

Special Olympics, Health One Global Launch Electronic Athletes Personal Health Record

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On 4 October at the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai, Dr. Stanley Shepherd, Chairman of Health One Global Limited, and Dr. Stephen Corbin, Special Olympics Senior Vice President, Constituent Services and Support, launched a new initiative for a life-long electronic Athletes Personal Health Record. Health One Global has been Special Olympics Healthy Athletes' Global Partner for electronic medical records since 2003.



Dr. Stan Shepherd, Chairman of Health One Global, Special Olympics Healthy Athletes Global Partner for medical records, holds a sample USB drive that will provide Special Olympics athletes with quick, secure access to their medical records. Dr. Shepherd spoke at the launch of the Athletes Personal Health Record initiative at the 2007 Special Olympics World Games in Shanghai, China.

The data gathered by the Healthy Athletes program has proven that, in every country, athletes have poor access to healthcare and poor health outcomes. Building on that knowledge, Special Olympics will pilot the Athletes Personal Health Record to:

- follow up significant problems identified at Healthy Athletes events and their treatment and outcomes;
- address athletes' total health needs;
- reach out to athletes who do not attend Healthy Athletes events;
- transform the coordination of healthcare for athletes; and
- confirm that participation in Special Olympics improves athletes' health.

The Athletes Personal Health Record will be a secure, comprehensive life-long electronic personal health record to be used by athletes, caregivers and healthcare

professionals, anywhere in the world, multilingually, both online over the Internet and offline on a portable USB drive.

Special Olympics plans to pilot the Athletes Personal Health Record in four countries and four languages in 2008. This will be a world first.

At the Healthy Athletes venue in Shanghai, Special Olympics and Health One Global demonstrated the Athletes Personal Health Record live with Special Olympics Global Messenger Andrew Williams from Melbourne, Australia.

Williams simulated the complete cycle of an athlete at the World Games who was injured on the field of play and whose medical consultation was entered into his Athletes Personal Health Record, over the Internet, from the Medical Center by a Chinese doctor in Chinese. Williams then attended the Healthy Athletes screenings where a significant medical problem was diagnosed and he was advised that he needed treatment when he returned home.



Dr. Stan Shepherd, Chairman of Health One Global (left), simulated the use of the new Athletes Personal Health Record with the assistance of Andrew Williams, Special Olympics Sargent Shriver International Global Messenger, from Melbourne, Australia.

The demonstration then simulated Williams consulting with his family doctor in Melbourne. Using his USB drive and his own password, Williams opened his own Internet record on his doctor's PC and the doctor was then able to read the details of the injuries (that had been entered in

Chinese) in English plus full details of the newly diagnosed medical problem. The doctor recorded his consultation on Williams' Internet record and referred him to a specialist. As the specialist had no Internet connection, before leaving, Williams synchronised his Internet record, which his family doctor had just updated, with his USB drive.

Williams met the specialist, who read the full details both from Shanghai and the family doctor, confirmed the diagnosis and recommended correct treatment, which he then recorded on Williams' USB drive. Later, at home, Williams could synchronise his USB drive with his Internet record so that both copies were fully up-to-date.

The Athletes Personal Health Record will put athletes in control of access to their data, ensure continuity of information, improve coordination of care, ensure no data is missing and empower them to manage their own health.

Williams commented, "This is great. It gives me independence to visit the doctor alone, instead of with my Mum, because I know all the information will be there on my USB drive."

Dr. Shepherd commented, "Special Olympics has the opportunity to lead the world in showing the way to improve the quality of care and the health outcomes through secure access to personal health information at the point of need."

Special Olympics International Board Member David Braddock, the Coleman-Turner Chair and Professor in Psychiatry, University of Colorado School of Medicine, stated, "Information management systems have a critically important role to play in intellectual disability on a worldwide basis. They have a clinical role and a planning and policy role. I am pleased to see that Special Olympics is emerging as a leader in this area."

Dr. Corbin concluded, "Special Olympics has developed a world-class health screening program for people with intellectual disability. We now need to move forward with a cutting-edge health information management system that aligns with that success."

Special Olympics has moved beyond sports to be a leader in health, and from there a leader in research that has global recognition, and from there to become a leader in global change, well beyond the sports opportunities. Empowering athletes and their families to manage their health optimally may be one of the greatest contributions Special Olympics can make to the athletes.