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## Telehealth System Offers Universal Connectivity

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Ideal Life claims its wireless health monitoring system is the first to transmit and process data to cell phones, tablets, PDAs, and PCs.

Ideal Life, Inc., has announced that its wireless health monitoring system now offers universal mobile connectivity, which enables its medical devices to transmit and process data to cell phones, tablets, PDAs, and computers -- making it the first Telehealth vendor to offer this feature, the company said.

The Toronto-based firm revealed this week that its wireless monitoring system is compatible with devices from Apple, Nokia, Motorola, and Sony Ericsson.

Ideal Life develops telehealth devices such as blood pressure monitors and glucose meters which are mainly used in hospital and home care settings. These devices close the long distance gap between patients and doctors by using wireless communications to process health information via telecommunications and electronic information processing technologies.

"People's communication preferences are moving away from wired to wireless options. Now, they can communicate their health information easily through their favorite communication channel or device," said Jason Goldberg, president of Ideal Life. "To make it possible for remote health monitoring to be practiced on a broad scale, we must have this wide range of connectivity options available to patients and to providers," Goldberg added.

According to Goldberg, Ideal Life's remote health monitoring system uses a wireless gateway for all devices. In most cases the Ideal Life Pod is used to allow all devices to automatically record and send data to health care providers.

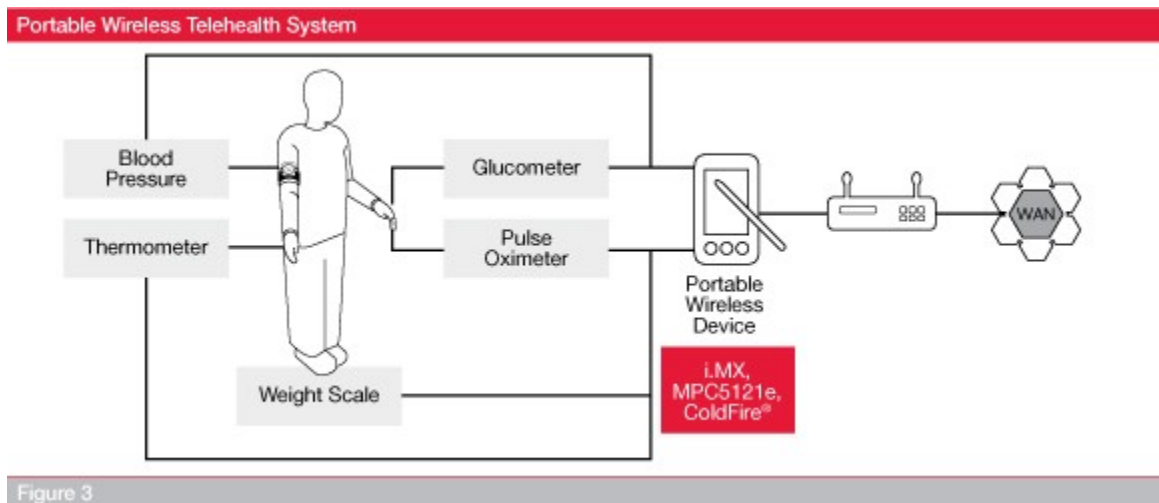


Figure 3

While telehealth devices offer great potential, however, they have not as yet evolved into a mainstream application, which is a difficulty that companies like Ideal Life face.

"Medical solutions such as those developed by Ideal Life face many challenges. Paramount among them is the need to gain acceptance among healthcare professionals and patients, as well as reimbursement by payers," said Liz Boehm, analyst at Forrester Research covering healthcare and life sciences.

Boehm also said while Ideal Life's universal wireless connectivity removes a potential technical barrier, it does not address the key issues that have hampered growth in the remote monitoring market.

"Until patients, [who] have strong personal and financial motivations to make serious lifestyle adjustments, and payers and providers [that] agree on an equitable reimbursement model that rewards physicians for outcomes without holding them responsible for bad behavior on the part of their patients, this market will continue to struggle," Boehm said.

Goldberg acknowledges these problems, saying to date telehealth devices have primarily been pilot programs serving small groups of patients and health consumers.

He also pointed out other barriers to telehealth device adoption, such as the expense of products, the difficulty of use, especially for older patients, the limited connectivity options and the complexity of exchanging data between patients and doctors drawbacks that he thinks his company's technology will overcome.

"Using technology that is easily integrated into providers' data networks, including various health record applications, make it easy to use," Goldberg said. "Our products are designed based on how people live, so they fit seamlessly into people's lifestyles," he added.

Ideal Life will be showcasing its products at the American Telemedicine Association conference, May 16-18, in San Antonio, Texas.

By Nicole Lewis

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