Press Release

Dräger Partners with Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory on Medical Device Interoperability Initiative

Service-oriented device connectivity (SDC) web services-based architecture facilitates dynamic and secure data sharing among medical devices in high acuity areas

Mississauga, Ontario – Dräger, an international leader in the fields of medical and safety technology, is collaborating with the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL) and other healthcare industry organizations on the development of a medical device interoperability reference architecture (MDIRA) aimed at improving patient safety through standardization of healthcare delivery. The project is sponsored by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command.

Dräger is contributing expertise in standardized medical device interoperability based on the service-oriented device connectivity IEEE 11073 SDC. This web services-based architecture facilitates interoperability among point-of-care medical devices and data exchange between point-of-care devices and HL7 compatible clinical and hospital information systems. It enables a hospital's medical technologies to share data and information bi-directionally, securely and dynamically.

"Medical device interoperability (MDI) can improve patient safety through standardization of healthcare delivery, but medical device industry contribution is needed to define technical aspects of interoperable platforms, architecture, medical devices, standards and data models that can be used across multiple medical areas," said Tobias Klotz, Systems Architect at Dräger. "Our contributions to the MDIRA project from a research and development, and hardware and software perspective are important to the establishment of a reference implementation for secure data sharing and use to facilitate advances in healthcare diagnosis and treatment for both the military and civilian healthcare systems."

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In healthcare today, most diagnostic and therapeutic medical devices operate in silos; while they can capture critical patient data, they are unable to communicate it with one another or to the patient's electronic health record (EHR) in a standardized way. But with SDC, there are significant clinical, operational and cost benefits that could be derived from facilitating data sharing among these devices and capture in the EHR. These benefits include standardized care delivery, more complete and accurate documentation, optimized outcomes and improved patient safety.

This project aims to facilitate autonomous medical systems through advanced device interoperability. This would not only allow a caregiver to monitor the status of multiple patients from a remote location and control their therapy settings, but also enable the medical system itself to adjust therapy settings and physiological measurements automatically for an extended period of time.

Achieving these goals requires close cooperation among healthcare providers, medical device manufacturers, information technology (IT) solutions providers, regulatory experts and other industry stakeholders. The Johns Hopkins University APL team, in collaboration with Dräger, the Massachusetts General Hospital Medical Device Interoperability and Cybersecurity Program (MD PnP) and others, is conducting research to develop the MDIRA framework for military healthcare interoperability that can subsequently be applied to the civilian healthcare system.

"We are dedicated to improving acute care with technologies and services that lead to therapy assistance and ultimately to hospital automation," said Jens Altmann, Head of Business Unit IT & Systems at Dräger. "The SDC architecture offers new possibilities for manufacturer-independent data exchange. We envision a future where medical devices are connected as a system and can interact with one another in a safe and secure environment to improve the efficiency and quality of care delivered. Our contributions to the MDIRA project will be another step in working towards this goal."

For more information click here.

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