



HCN's Medical Director Software Outperforms Other Systems on British Medical Journal Safety Criteria

Wednesday 2 June 2004: Health Communication Network Limited (HCN) today announced that its clinical software package, Medical Director (MD), used by 16,000 Australian doctors, outperforms all software described in a recent British Medical Journal (BMJ) article.

In the BMJ article (<http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/328/7449/1171>), the authors developed 18 prescribing scenarios using various drug interactions and other safety issues that they believed should be flagged to prescribing GPs. All of the four UK systems tested scored between 4 and 7 out of 18. In internal tests conducted by HCN using the same criteria, MD greatly exceeded the score of these UK systems and other Australian GP software products tested.

Three of the 18 scenarios used by the BMJ article authors do not currently apply in Australia, as they concern drugs not yet available here. However, if these drugs were listed in Australia, the methods employed by MD's current drug checking system would have alerted GPs to these 3 interactions. Of the remaining 15 safety scenarios, MD correctly flags 12, and will score 15 out of 15 when the already scheduled product enhancements are implemented in the August 2004 release.

HCN Managing Director, Mike Gregg said, "We take very seriously our responsibility in providing clinical software to 85 per cent of Australian GPs. HCN employs a team including a doctor and a pharmacist to produce our own interaction database which is being continually enhanced. It is not possible for doctors to read and remember the warnings, precautions, contraindications and dosing scenarios for every one of the 9,000 plus medications currently available in Australia. Having a sophisticated interaction system, like that used in MD, ensures that doctors have the best possible information presented to them at the point of prescribing."

Dr Andrew Magennis, who is responsible for the production of HCN's interaction data set said, "This is a very tangible differentiator for Medical Director™ and one of the advantages that a well resourced company can bring GP users. We have tested most of MD's Australian competitors and they scored similarly to the UK products. We are confident that MD would significantly outscore all the remaining Australian GP software products and we would welcome an independent review in Australia similar to that conducted in the UK to confirm this."

Dr Magennis said, "We save Australian lives on a daily basis by what we do, and we are all very proud that Medical Director is so far in front of other products in Australia and the UK."

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About Health Communication Network

HCN is an Australian company that develops applications to support health decisions.

Over 16,000 doctors, representing 85 per cent of computerised GPs and many specialists, use HCN's Medical Director software to care for their patients during the consultation. These customers use Medical Director to write 90 million prescriptions each year and refer patients to other health services such as medical specialists, radiology, pathology and hospitals.

HCN is also the market leader in practice management software with close to 3,500 general practice and specialist sites. The Company's iRIS radiology information system offers an advanced solution to the larger radiology practices.

HCN pioneered the delivery of internet-based health information resources and now provides over 80 per cent of Australia's medium to large hospitals with one of the world's most comprehensive collections of online knowledge resources.

HCN's research division is a national leader for the provision of quality information on the use of medicines in general practice and research services through the electronic medium.

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