

## Press Release

### **Grapevine Solution's Defero Product & St Vincent's Hospital Group receives a Commendation in "Best Use of IT" at this year's 2009 Healthcare Awards.**

#### **Dublin, Ireland – October 20th 2009.**

This year's Healthcare Awards, sponsored by the Irish Medical Times (IMT), featured Grapevine Solutions messaging product, "Defero" in conjunction with St Vincent's Healthcare Group. The collaboration was awarded a commendation in the category "Best Use of IT" and has proved itself to be a deserving contender for this coveted title.

In June 2009 the IMT reported on a survey the HSE carried out in 30 hospitals over a 3-month period. The HSE surveyed missed appointments, which are internally classified as "Did Not Attend" or DNA rates by the HSE.

The survey found that over 100,000 appointments were missed, and with an estimated cost of €80 per DNA, that equates to €8 million. The HSE expects the cost of DNA's for 2009 to be in the region of €33 million. This is a world-wide problem and the NHS in the UK estimates that DNA's will cost approximately £750 million per annum.

St Vincent's sees around 143,000 outpatients annually with an average DNA rate of 23 per cent, representing almost 30,000 missed appointments per year. In December 2008 St. Vincent's decided to tackle this problem & tendered for a new text messaging solution to send appointment reminders to patients. Grapevine was awarded the contract in early 2009 and a pilot project commenced soon after.

The 3-month pilot project was carried out with 2 of the busiest clinics in St. Vincent's Hospital: ENT and Nutrition & Dietetics. Patients attending the ENT clinic were automatically sent an appointment reminder via an interface with the hospital's Patient Administration System. The Nutrition & Dietetics clinic used the Defero web client to manually send appointment reminders as needed. The pilot was a major success with DNA rates reduced by 44% over the trial period. St. Vincent's have a target DNA rate of 5%. Since the successful completion of the pilot, new clinics such as Neurology & Urology have also been included.

As well as contacting patients, other hospital services such as the Nurse Bank were able to use the Defero Contacts Module to communicate with hospital staff. It is envisaged that Defero will be used for other communication purposes throughout the hospital including the hospital Major Emergency Plan.

Dermot Cullinan – Director of ICT in St Vincent's, "Here in St Vincent's we wanted a communication system that would allow us to contact patients & staff quickly, effectively, discreetly and more cost effectively compared to traditional methods."

Martina Corcoran – ICT Project Manager in St Vincent's, "Reducing the DNA rate is the focus of a multidisciplinary team. Defero is a tool that is easy to use and is not time consuming on staff time."

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Grapevine's Defero product was designed to ensure that patients received timely appointment reminders direct to their mobile phone no matter where they are located. This form of communication is cost effective, efficient and direct. Defero can be easily integrated with most Patient Administration Systems and includes a Web portal that allows end users to manually send & schedule appointment reminders

Terry Byrne, Managing Director of Grapevine Solutions says, "Our experience of working with healthcare providers for over 15 years helped us to design Defero so that it was very user-friendly and could be quickly integrated with existing hospital systems & allows the hospital to manage patient & staff communications in line with their existing procedures."

With the successful implementation in St Vincent's and interest from other hospitals, Grapevine expects to establish Defero as the best means to deliver effective staff and patient communication. Whether it is to notify emergency staff, remind patients of their appointments or inform nurses of new shifts, Defero gets the message across.

### **About St Vincent's Hospital Group**

St Vincent's Healthcare Group, (incorporating St Vincent's University Hospital, St Vincent's Private Hospital and St Michael's Hospital) provides acute general medical care serving the South East region of Dublin and surrounding areas.

### **About Grapevine Solutions**

Grapevine Solutions, established in March 1996 is an Irish based IT company that provides leading edge products and software services. Based in Dublin, its team of experienced staff has a wide range of project management, system design and development skills as well as expertise with a wide range of business sectors. Grapevine Solutions is Ireland's leading supplier of Intersystems technology.

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