

Press Release

Vitaphone Medication Adherence Support System PICO awarded design

Vitaphone's PICO wins prestigious red dot design award

TILBURG, the Netherlands, August 17, 2009. Vitaphone's Medication Adherence Support System, PICO, was recently awarded with one of the most desired awards in the world.

The innovative device received the the biggest international design prize, red dot design award, in the category "Medical equipment and machinery". In the Aalto Theater in Essen, Germany, the award winners were honoured by a jury of experts in front of 1200 guests from the industries, politics, and media.

With its appealing design and eye for detail the Vitaphone PICO was preferred before its competitors. A total of over 11.000 submissions from 61 countries competed for the awards. Other award-winning designs included the Volkswagen Passat CC in the category "Automobiles, transport and caravans" en the Apple iPod nano in the category "Entertainment technology and cameras".

Matthias Quinger, Chairman of the Vitagroup and CEO of Vitaphone GmbH, Germany, was very pleased with the award: "We are proud of our Dutch colleagues who developed this innovative product", Quinger stated, "thus we added an elegant and appealingly designed, and moreover, very functional product to our portfolio."

"A design competition like this one is a powerful objective test for previously made subjective design decisions" design expert and initiator of the award, professor dr. Peter Zec, stated in his speech during the award ceremony. "Successful participation in a design competition could be an initial indication for the later commercial success of a product", Zec added.

André van Oort, CEO of Vitaphone Nederland b.v., adds "The award is a sign that we are on the right track."

PICO – high tech for health

The Vitaphone PICO is an easy-to-use, compact device that tells its user, (chronically) ill people, when it is time to take his or her medication. Subsequently, the PICO registers whether or not the medication has been taken out at the prescribed time. The PICO contains medication in prepackaged pouches per intake moment packed in a roll on an exchangeable cartridge. The unit is wirelessly connected to a telemedical service, enabling the user to check the correct medication time and dosage at any time.

Thus, the PICO supports, controls, and optimizes the timely intake of medication and supports the patient in his medication adherence: the extent to which individuals take their medications as prescribed by their doctor.

Connected to the telemedical service of Vitaphone, the PICO assures that the user does not forget to take his medication. André van Oort adds: „The patient can e.g. when he goes to work, take out several pouches with medication (equals several intake moments). The patient's mobile phone than takes over the alert functionality of the PICO. All data are sent to the telemedical service and permanently monitored, around the clock. On demand, repeated alerts can also be sent to other caregivers".

Background: reduce medication costs, increase quality of life

Around a quarter of all prescribed medication is not taken according to directions. The effects of this so called non-compliance for the health care system are enormous. It leads to an increase in morbidity and mortality, (repeated) hospital admissions, and so on.

E.g. in the Netherlands, incorrect medication intake annually results in 19.000 avoidable hospital admissions, which unfortunately leads to hundreds of deaths. Calculations reveal that this leads to a loss of hundreds of millions of Euro's each year. Patient's non-adherence to prescribed medication is an important factor in a medication related hospital admission. Improving medication adherence therefore is a continuous point of attention for the treating physician and the pharmacist, and the PICO can play an important role in this.

"The PICO support system significantly decreases the chances of taking the wrong dosis of medication or a wrong (fatal) combination of medication and the hospital admissions resulting from this", according to André van Oort. "At present, usually a family member or home care nurse sorts out the tablets for the days or week ahead. Unfortunately, people make mistakes and in this case this occurs more often than desired. Also, the preparation of a patient's medications isn't a task of non-health care professionals.

The chances of an error in non-pre-packaged medication dispensing and intake are estimated to be around 20%. Medication to be used in combination with the PICO is pre-packaged per intake moment by the pharmacist's supplier. Because of the stringent control procedures during the pre-packaging process the aforementioned errors can be reduced to virtually zero. Thus, using pre-packaged medication will reduce the potential for human error and increase patient safety.

About Vitaphone

Vitaphone Nederland b.v. (www.vitaphone.nl) and Vitaphone GmbH both are members of the Vitagroup. The Vitagroup has offices and telemedical service centers around the world, among others in Germany, the Netherlands, USA, and China.

Vitaphone is specialized in state-of-the-art telemedical products and services and sets new standards on the transfer of biosignals and biochemical parameters (telemedicine) with modern communication tools, and integrate these into innovative service concepts.

The telemedical services are provided by the Vitaphone Telemedical Service Centers. The medically educated employees of the Vitaphone service centers guide and monitor thousands of cardiovascular patients for more than 5 years. For the Benelux this is done from the Vitaphone Telemedical Service Center located in Maastricht, the Netherlands.

Vitaphone products and services can be implemented on a broad scale. Next to primary and secondary care Vitaphone offers International Clinical Trial Services.

Vitaphone PICO



„never forget your medication“

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