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## Press Release

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### **Robots Lend a Hand at D.C. Hospital**

#### ***Providence Hospital relies on its new “employees” to improve patient care by delivering, tracking variety of supplies***

October 25, 2006 — Providence Hospital in Washington, D.C., has six new high-tech “employees” that are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and never need a break. The innovative robotic transport system and asset tracking solution – devised by Aethon, Inc. – sets Providence apart from all the other area hospitals.

The robotic system consists of two components, TUG<sup>®</sup>, acts as a courier, delivering a wide variety of supplies throughout the hospital. HOMER<sup>™</sup> provides tracking of key hospital assets via RFID technology.

“Aethon’s system helps us ensure that our clinical caregivers are spending their valuable time caring for patients,” said Mike Thompson, Vice President of Marketing and Government Affairs. “TUGs free up healthcare professionals to focus on patient care and the more important aspects of their job.”

Slightly bigger than the base of a household vacuum cleaner, TUG is designed to work in conjunction with a wide variety of hospital carts. It replaces the need to have professional staff pushing carts to pick up and deliver medication, supplies, and meals. TUGs automate and monitor the delivery of goods, pulling the carts to programmed destinations throughout the hospital when needed. Providence uses Aethon’s robotic system to expedite deliveries in its materials management, pharmacy, lab, and dietary departments.

“Before we ‘hired’ TUG, professional staff was responsible for hospital transport. In a pinch, nurses, pharmacists, and lab technicians had to spend valuable time acting like hospital runners – ferrying equipment, lab specimens, and medication,” said Mark Todd, Director, Materials Management.

Staff can dispatch TUG by an easy-to-use graphical interface on either a touch screen or a hospital PC. During deliveries, the screen displays a map of the TUG’s location. A series of sensors or “light whiskers” detect obstacles (such as beds, doors, water fountains, or people) in TUG’s path and keep it a set distance from corridor walls. When TUG senses an object, it navigates around the person or thing. When it is finished making a delivery, TUG returns to its docking station.

Like a tugboat, TUG is a compact, rugged system, and features Aethon’s patented navigation system. Durable, non-skid wheels offer precise control and a hauling power up to 500 pounds. Four batteries provide up to 10 hours of continuous operation and are automatically recharged when TUG is docked on its home base.

Recently, Providence Hospital tapped HOMER, Aethon's asset-tracking system, to:

1. Identify equipment as it comes through the door
2. Track equipment that moves
3. Easily identify equipment that needs to be served or replaced
4. Allow nurses to look at inventory and request necessary equipment

HOMER, a unique asset tracking technology, will enable Providence to take its asset tracking to new levels of efficiency and dependability; it is currently in a beta phase. Leveraging the TUG platform and employing a single mobile antenna, HOMER eliminates the typical infrastructure hurdles of other less innovative systems. It is quick and efficient to install. Providence anticipates that this will translate into more efficient organization and location of pumps, wheelchairs, monitors, respirators, beds, and virtually any other assets hospitals are interested in tracking.

"Aethon offers hospitals a complete, simple, and reliable system," said Todd. "Aethon's solution is more comprehensive and complete than I had envisioned. There was no comparison between TUG and HOMER and more conventional, alternative systems. They were either very expensive or were missing important parts. Aethon integrates automated delivery as part of its asset tracking solution, ensuring that we will not only know where our assets are, but that they are where they should be."

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About Providence: Chartered by President Abraham Lincoln in 1861, Providence Hospital stands as the oldest continuously operating hospital in the Nation's Capital and a symbol of commitment to the healthcare needs of the metropolitan area. The 382-bed medical facility and 240-bed nursing and rehabilitation center fulfills the mission to the sick and the poor with joy, care, respect, while at the same time embracing the best that medical science has to offer.

A member of Ascension health System, the country's largest not-for-profit healthcare system, Providence Health System serves the community through diverse and qualified teams of physicians, nurses, technicians, and support staff. Programs operated in conjunction with other major healthcare providers throughout the region offer patients and the community a wide array of services for both treatment and prevention.

About Aethon: Based in Pittsburgh, PA, Aethon is a leader in providing practical, dependable, and affordable robotics for hospitals. Aethon's first commercialized product, TUG, is an automated courier system for the delivery and tracking of hospital goods and supplies. TUG saves hospitals thousands of dollars, is simple to install, and can be applied across a variety of applications. For more information, visit <http://www.aethon.com>.

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