

LATIN AMERICA'S FIRST NATIONAL TELEMAMMOGRAPHY NETWORK LAUNCHED IN PANAMA

Preventative health project launched during breast cancer awareness month

A new 'telehealth' project has been launched in Panama to create electronic mammography records for all female patients so that scans can be sent and viewed by experts in other countries. The project has been launched by Cable & Wireless Panama, the Panama business of Cable & Wireless Communications, who will be paid \$8.5 million by the Ministry of Health to create Latin America's first national 'telemammography' network.

Initially, 10 hospitals will create digital x ray records for patients linked to a new electronic appointments system. A mobile unit, purchased by Panama's First Lady's office, has also been equipped with x ray equipment to generate electronic records and is already operating in rural areas of the country.

The new electronic work system will allow Panama's Ministry of Health to provide faster diagnoses to patients. Doctors will have secure remote access to records. That will also enable overseas specialists to access and assess files if required. All the data will be securely hosted in Cable & Wireless Panama's data centres.

The project has been jointly launched by Cable & Wireless Panama, the Ministry of Health and the First Lady's office to coincide with Pink Ribbon Month 2010, which supports women and the diagnosis of breast cancer.

According to Panama's National Cancer Institute, one in nine women over 40 years old is likely to get breast cancer. However, currently only 10% of women in Panama aged over 40 gets tested for the disease early enough for effective treatment. Panama reports more than 500 cases of breast cancer annually, causing over 160 deaths each year.

Telemammography is the latest social telecoms project to be launched by Cable & Wireless Communications, which is developing a set of products to deliver telecoms-enabled public services and important projects for social change. Telemammography builds upon the teleradiology service which Cable & Wireless Panama launched in 2008.

Tony Rice, Chief Executive of Cable & Wireless Communications, commented:

"Telemammography is the latest social telecoms project which we have launched in Panama. It is a fact that early detection of breast cancer saves lives and we are very pleased to be supporting the Panamanian Government in delivering such a result for its citizens. Like teleradiology, this will improve diagnosis and lead to more successful treatment. We are proud to be part of the team that has developed this service."

Contacts

Cable & Wireless Communications

Media

Lachlan Johnston	+44(0) 207 315 4006 / +44 (0) 7800 021 405
Steve Smith	+44(0) 207 315 4070/ +44 (0) 7785 778 375

Investors

Sheldon Bruha	+44(0) 20 7315 4178
Kunal Patel	+44(0) 20 7315 4083

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