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**CENTER FOR  
CONNECTED HEALTH**

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**PARTNERS HEALTHCARE CENTER FOR CONNECTED HEALTH  
AWARDED MCKESSON FOUNDATION GRANT  
TO DEVELOP TEXT MESSAGING PROGRAM FOR DIABETES PATIENTS**

BOSTON, OCTOBER 18, 2011 -- The Center for Connected Health, a division of Partners HealthCare, today announced it has received a research grant from the McKesson Foundation's Mobilizing for Health initiative, to develop a text messaging program to help diabetes patients better manage their condition. The goal of the Mobilizing for Health initiative is to improve health outcomes among under-served patients with chronic diseases using mobile health (mHealth) technologies that have proven successful. The grant program aims to provide a clearer understanding of how mobile phones can be used to improve health outcomes, and study findings could indirectly impact millions of patients around the world.

"We are honored to have been selected by the McKesson Foundation as a 2011 grant recipient," said Joseph C. Kvedar, MD, Director, Center for Connected Health. "Our experience with text messaging programs in underserved patient populations is demonstrating great potential for providing low-cost, accessible educational messaging to patients, and we applaud the Foundation for their support of innovative, technology-driven solutions for chronic disease management."

"The Mobilizing for Health research grants allow us to increase the evidence base for mobile health interventions," said Carrie Varoquiers, President of the McKesson Foundation. "The use of mobile phones in healthcare seems very promising, especially in low-income populations with chronic diseases, but we need to better understand what works before these interventions can be scaled."

The Center's randomized, controlled clinical trial will integrate a text messaging program into an existing Diabetes Self-Management and Education (DSME) program at three of Massachusetts General Hospital's community health centers representing medically underserved and low-income populations in the Boston area. The goal of this study is to assess the effect of personalized text messages on clinical outcomes and physical activity in patients with Type 2 Diabetes, many of whom are obese or have low levels of activity. Results will be measured by change in HbA1c (the clinical measure for blood sugar control), as well as patients' engagement, usability and satisfaction with the program. This study will also use pedometers to measure physical activity, to better target messages to engage patients in behavior change to increase their activity levels.

Text messages will include coaching to improve activity levels, and reminder, educational and motivational messages to help patients meet their diabetes self-management goals. The text messages, offered in English or Spanish, will be personalized for each patient based on their initial stage of behavior change, or willingness to change behavior.

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“While DSME programs have shown to reduce complications, improve diabetes self-management and quality of life, diabetic patients are likely to discontinue recommended behavior changes without ongoing support,” noted Kamal Jethwani, MD, MPH, Lead Research Scientist, Center for Connected Health, and Principal Investigator for this study. “By adding two key connected health cornerstones – objective data collection and targeted personalized feedback – we believe that patients will adopt new behaviors sooner and maintain healthy behavior for longer. And, because text messaging is a low-cost, widely available technology, we hope to improve the overall quality of diabetes management for a larger pool of patients.”

#### McKesson Foundation Vision and Mission

Founded in 1943, the McKesson Foundation envisions a world where affordable, quality healthcare is available to all. The Foundation is dedicated to supporting McKesson employees' community involvement efforts and improving the health of patients through improved healthcare quality, personal health management, and lower healthcare costs. To that end, each year the McKesson Foundation contributes more than \$5 million to nonprofit organizations working in our communities.

#### About the Center for Connected Health

The Center for Connected Health, a division of Partners HealthCare, is creating effective, new solutions and innovative interventions to deliver quality patient care outside of the traditional medical setting. Our programs use a combination of remote-monitoring technology, sensors, and online communications and intelligence to improve patient adherence, engagement and clinical outcomes. The Center also offers expert online second opinions, virtual visits, and engages in innovative research to uncover new models for better care. The Center's Consulting Services assist companies, providers and other organizations to learn more about entering the connected health space and to prepare products and services for integration into the healthcare delivery system. Visit [www.connected-health.org](http://www.connected-health.org).

Boston-based Partners HealthCare is an integrated health system founded in 1994 by Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital. In addition to its two academic medical centers, the Partners system also includes community and specialty hospitals, community health centers, a physician network, home health and long-term care services, and other health-related entities. Partners is one of the nation's leading biomedical research organizations and a principal teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School. Partners is a non-profit organization. Visit [www.partners.org](http://www.partners.org).

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