

Spotlight On Health Care

Patient Identification Secure “In The Palm Of Your Hand”

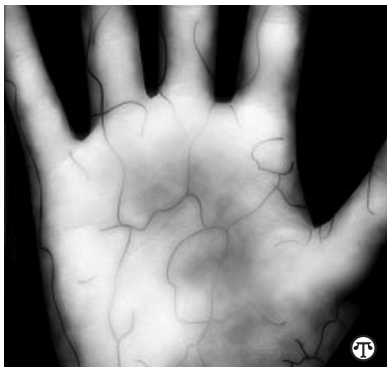
(NAPSA)—Advanced technology helps increase patient safety and security in a handy way. Patients at NYU Langone Medical Center can now register for health care services by simply scanning their hands using a new vein recognition technology. This can minimize the need for them to publicly share personal information, such as Social Security or driver’s license numbers.

The palm scanner uses a safe, near-infrared light to read the palm’s vein pattern, which is 100 times less likely to be duplicated than fingerprints. The digital palm image is then converted into a unique patient identifier that interfaces with the medical center’s electronic health record system and securely links to the patient’s electronic health record. At each visit, a patient simply places his or her hand on a small black box to automatically register.

“PatientSecure provides a safe, secure, easy and fast way for patients to register for care. It not only protects privacy and enhances quality but transforms the patient experience,” said Bernard A. Birnbaum, M.D., senior vice president and vice dean, chief of hospital operations.

According to Dr. Birnbaum, it is common for patients at a large urban medical center to share the same first and last names. For instance, at NYU Langone alone, two or more patients share the same name more than 125,000 times. The new technology significantly reduces the chances of misidentification.

The palm scanner also provides enhanced protection against medical identity theft. The number of medical identity thefts more than doubled in a year, with more than 275,000 cases reported, and experts expect the problem to worsen. In addition to unexpected



A palm scanner helps one hospital keep patient records safe and secure.

medical expenses, medical identity theft can result in altered personal medical and health insurance records information such as blood type, history of drug or alcohol abuse, and test results. This could mean inappropriate treatment, injury, illness, even death.

Additionally, quick identification in time-sensitive situations can lead to faster treatment and better outcomes. If a patient without identification arrives at the medical center unconscious or unable to communicate, a quick palm scan can immediately identify him or her and the medical professionals can be alerted to crucial information, including medical history, allergies and current medications.

According to NYU Langone patient Michael Baldwin, 55, “PatientSecure makes my doctor’s visit faster and keeps my personal information secure. This technology makes you feel like a VIP. You just put your palm on the scanner and you’re done registering at your doctor’s office—no clipboard, no hassle of paperwork to check in, plus, it’s absolutely secure.”

You can learn more at www.med.nyu.edu and (212) 263-7300.