



NEWS RELEASE

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National Safety Initiative Targets the Simple Mistakes That Contribute to 98,000 Deaths Each Year from Medical Errors

31 Million Patients and 5,000 Healthcare Risk Managers in Hospitals Can Receive Free Multimedia Safety Tool Kit, To Be Launched at National ASHRM Conference Oct. 23-26

San Antonio, Texas - October 24, 2005 - Recognizing that it's the simple things that can sometimes cause medical setbacks and even tragedies, a national safety initiative is committed to arming 31 million patients with the information they need to have a safer hospital stay.

Despite a six-year campaign to improve hospital safety, 98,000 people still die from medical errors annuallyⁱ. To put this into perspective, each year 4,000 people die during open heart surgery, while an estimated 103,000 die from hospital-acquired infections.ⁱⁱ Simple mistakes - such as forgetting to wash hands, medication errors and not following the doctor's instructions - cause 27,000 deaths each yearⁱⁱⁱ.

“By providing some standardized patient education, many of these tragedies could be prevented,” says Jordan Dolin, CEO of Rightfield Solutions, one of the program sponsors and the creator of Emmi™, an innovative web-based, interactive tool that informs patients about medical conditions and surgical procedures. “With

Emmi, we have seen how potentially dangerous situations can be avoided when people are informed and become an active participant in their health care.”

On October 23-26, the patient safety tool kit will be launched nationally through the Foundation of the American Society for Healthcare Risk Management (ASHRM), at ASHRM’s national conference in San Antonio, Texas. Program sponsors include ASHRM, which represents 5,000 risk managers throughout the United States, Rightfield Solutions, the creators of the Emmi™ patient education system, and the Health Research and Education Trust (HRET).

Among the program’s supporters is Sorrel King, a keynote speaker at the conference whose young daughter Josie died due to a medical error.

“My experience taught me how important it is for patients and their families to be proactive during their hospital stay, and to have their views heard by the health care team,” said Mrs. King, founder of the Josie King Foundation and the Patient Safety Group, which developed an online safety program for hospitals called eCUSP with Johns Hopkins Hospital after her daughter’s death. “By providing such valuable information on what patients can do to ensure a safe hospital stay, ASHRM is empowering thousands of risk managers to communicate their organizations’ commitment to patients and families to help avoid medical errors.”

Mrs. King’s co-presenter, Richard Kidwell, JD, who collaborated with her on the Patient Safety Group, agrees. “I’ve seen firsthand the improvements that can be made when patients and health care professionals open up a dialogue about patient safety. As more and more Baby Boomers become advocates for their parents, we need to extend this effort to include not only patients but their families as well,” said Kidwell, now Associate Counsel and Director of Corporate Risk Management, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Pittsburgh.

King and Kidwell speak at 8:30 on Monday, October 24, on “After the Event: Teaming with Patients and Families.”

The patient safety tool kit, a product of the ASHRM Foundation, will be available free of charge to patients and their families throughout the country. The kit includes:

- A five-minute, web-based version of the patient safety Emmi™ - explaining what patients should do during and after their hospital stay to help prevent mistakes, infections and accidents. Emmi is an interactive communication tool that combines a thorough explanation of a medical procedure or condition. Hospitals can post the patient safety Emmi on their websites so patients and families can view it before coming to the hospital. To date, more than 70,000 patients have been provided an Emmi prior to undergoing a surgical or diagnostic procedure. In a survey of over 8,000 viewers, 86 percent of patients stated that Emmi informed them of risks that they had not known about earlier - clearly demonstrating the effectiveness of the platform as a risk management tool.
- A two-minute non-interactive version of the patient safety Emmi will also be made available for broadcast on the hospital’s in-room television network.
- A tip sheet for patients and families on what they can do to improve the chances of a safe hospital stay.

Demonstrating its commitment to helping patients become more active participants in their healthcare and invest in their safety, Rightfield Solutions is providing an in-kind contribution of several million dollars for the development of the patient safety Emmi.

“To create safe, trusted healthcare environments, we must find unique and effective ways to educate and empower patients and their families as active participants on the healthcare team,” said Elizabeth Summy, Executive Director, ASHRM. “We are proud to partner with Rightfield Solutions to help give patients

information in this medium, with the hope that they will become more engaged in their care and outcomes.”

To view the Emmi program from the ASHRM patient safety tool kit, please click on the following link:

<http://www.emmisafety.com/ashrm>

About Emmi

Emmi(TM), Expectation Management and Medical Information, is a powerful risk management and patient satisfaction tool developed by Chicago-based Rightfield Solutions, LLC. Emmi combines clinical and legal best practices into a web-based, interactive tool for healthcare providers who want to manage risk by developing better relationships with patients and by increasing their satisfaction with the care provided. Introduced in 2002, Emmi has been provided to more than 70,000 patients, more than 600 surgeons and a growing number of hospitals, medical groups, leading healthcare industry associations and malpractice insurance carriers. There are currently, Emmi programs available for a wide range of surgical and medical procedures, including Orthopedic, Cardiovascular, Obstetrics/Gynecology, General Surgery, Bariatric, Plastic/Cosmetic Surgery, as well as many others. All Emmi programs are developed by board certified surgeons in their respective fields. For additional information on Emmi, visit <http://www.rightfield.net> , or contact Jordan Dolin at 312-236-3650, ext. 14. For an Emmi demo, please visit <http://www.emmidemo.com> .

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ⁱ *The Journal of the American Medical Association*: reported in *USA Today* in May 2005:
http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2005-05-17-medical-errors_x.htm

ⁱⁱ Reported in an article on the University Children’s Hospital Medical Centre website:
http://www.ucihealth.com/News/UCI%20Health/chat_milliken_12-22-99_heart_surgery.htm & Report in the *Medical Journal of Clinical Infectious Diseases* reported in *New York Daily News* in September 2005: http://www.nydailynews.com/city_life/health/story/348814p-297486c.html

ⁱⁱⁱ David A. Hyman, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign professor of law and of medicine, wrote in the *Cornell Law Review*. : reported in *science daily* :
<http://www.sciencedaily.com/upi/index.php?feed=Science&article=UPI-1-20050818-13561900-bc-caregiving-handwashing1.xml>
Joint Commission Newsletter in February 2005:
http://www.jcaho.org/about+us/news+letters/jcahonline/jo_02_05.htm