumer directly with technology in an effort to improve self-awareness, accountability, knowledge, and ultimately, the quality of care.

The author has disclosed that she has no significant relationships with, or financial interest in, any commercial companies pertaining to this article.

IMPROVING INFORMATICS SKILLS FOR CLINICIANS, NEW FOUNDATION INCORPORATES

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Focused on better preparing the clinical workforce to use technology and informatics to improve the delivery of patient care, Technology Informatics Guiding Education Reform—or TIGER—becomes the TIGER Initiative Foundation, effective July 1, 2011. With

incorporation, this new foundation becomes a legal entity, a 501(c)(3) organization operating for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes, and with new resources, including the necessary infrastructure and staff, plus marketing and Web development, TIGER began as a grassroots initiative in 2006, with support from more than 70 contributing organizations and a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, to engage and prepare the clinical workforce to use technology and informatics to improve the delivery of patient care. Now, 5 years later, these many volunteer hours and efforts have helped advance the TIGER cause. Leaders from the TIGER Phase III Executive Committee, HIMSS, and collaborative partners will help with the process to establish and maintain the TIGER Initiative Foundation.

“TIGER operates based on three principles developed to guide the industry on its activities,” explained Christel Anderson, HIMSS Director, Informatics, and Acting Secretary of the TIGER Initiative Foundation. “Through its work, TIGER identifies the necessary skills, including basic computer competencies, information literacy and informatics skills, that must be part of a clinician’s portfolio.”

The founding principles for TIGER are as follows:

- preparing nurses to use technology and informatics to improve patient care;
- engaging clinicians in the development of a nationwide health IT infrastructure; and
- accelerating the adoption of smart, standards-based, interoperable, patient-centered technology that will make healthcare delivery safer and more efficient, timely, accessible, and efficient in a new interdisciplinary approach.

The completed work of TIGER is available on the organization’s newly designed TIGER Web site and offers users a series of collaborative reports that are the building blocks for the next phase of the Tiger Initiative Foundation, the Virtual Learning Environment. This online resource will be designed through interdisciplinary collaboration and follow the TIGER Competency Framework with the learning tools of tutorials, scenario-based learning, traditional online learning, and educational gaming/modules/scenarios.

Visit the TIGER Web site, <http://www.thetigerinitiative.org/default.aspx>, for more information.

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