



Press Release

Nation's First Automated "Chain-of-Custody" Technology for Hospital Pharmacies Now in Place at the University of Maryland Medical Center

Aethon's Revolutionary MedEx System Enhances Patient Care and Hospital Efficiency by Tracking Location, Status and Delivery of Patient Medications

August 23, 2010 – PITTSBURGH, PA – Aethon, the nation's leading provider of mobile, self-directed robots to hospitals, announced today that its MedEx System is now operational at the University of Maryland Medical Center. MedEx is the first automated tracking and "chain-of-custody" system that allows a hospital's pharmacy to know the real-time location and status of medications throughout the facility. The medical center was the first hospital in the country to use Aethon's robots to deliver medications from the pharmacy to patient care units, and now becomes one of the first to integrate Aethon's chain-of-custody solution.

MedEx serves as an enhancement to the TUG robot developed by Aethon and currently in use at more than 120 hospitals across the country. These robots dependably and affordably automate the logistics process in hospitals, enabling hospitals to deliver, track and retrieve medications, supplies, meals and equipment throughout the facility to increase productivity, enhance safety, and improve healthcare efficiency and patient care. With the MedEx technology hospital-based pharmacies now have a completely automated chain-of-custody solution, which allows them to chronologically track and document the "who, what, when and where" of each medication delivery.

"MedEx eliminates the need for manual deliveries or hardcopy receipt signatures for medications," says Aldo Zini, Aethon's president and chief executive officer. "Now hospitals can confidently track and transport medications from the point of origin to the person retrieving them, which translates to reduced medical errors, improved regulatory compliance, and better patient outcomes and satisfaction."

Marc Summerfield, director of pharmacy at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore, says, "The automated component should reduce a large volume of paperwork and lead to improved work satisfaction on the part of nurses and pharmacy technicians. We also look forward to this system enhancing the accuracy and legibility of medication records." Summerfield plans to use MedEx as a vital link in his vision to automate the medication use process from the loading dock to the bedside. He plans to work with his partners, Aethon and Omnicell, to create an interface that enables the MedEx system to automate the unit-based cabinet restocking process for additional improvements in efficiency and accuracy.

Combining passive radio frequency identification (RFID) technology and biometrics capabilities built into the TUGs' secure carts, MedEx automatically creates an electronic chain-of-custody receipt (person, location, date/time) indicating when an item is placed in and removed from the TUG. The MedEx system's tracking capabilities extend to refrigerators, lock boxes, nurse servers and automated dispensing cabinets to provide additional assurance that all medications have reached their final destination and have been properly stored.

In addition to improving regulatory compliance related to the delivery and storage of medications, MedEx solves one of the most prevalent and frustrating operational problems in hospitals today – missing medications. “Our exclusive chain-of-custody record significantly reduces time spent tracking down or replacing lost medications,” says Zini. “Plus, the MedEx system allows nurses to spend more time at the patient bedside, reduces order-to-delivery time, and offers greater peace of mind for patient and hospital staff.”

“In addition to these advantages, pharmacies can reap significant cost savings because some of the missing medications are expensive and never recovered,” adds Summerfield. “MedEx can reduce these losses.”

About Aethon: Aethon is a leader in healthcare supply chain logistics, chain-of-custody and workflow solutions that automate the movement of equipment and supplies throughout the hospital. At the core of Aethon’s solution is a proprietary autonomous mobile robot, known as the TUG, which can be used to deliver, track and retrieve medications, supplies, meals, equipment and more. TUGs improve asset utilization, ensure regulatory compliance, reduce costs, enhance clinical productivity, improve workflow and allow clinicians to focus on patient care. Hospitals using TUGs realize an ROI of 20 to 50 percent, while improving nurse and patient satisfaction. More information is available at www.aethon.com.

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