



SoundCare Fills Communications Gaps for University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Health System

A SoundCare®
on-hold messaging
case study

“What Vericom does is important. People don’t realize they are holding when they are listening to valuable information, and that really helps increase patient satisfaction.”

Daphne Hoyt, RN Nurse Coordinator
HealthFinder Call Center, UAB

One Solution—Many Uses

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Health System is one of the leading patient care centers in the U.S., with an innovative network of health services including a 908 bed hospital, specialty eye hospital, physician clinics, and health centers.

Vericom serves both The Kirklin Clinic® and UAB’s HealthFinder Call Center with its on hold and in queue communications solution, SoundCare®.

A specially designed outpatient care center, The Kirklin Clinic is home to more than 700 physicians—leaders in patient care, teaching, and medical research.

UAB’s HealthFinder is a nationwide telephone service providing easy access to UAB physicians and health services. Registered Nurses assist callers in evaluating their particular health care needs and referring them to the appropriate physician or service.

All Programs Big And Small

At both The Kirklin Clinic and the HealthFinder Call Center, UAB’s marketing department routinely uses SoundCare to promote profitable service lines, such as cardiac and cancer. Additionally, SoundCare fills the needs of other departments that don’t always get the visibility enjoyed by UAB’s top service lines. SoundCare gives these departments an outlet to inform the community about their services, including free screenings and health observance events.

For example, UAB’s EatRight nutrition and weight management program has been very successful in enlisting program participants via SoundCare messages.

“In 2004, 32% of callers who inquired about EatRight enrolled in the program as a result of hearing SoundCare messages. In the first quarter of 2005, that number increased to 53%.”

Suzanne Henson MS, RD Coordinator
EatRight Weight Management Program
UAB Health System

Summary

SoundCare:

- **Promotes Programs**
SoundCare accounted for 53% of registrants for EatRight nutrition and weight management program
- **Increases Patient Satisfaction**
Listening to valuable information while on hold in the HealthFinder Call Center helps increase patient satisfaction
- **Markets in Real Time**
Last minute programs and events get a voice with SoundCare

"In 2004, 32% of callers who inquired about EatRight enrolled in the program as a result of hearing SoundCare messages. In the first quarter of 2005, that number increased to 53%," says Suzanne Henson, MS, RD, Coordinator, EatRight Weight Management Program.

Another gap SoundCare fills in marketing is in the area of 'real time' communications. Printed materials are a key part of UAB's marketing strategy, and the marketing department plans far in advance to meet printing deadlines. However, opportunities arise and departments frequently ask to promote events at the last minute. While print deadlines may have passed, it is never too late to develop SoundCare messages.

"I know I can always promote a last minute event or program via SoundCare," says Rachael Verschoore Weekley, UAB Marketing Specialist. "SoundCare offers a real time advantage for us over other marketing and print media."

Increasing Patient Satisfaction

SoundCare fills yet another role in the UAB Health System by serving as a source for both information and patient satisfaction in the HealthFinder Call Center.

Informational and educational SoundCare messages enhance each caller's experience while they wait on hold to make appointments and receive physician referrals.

"SoundCare not only occupies callers' time with valuable information about UAB's services and events, it plays a very important role in patient satisfaction," says Daphne Hoyt, RN, Nurse Coordinator for HealthFinder Call Center.

"People often call in for one thing, and by asking a series of questions our nurses can determine if the call is of a clinical nature or not. If we need to put callers briefly on hold to look into something further, I feel good knowing SoundCare is getting important information to them while they wait," adds Hoyt.

"When someone hears a SoundCare message and joins one of our free health membership programs as a result, we now have a new relationship and can communicate further with that individual, encouraging him or her to use our other services. That's powerful!"

Rachael Verschoore Weekley
Marketing Specialist
UAB Health System