

Fact Sheet

Founded: 1997
U.S. Headquarters: Atlanta
Web site: www.dialogmedical.com
Employees: 26
2004 Revenues: \$5.5 million
Mission: To improve the consistency and effectiveness of the informed consent process
Key Management: Michael Burke, president
James Gottesman, M.D., medical director
Scott Fleischman, vice president of sales
Timothy Kelly, vice president of marketing
Keyton Weissinger, vice president of technical operations

Product Profile: Dialog Medical's iMedConsent™ application is a comprehensive informed consent and patient education solution that is used by hospitals, surgery centers and physician practices to inform patients about the clinical details, risks, benefits and alternatives associated with thousands of medical treatments and procedures.

The application quickly produces procedure and treatment consent forms, tailored to an individual patient's underlying diagnosis, that are drawn from a comprehensive library of thousands of consent documents. iMedConsent™ also includes patient education documents for thousands of diagnoses and treatments, as well as an extensive image gallery that allows the physician to annotate images and simplify complex topics for the patient. The program's complete library of template documents and powerful editing tools allows healthcare organizations to easily customize documents in a way that addresses individual patient needs and concerns. Physicians can modify documents to reflect specific treatment protocols, the literacy level of patients and the regulations specific to the state in which they practice. iMedConsent™ can function as a stand-alone application or seamlessly interface with an institution's electronic medical record (EMR).

Customers: More than 15,000 physicians and 160 medical centers use iMedConsent™ to assist them in educating and informing their patients.

Partners: Partners include A.D.A.M. Inc., American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, NeoTool Development, LLC, aXs Info, Inc. and others.

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iMedConsent™

Dialog Medical's iMedConsent™ application is a comprehensive informed consent and patient education solution that is used by hospitals, surgery centers and physician practices to inform patients about the clinical details, risks, benefits and alternatives associated with thousands of medical treatments and procedures. More than 15,000 physicians and 160 medical centers use iMedConsent™ to assist them in educating and informing their patients.

How it works: The application quickly produces procedure and treatment consent forms, tailored to an individual patient's underlying diagnosis, that are drawn from a comprehensive library of thousands of consent documents. iMedConsent™ also includes patient education documents for thousands of diagnoses and treatments, as well as an extensive image gallery that allows the physician to annotate images and simplify complex topics for the patient. The program's complete library of template documents and powerful editing tools allows healthcare organizations to easily customize documents in a way that addresses individual patient needs and concerns. Physicians can modify documents to reflect unique treatment protocols and the regulations specific to the state in which they practice. iMedConsent™ can function as a stand-alone application or seamlessly interface with an institution's electronic medical record (EMR).

Benefits to healthcare organizations: An automated informed consent process offers a host of benefits, resulting in improved care and more efficient internal processes by allowing providers to:

- *Enhance patient safety and satisfaction.* Patients who are well informed are less likely to experience medical errors because they serve as an additional layer of protection. The iMedConsent™ application allows providers to better inform and educate their patients, thus offering the opportunity to increase patient satisfaction and enhance patient safety.
- *Compile, record and manage patient information.* iMedConsent™ facilitates the digital capture of patient and provider signatures on the final consent document. The result is a paperless process that can be easily integrated into a facility's document management system.
- *Access patient information in real-time.* Immediate access to patients' informed consent records allows healthcare organizations to quickly confirm that documentation exists and eliminate potential delays in much needed surgeries and procedures due to lost or misplaced consent forms.
- *Simplify documentation.* A progress note, fully documenting the informed consent discussion, is automatically generated by the iMedConsent™ application. That progress note is posted to the patient's electronic medical record. This seamless process saves physicians valuable dictation time and eliminates the potential for transcription errors.
- *Reduce risk.* An automated approach to informed consent ensures that all forms are filled out completely and correctly, significantly reducing an organization's exposure to risk and liability.
- *Enhance compliance with standards.* Standardization of the informed consent process with iMedConsent facilitates compliance with JCAHO and other standards.

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Informed Consent: Building a More Comprehensive Process

Before a patient undergoes a medical treatment or procedure, providers must first explain the patient's diagnosis, discuss the risks and benefits of the recommended course of treatment, review treatment alternatives, address any questions or concerns and obtain the patient's consent. These communications comprise the informed consent process and allow patients to make informed and educated medical decisions. While all healthcare organizations have an informed consent program in place, these programs do not always meet their stated objectives. Many organizations employ a single-event approach to informed consent, focusing only on the signed consent form as the end goal. Although this approach allows healthcare organizations to obtain patients' legal agreement to submit to medical procedures, it often fails to adequately inform or educate patients about their conditions, potential for adverse outcomes and treatment options.

In fact, more than two-thirds of patients in the United States do not receive any written information about their condition from their doctor. Other studies have shown that up to three-quarters of written consent forms are incomplete. When comprehensive informed consent does occur, the process of documenting these encounters is time consuming and prone to errors and omissions. Clearly in many cases, there is a breakdown between the original intent of informed consent and the way that process is being carried out today.

By treating informed consent as a process—not a legal document or a signed consent form—healthcare organizations can greatly improve patient safety, enhance patient satisfaction and optimize the delivery of care. Informed consent is a continuum that encompasses all communication between a patient and a provider about diagnoses, treatment alternatives, benefits, risks and expected outcomes relative to scheduled treatments and procedures. This dialogue between patients and providers not only helps patients to better comprehend information relating to medical decisions but it also empowers patients to serve as diligent advocates of their own care.

In an industry challenged to find ways to improve patient safety and reduce medical errors, healthcare organizations must reevaluate the informed consent process and explore how it can be enhanced to create a safer healthcare environment. By implementing a more comprehensive process that positively impacts patients and their medical decisions, healthcare organizations can make great strides in advancing patient safety efforts, strengthening patient-provider relationships and transforming care.

The need for standardization

While it is critically important that an enterprise ensures that all patients receive the same standard of care, including information about procedure-specific risks and treatment alternatives, this communication typically varies widely within an enterprise. Standardizing this process can be quite a challenge, especially for busy healthcare institutions that rely on cumbersome, paper-based processes.

Most healthcare organizations have limited standardization in place for managing the informed consent process and still rely on handwritten consent forms that are hastily prepared and written in complex medical language that is confusing to the patient. Other facilities employ a one-size-fits-all approach to consent documents, offering patients consent forms with few specific details about a particular procedure. One recent study in the *Archives of Surgery* examined 540 consent forms in 157 hospitals nationwide and found that only about 26 percent included the four key, required elements of informed consent—benefits, risks, alternatives and educational information.

Opportunities to improve informed consent

In its recent landmark report, *Making Healthcare Safer: A Critical Analysis of Patient Safety Practices*, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) identified informed consent as a clear opportunity for advancing patient safety efforts and listed a variety of ways to improve the process. These suggestions included:

- Improving the readability of consent forms
- Asking patients to recall what they heard during procedure-specific discussion
- Adding visual or auditory learning aids to consent discussions
- Providing written materials to patients
- Creating more structured discussions

By utilizing technology solutions to automate and enhance the informed consent process, healthcare organizations can incorporate all of these recommendations into their existing processes.

Dialog Medical's iMedConsent™ application provides a unique system that facilitates a comprehensive informed consent process and documents encounters as they occur. This application quickly produces procedure and treatment consent forms, tailored to an individual patient's underlying diagnosis, that are drawn from a comprehensive library of thousands of consent documents. iMedConsent™ also includes patient education documents for thousands of diagnoses and treatments, as well as an extensive image gallery that allows the physician to annotate images and simplify complex topics for the patient. The program's complete library of template documents and powerful editing tools allows healthcare organizations to easily customize documents in a way that addresses individual patient needs and concerns. Physicians can modify documents to reflect specific treatment protocols, the literacy level of patients and the regulations specific to the state in which they practice.

Benefits to healthcare organizations

An automated informed consent process offers a host of benefits, resulting in improved care and more efficient internal processes by allowing providers to:

- *Enhance patient safety and satisfaction.* Patients who are well informed are less likely to experience medical errors because they serve as an additional layer of protection. The iMedConsent™ application allows providers to better inform and educate their patients, thus offering the opportunity to increase patient satisfaction and enhance patient safety.
- *Compile, record and manage patient information.* iMedConsent™ facilitates the digital capture of patient and provider signatures on the final consent document. The result is a paperless process that can be easily integrated into a facility's document management system.
- *Access patient information in real-time.* Immediate access to patients' informed consent records allows healthcare organizations to quickly confirm that documentation exists and eliminate potential delays in much needed surgeries and procedures due to lost or misplaced consent forms.
- *Simplify documentation.* A progress note, fully documenting the informed consent discussion, is automatically generated by the iMedConsent™ application. That progress note is posted to the patient's electronic medical record. This seamless process saves physicians valuable dictation time and eliminates the potential for transcription errors.
- *Reduce risk.* An automated approach to informed consent ensures that all forms are filled out completely and correctly, significantly reducing an organization's exposure to risk and liability.
- *Enhance compliance with standards.* Standardization of the informed consent process with iMedConsent facilitates compliance with JCAHO and other standards.

By delivering up-to-date clinical information that is written in clear and easy-to-understand language, patients have the information they need to make educated care decisions. These communications not only position the patient as an important element in the patient safety effort, but also result in higher levels of patient compliance with procedure-specific instructions.

One Health System's approach

One of the nation's largest healthcare providers is the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) with 15,000 physicians serving 5.1 million patients. In 2004, the VHA announced its Electronic Support for Patient Decisions initiative. The cornerstone of this initiative is the use of the iMedConsent™ application as a means for standardizing the informed consent process across all 162 VHA medical centers. The iMedConsent™ application provides VHA hospitals with the tools they need to address all steps in the informed consent process: procedure-specific consent forms for all medical/surgical procedures; patient education documents

for thousands of diagnoses and treatments; an extensive anatomical image gallery that allow VA physicians to annotate images and simplify complex topics for their patients; and automated documentation of the encounter with progress notes stored in the patients' electronic charts.

iMedConsent™: The newest standard of care

Establishing an informed consent process that is built on consistency, clarity and trust begins with a commitment to developing stronger provider-patient relationships. By equipping healthcare providers with the tools they need to communicate with patients more efficiently and effectively about medical procedures, their benefits and their risks, Dialog Medical's iMedConsent™ program creates a foundation for enhanced provider-patient communication and better medical decision making. For leading-edge healthcare organizations that are looking for innovative ways to increase patient satisfaction and enhance patient safety, an automated, comprehensive informed consent process is the newest standard of care.

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Executive Bios

Michael Burke
*President and
Co-Founder*

Michael Burke founded Dialog Medical along with James Gottesman, M.D. in 1997. As president, he is responsible for Dialog Medical's strategic direction and market positioning.

Before founding Dialog Medical, Burke served as director of marketing and general manager for NextGen Healthcare Information Systems, a leading provider of practice management and electronic medical records software. Prior to that, he served as a senior marketing manager at C.R. Bard Inc., a leading multinational developer, manufacturer and marketer of innovative, life-enhancing medical technologies in the fields of vascular, urology, oncology and surgical specialty products. During his time with the company, he managed product lines in both the Urology and Interventional Radiology business units.

Burke received his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Dayton and holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of Cincinnati.

**James Gottesman,
M.D.**
*Medical Director
and Co-Founder*

Dr. James Gottesman co-founded Dialog Medical in 1997. He currently practices with Seattle Urological Associates and also remains an attending physician at both the Swedish Medical Center and Providence Medical Center. As medical director, Dr. Gottesman is responsible for new product research and assisting with the selection of physicians who serve on Dialog Medical's Advisory Board.

In addition to being a practicing urologist, Dr. Gottesman serves as a principal investigator for the Southwest Oncology Group, Genitourinary Division (Seattle), PROSCAR™ Long-Term Efficacy and Safety Study (PLESS) and National Prostate Cancer Prevention study. He is also a clinical professor of urology at the University of Washington and a published author.

Dr. Gottesman graduated from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Medical School and also completed his surgical training at UCSF. He trained in urology at UCLA.

Scott Fleischman
*Vice President
of Sales*

Scott Fleischman is responsible for crafting and executing Dialog Medical's sales plan as it relates to the company's iMedConsent™ application.

Before joining Dialog Medical in 2001, Fleischman served as an account supervisor for Atlanta-based advertising agency Adair-Greene Healthcare, where he managed professional and consumer campaigns for Novartis Ophthalmics products. Prior to that, he served as a marketing manager of acute care products for C.R. Bard Inc. During his time with the company, he supervised the launch of the Bardex® I.C. urology catheter line and managed the marketing efforts for the acute care urology product line.

Fleischman received his bachelor's degree in business administration from Georgia State University.

Timothy Kelly
*Vice President
of Marketing*

Timothy Kelly oversees the creation and implementation of marketing strategies and content development for Dialog Medical. He brings more than 15 years of extensive marketing experience to this role.

Before joining Dialog Medical in 2004, he held positions in the marketing departments of two divisions of C.R. Bard Inc., most recently serving as marketing director for Bard Medical Division. In this role, he was responsible for leading a team that conducted a 40-institution clinical trial of an investigational respiratory product. Kelly also spent time managing C.R. Bard's urology, critical care, surgical and infection control product lines. Prior to that, he served as a fellow at the Biomedical Engineering and Science Institute, where he focused on telemetry and gastroenterology.

Kelly received his bachelor's degrees in electrical engineering and biomedical engineering from the University of Bridgeport, holds a master's degree in biomedical engineering from Drexel University and a master's in business administration from Mercer University.

Keyton Weissinger
*Vice President of □
Technical Operations*

As vice president of technical operations, Keyton Weissinger is responsible for managing customer-centered development strategies and related support activities.

Before joining Dialog Medical in 2003, Weissinger served as a senior manager for Radiant Systems, a provider of innovative store technology for the hospitality, petroleum and convenience store, and entertainment industries. During his time with Radiant Systems, he led the development of software and architecture for the company's food service and lodging products. Prior to that, he served as a manager of the software architecture group for USWeb, an interactive media firm, where he was lead architect and manager for several large accounts, including FedEx and Ashland Chemical.

Weissinger received his bachelor's degree in molecular biology from the University of Georgia.

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