



## UofL Health Care's announces remote physician presence robot network in Central & Western Kentucky

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**(Monday Nov. 5, 2007, Louisville-Owensboro, KY)**—As the region's leading academic medical center, UofL Health Care (which is comprised of University of Louisville's Health Sciences Center, University of Louisville Hospital and University Physicians Associates) announced today that it is creating a remote physician presence robot network, as one part of its initiative across Central and Western Kentucky. UofL Health Care is also announcing that Owensboro Medical Health System (OMHS) in Owensboro, Kentucky, will be its first partner in the remote physician presence robot network.

UofL Health Care's robot network will provide the highly specialized expertise and support resources of the UofL medical faculty to outlying hospitals via a remote controlled robot. The network is the first of its kind in Kentucky, and will provide quality medical care to hospitals in Central & Western Kentucky in a way that will bring together the capacity at regional hospitals and those of the University Health Sciences Center. UofL Health Care is looking to form partnerships with many other hospitals in Central and Western Kentucky in this exciting new endeavor.

The remote physician presence robot network is one aspect of the Central and Western Kentucky initiative, which is designed to extend UofL Health Care's capacity in a cooperative and complementary fashion, which will improve patient access to a wider range of specialists, technologies and services. The program is designed as a partnership with regional health centers that will create better diagnoses, allow patients to remain in their regions where appropriate and create a direct access to treatments in Louisville's health care community.

At today's high-tech news conference, OMHS President and CEO Dr. Jeff Barber announced to the Owensboro audience that OMHS is proud to be the first Kentucky health care organization to partner with UofL Health Care in this exciting new frontier of medicine." Owensboro Medical Health System is committed to providing the best health

care to our patients using the latest medical innovations. UofL is also deeply dedicated to this mission and this latest initiative will build on our existing relationship.”

Owensboro Medical Health System is a 447-bed, tertiary care facility. As a regional medical center, it serves patients in nine counties in western Kentucky (Davies, Breckinridge, Hancock, Ohio, McLean, Muhlenberg, Henderson, Hopkins, and Webster) and two southern Indiana counties (Perry and Spencer).

UofL President Dr. James Ramsey said “Adding the services of InTouch Health’s remote physician presence robot to the array of University of Louisville’s advanced medical services allows us to strengthen our collaboration with doctors across the state, and thus improving patient care for all. Today is another important step in growing our already strong partnership with OMHS. This team effort is providing vital health care benefits to the people in the Owensboro area.”

The RP-7™ Robot (invented, designed & manufactured by InTouch Health, Santa Barbara, California) through the utilization of a secured wireless, broadband, internet connection, can provide physician care to patients in another location. Within moments of a request for a medical consultation, a UofL Health Care physician, seated at a computer ControlStation (either at home, office, airport terminal, or anywhere in the world that has a wireless connection) connects via the Internet to the RP-7 Robot located in the OMHS Emergency Room to consult on the patient.

For today’s announcement, Michael Chan, Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing, participated in the Owensboro news conference via robot from InTouch’s California headquarters; and InTouch Health Founder, Chairman and CEO Yulun Wang, PhD logged into the Louisville site via robot, also from InTouch’s headquarters in California.

“Our first robot was invented five years ago with the vision in mind that hospitals could create a robotic network to extend the expertise and provide patients with immediate access to physicians with specialized expertise, creating a more complete continuum of care,” said Wang.

Through the robot (which stands 5 feet 6 inches tall), a doctor can interact and converse with a patient, patient’s family, physician or nurse through a live, two-way audio and video. Using a joystick, the camera and the guidance of 360-degree infrared sensors, the physician can maneuver the robot through the hospital to a patient’s bedside and move the robot’s head to view vital signs on monitors and charts. The physician drives the robot through remote access, and the robot is *almost* self sufficient; the only thing it needs assistance with is plugging in to recharge the robot’s battery.

Before Barber and University of Louisville Hospital President James Taylor gave the virtual thumbs up (via the robot) to each other on the partnership, Taylor remarked “While of course the preference is to always have a physician to patient, face to face interaction at the bedside, this technology will help UofL Health Care physicians connect

with patients without having to physically travel hundreds of miles away. This can provide faster access to the physician resources available at the University of Louisville.”

With a national specialized physician shortage that is often more pronounced outside metropolitan areas, UofL Health Care is poised to help provide a solution to Kentucky’s problem with an innovative solution—thanks to InTouch Health.

Dr. Larry Cook, Executive Vice President for Health Affairs, conceived the UofL Health Care Central and Western Kentucky initiative following fifteen years of developing programs in the region. “Our intent is to complement the great services of OMHS and others,” said Dr. Cook. “There are many highly qualified physicians providing service in Central and Western Kentucky. This is our attempt to provide a linkage between our academic medical center in Louisville, and those hospitals and physicians in Western and Central Kentucky wishing to access services on an as-needed basis.”

Dr. Gerard Rabalais, Chair of UofL’s Department of Pediatrics and Chair of University Physicians Associates (which is a part of UofL Health Care), commented “The expertise and resources of UofL Health Care physicians can be provided through a robot anywhere in the state—or eventually the world. It also solves the problem of being in two places at once. The physician can provide the appropriate diagnosis to a patient in Owensboro and then return to his/her patients in Louisville. This will allow University of Louisville physicians to more efficiently partner with health care providers across the state and create the best plan of treatment for patients.”

OMHS stroke patients will be the first patients to benefit from the UofL Health Care Robot network partnership. OMHS' Emergency Department and neurology specialists will be assisted by University of Louisville's nationally renowned Neurology physicians, specializing in stroke, movement disorders (including Parkinson's disease) and other subspecialties of neurology.

Discussions are underway to add the University’s Department of Pediatrics resources and services to OHMS. “We are happy to provide those services that the OMHS needs and we can support,” Rabalais added.

UofL Health Care, as an academic medical center, can also offer additional services to OMHS, including: pediatric cardiology, neonatology, maternal fetal medicine and GI/hepatology. Additional services are available to other regional hospitals as those partnerships develop.

With today’s announcement UofL Health Care also launched the University of Louisville Stroke Network, an initiative designed to increase stroke diagnosis and provide earlier treatment. As Kentucky’s first Joint Commission designated primary stroke center, University Hospital’s Stroke Center leads the state’s outreach efforts of stroke education, treatment and prevention. This has won University Hospital’s Stroke Center national recognition and awards from the American Heart/Stroke Association.

Director of University Hospital Stroke Center and Interim Chair of UofL's Department of Neurology Dr. Kerri S. Remmel has been testing and utilizing the robot within University Hospital to round on stroke patients.

She was also on-call this past weekend for OMHS. Thanks to the robot, Dr. Remmel was able to quickly assess and treat two neurological patients at OMHS.

During today's news conference in Louisville, Dr. Remmel demonstrated how the physician control station works and interacted with the Owensboro audience via robot.

"The robot is a valuable physician tool. I have found that using the robot means that patients can be accessed more quickly, which expands treatment and intervention opportunities, and eventually opens up opportunities for enrollment in national clinical trials that benefit all patients," said Remmel. "With stroke, time saved is brain saved. The earlier a patient is diagnosed, the earlier the best treatments can be applied," she added.

OMHS is the first to sign on to partner with UofL Health Care in this unique endeavor. As UofL Health Care works to set up his remote presence robot network in Central and Western Kentucky, more partner hospitals will be announced as they sign on to join UofL Health Care in the state's groundbreaking initiative.

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***About UofL Health Care:***

University of Louisville Hospital, University Physicians Associates and the James Graham Brown Cancer Center are part of UofL Health Care, the region's leading academic, research, and teaching medical center. All UofL Health Care services are associated with the University of Louisville Health Sciences Center. Our patients benefit from the latest medical advances, often long before they become available in non-teaching settings. University Hospital's Stroke Center is designated a primary stroke center by the Joint Commission—the first hospital in the state of Kentucky to have this designation, joining the ranks of more than 400 primary stroke centers nationwide. For more information on all of UofL Health Care's service lines, please visit [www.uoflhealthcare.org](http://www.uoflhealthcare.org).

This latest project is building upon the University of Louisville and Owensboro Medical Health System's existing and ongoing partnership to improve patient care in Central and Western Kentucky. In 2006, the James Graham Brown Cancer Center at UofL in partnership with OMHS opened the Owensboro Cancer Research Program. The cancer research center at the OMHS Mitchell Memorial Cancer Center specializes in cancer drugs grown and developed in plants.

For media inquiries, please contact Lucha Ramey, UofL Health Care, 502-562-8022, [luchara@ulh.org](mailto:luchara@ulh.org).

***About Owensboro Medical Health System:***

**OMHS** serves an 11-county region in Western Kentucky and Southern Indiana. Our mission is to heal the sick and improve the health of our community with a vision to meet the region's healthcare needs by actively listening and partnering with those we serve. OMHS is a full-service hospital, employing a workforce of over 3,000. In addition to hospital and rehabilitation services, OMHS includes the HealthPark – a medical-based fitness center – home health services, a wound healing center, two outpatient diagnostic centers, the Mitchell Memorial Cancer Center and the McAuley Clinic, which provides health care for the uninsured; OMHS also operates MultiCare, Madisonville. For more information, please visit [www.omhs.org](http://www.omhs.org).

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***About InTouch Health:***

InTouch Technologies, Inc. (d.b.a. InTouch Health®) is a privately held company based in Santa Barbara, California. The company has pioneered Remote Presence technology for hospital providers. Through its RP-7 Remote Presence Robotic System, a proprietary mobile robotic and communications platform, doctors are able to consult with hospital-based patients and staff more easily and frequently. The InTouch Health solution leverages the time and expertise of healthcare professionals across multiple care facilities, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of care delivery. More information on InTouch is available at [www.intouchhealth.com](http://www.intouchhealth.com).

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