

AT&T, Alere Partner On Diabetes Tools

Diabetes patients will be able to monitor their vital signs via mobile devices and the Web, using WellDoc's DiabetesManager system.

By Nicole Lewis
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AT&T has joined forces with Alere Health to offer WellDoc's DiabetesManager system to adults with type 2 diabetes. The program will allow diabetes patients to monitor their vital signs anytime and anywhere. Alere Health offers care management programs in conjunction with health plans, physicians, and employers, and it currently serves over 290,000 individuals with diabetes.

Participants in the program, outlined in a joint [statement](#), will be able to enter blood glucose readings and medication data into DiabetesManager's health application on their compatible mobile device or the Web. Once the information is uploaded via AT&T's network, the data is sent to Alere Health's advanced clinical care management system, Apollo, which contains information about the patient's medical history. Alere Health will provide nurses 24 hours a day to assess patients' information and identify whether glucose readings are normal or not. If the patient's glucose readings are abnormal, a nurse will call the patient to provide real-time feedback regarding their blood glucose control and suggest immediate actions to address the problem.

[Diabetes](#) is a major cause of heart disease and stroke, and the leading cause of kidney failure. Nearly 26 million Americans have diabetes and an estimated 79 million adults have pre-diabetes. If current trends continue, as many as one in three U.S. adults could have diabetes by 2050, according to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

With this personalized approach to diabetes care management, Alere Health hopes to prevent a patient's health condition from deteriorating, which often leads to hospital emergency room visits and a higher cost of care. The FDA-cleared DiabetesManager will target higher risk and more acute patients, in contrast to Alere's Mya solution that is designed for lower risk patients.

Alere is AT&T's business customer, and the announcement not only expands the relationship between the two companies, but will help AT&T enhance its own mobile health strategy, Randall Porter, assistant VP of AT&T ForHealth, said in an interview with *InformationWeek Healthcare*.

"mHealth is an area increasingly being recognized as offering promising solutions for enhancing patient engagement and improving outcomes. mHealth solutions can enable caregivers to really have insight into what is happening with a patient at home or on the move and bridge that gap as it exists today," Porter said.

AT&T and Alere Health will jointly market and sell the solution to health plans and corporate payers. Further clarifying the arrangement, Porter said [AT&T](#) will sublicense WellDoc's DiabetesManager to Alere. Alere will integrate its Apollo care management platform with DiabetesManager, and then sell the combined system as part of its core portfolio.

Mobile health firms are developing new sales channels by strategically partnering with more established companies that can introduce their products to a wider variety of customers. The relationship between WellDoc and AT&T is an example of how a small mHealth firm can expand its market share, explains Anand Iyer, president of WellDoc.

"In the disease management channel, the AT&T mHealth Solutions group acts as our U.S. enterprise sales force, and landing Alere is a fantastic win--not only because they are the largest health management company, but also because Alere shares WellDoc's passion for decentralizing healthcare and empowering patients," Iyer said in an interview with *InformationWeek Healthcare*.

Company officials said the system is expected to be available in the third quarter of this year.