



# The Computerworld Honors Program

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## Final Copy of Case Study

**Status:**

Laureate

**Year:**

2013

**Organization Name:**

Lehigh Valley Health Network

**Organization URL:**

[www.lvh.org](http://www.lvh.org)

**Project Name:**

iPads for Home Health Services

**Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:**

Mobile Access

**Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)**

This project was implemented in order to provide Home Care & Hospice nurses with a more effective way to document patients' home visits. Prior to the implementation of the iPads, HomeCare and Hospice Nurses were utilizing laptops and broadband cards for their visits to patient homes. The use of laptops required the nurses to spend time each day transferring patient care documentation to and from laptops in order to have the information required to make their visits to patients' homes. Throughout the day, as the nurses would document their patient visits, the documentation would remain on their laptops until they had an opportunity to transfer data back to the server. If a laptop encountered an issue, there was the possibility for the patient care data to

become corrupted, which meant the nurse lost all of the documentation for the entire day. Losing documentation is highly regarded as a patient safety issue. The use of the iPads in the field has enabled the nurses to have a direct connection to our HomeCare and Hospice application, which allows the nurses to work live on the server as opposed to previously only working with the documentation that was downloaded to their laptops for the day. Working live allows patient visit notes to be visible to any user of the application as soon as it is entered. Working live also means that the nurses save time each day by not having to wait while the laptops transfer each morning and evening. The project also provided a great cost savings to the organization and a morale booster for the users. The field nurses like the ability to carry a smaller, lightweight device with their nursing bags and to have the ability to connect quickly and document the patients' visit notes directly to the application.

**When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)**

This project was first implemented in June of 2012 with ten iPad users. Since that time, the Home Care and Hospice departments continue to deploy iPads to more users. Also, along with deploying iPads, the Home Care and Hospice departments are working more closely with a mobile device management application that provides the ability to quickly enroll devices in our enterprise environment, configure and update device settings over-the-air, enforce security policies and compliance, secure mobile access to corporate resources, and remotely lock and wipe managed devices. The mobile device management application also includes mobile content management, which allows us to secure document distribution and mobile access to documentation. The other technology that is being deployed to the iPads are clinical iPad apps such as medical dictionaries, medication dosage, readmission risk calculators and emergency preparedness. Having these apps easily accessible to nurses as they are seeing patients in their homes has been tremendously effective in assisting patients and their families with concerns regarding the patients' care.

**Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)**

The project is still in the deployment phase. The Home Care and Hospice departments have 150 laptop users. The goal is to convert as many users as possible to iPads. In July of 2012, the departments were able to purchase 50 iPads and in July 2013, Home Care and Hospice will receive more funds in order to purchase an additional 75 iPads. Along with the iPad deployment, the



departments have established a users' group to discuss their iPad usage and best practices for the multiple software applications that are utilized on the iPads.

**Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)**

This project has benefited the Home Care, Hospice and Information Services departments at LVHN by eliminating the need of applying software updates to laptops on a continuous basis. There has also been a significant reduction in the amount of computer equipment that has been broken and in need of repair. In the past, if a laptop user encountered a problem, the local database on the laptop that stored the patient visit documentation would become corrupted. This patient safety concern would often cause nurses to go back and try to re-construct their documentation or notes for each of the patient visits that were conducted within one day. Also, if a spare laptop was not available to the user, then that user would have to use paper documentation and would not have access to the Home Care and Hospice software applications. Therefore, the users would not have the ability to view patient diagnoses, medications, wound information and treatment goals from prior visits.

**Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)**

This project is considered a notable advancement and could be adopted by other organizations. The vendor for the Home Care application that the Home Care and Hospice departments utilize recognizes that none of their other clients have nurses utilizing iPads to document within their clinical application in patient homes. The LVHN Home Care, Hospice and Information Services departments will be making a presentation regarding the use of iPads in patient homes during the vendor's national users' conference in April of 2013. Furthermore, another local Home Care and Hospice agency within the same region as LVHN utilizes the same Home Care and Hospice application. That organization has contacted the LVHN Home Care and Hospice departments regarding the utilization of the iPads and associated technology in order to be able to deploy the iPads within their own organization.