



## **O2 puts a ‘breath of fresh air’ into the health market**

*O2 Health to deliver better self care for patients and smarter working practices for staff*

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Patients will increasingly be put in control of their own health as part of a new vision for healthcare outlined by O2 Health today.

O2 Health will aim to affect positive change across the NHS which puts patients at the centre of their care by forming genuine partnerships with healthcare providers to gain a deep understanding of their challenges, before deploying bespoke solutions that create benefits for patients and health workers alike.

At a time when spending on global healthcare is set to grow by 5.5 per cent a year<sup>i</sup> and the NHS is expected to make more than £20bn in efficiency savings, O2 Health seeks to help the NHS and other healthcare providers do more for less.

Keith Nurcombe, Head of O2 Health, said: “This is not about mobile-health or e-health, this is about patients. Our patient-first approach is groundbreaking within the industry. We are already starting to see real benefits – improved patient care and efficiency savings where we have been working with health providers.

“The NHS is looking for ways to do more with fewer resources, but this can’t be at the expense of patients, service or standards. We understand the NHS, and can help it – and our private partners – to deliver more for less through smarter working.”

Ben Dowd, Business Sales Director of O2 said: “Now is the right time to launch into the health market. Just last week the government set out its desire to put patients at the heart of their own care and it is an aim shared by O2 Health. The UK has an ageing population with increasingly complex healthcare needs but resources are limited. Healthcare providers need to look for innovative ways to provide patients with more choice and control over their care.

“We’ve listened to our existing healthcare customers and have developed solutions that will deliver real benefits. Our patient centred approach, combined with a team with real experience of working in the health sector, means we are well positioned to deliver real change in healthcare provision.”

O2 Health is already helping to improve patient care by providing the NHS with cost effective ways of delivering more efficient provision in the community and in hospitals.

A *Telefonica* company



Last year O2 Health was approached by Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust which was concerned about the high administrative burden for its community midwives. Having joined the midwives on their rounds, O2 realised that they were doubling their admin time through manually writing notes in situ, and then typing them up when they returned to the hospital.

O2's suggested solution was for the midwives to use digital pens and paper, linked to a BlackBerry®. The pen encrypts and sends the data to the smartphone via Bluetooth. It is then transmitted directly and securely to the Trust's patient record system.

After testing, the pens were rolled out across 130 community staff with great success. Using digital pens has halved the time that midwives typically spend on administration, helping them to spend more time with mothers – it's also projected to save £220,000 per year. The change has freed up more time for midwives to care and has helped improve patients' experiences, who get a copy of the midwives' reports, whilst electronic copies are backed up on the system.

Sharon Hackett, Lead Midwife at Portsmouth NHS Hospitals Trust, said: "The digital pen has made dramatic improvements to the way community midwives work. The digital pen cuts the amount of time midwives spend on administration, allowing them more time to spend with expectant mothers, their birthing partners and their babies, which is absolutely fantastic. The project has proved to be of great benefit to mothers, midwives and the NHS in general."

O2 Health works together with healthcare providers to find the right uses of O2 health technologies which enable patients and healthcare providers to find new ways of managing their care in their own home or release staff from the burden of unnecessary administration.

O2 Health seeks to provide organisations and individuals with the tools and technology to:

- Deliver effective and intelligent systems to help people manage their own health and long term conditions that reduce the need for hospital visits. For example, installing wireless systems that enable people with Diabetes to manage their condition on their terms, removing needless hospital visits, or in extreme circumstances, avoiding an emergency admission. Patients can take daily glucose readings anywhere using their glucometer and communicate back to the health professional or monitoring centre via their mobile – allowing management by exception and alerts of unusual results.
- Provide the NHS and private healthcare organisations with cost effective ways of delivering a more efficient service in the community and in hospitals. For example providing patients with tools that enable them to carry out rehabilitation exercises at home after an operation or injury, under the supervision of their physiotherapist but without the regular visits. Patients carry out pre-determined



rehabilitation programmes shown on a TV screen, with progress monitored remotely via movement sensors and data capture tools. Data is communicated back to the physiotherapist for ongoing evaluation - freeing the physiotherapist's time to see other patients.

- Release staff from unnecessary administration burdens by helping them to work smarter. By working with healthcare providers to find mobile working solutions for health teams visiting patients in their homes O2 health have helped to free up healthcare professionals time to care by reducing admin and travelling time. This enables staff to schedule jobs electronically and update patient records remotely using a mobile device, removing the need for the health worker to travel back to base.

## ENDS

### Notes to editors:

1. O2 Health is a new business area within Telefónica O2 UK with resources dedicated to the healthcare market.
2. O2 Health already works with NHS and private healthcare clients. O2 Health has a dedicated team of 24 people, headed up by Keith Nurcombe. Keith joined Telefónica O2 UK in February 2010 and brings with him 18 years health sector experience having previously been CEO at Advantage Healthcare and after having spent five years at GlaxoSmithKline on the consumer side of the business before taking up a senior management post in the 'over the counter' business.
3. Further case studies are available upon request. Please contact [sally.aldous@bluerubicon.com](mailto:sally.aldous@bluerubicon.com) for more details.

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**All O2 news release can be accessed at our website: [www.o2.co.uk/news](http://www.o2.co.uk/news)**

### About O2

- Telefónica O2 UK Limited is a leading communications company for consumers and businesses in the UK, with 21.4 million mobile customers and over 600,000 fixed broadband customers as at 31 March 2010.
- Telefónica O2 UK Limited is part of Telefónica Europe plc, a business division of Telefónica S.A. which uses O2 as its commercial brand in the UK, Ireland, Slovakia, Germany and the Czech Republic, and has 53.9 million customers across these markets.
- In 2006 Telefónica Europe acquired Be, the UK fixed broadband provider, and in October 2007 O2 launched its broadband service using the Be network.
- O2 is the naming rights partner of The O2, the world-class entertainment venue.
- O2 employs around 13,000 people in the UK and has 490 retail stores.
- O2 was ranked highest in customer satisfaction for both UK mobile and fixed broadband customers according to the J.D. Power and Associates UK Mobile and Fixed Broadband Studies 2010.



- O2 Home Broadband came top in 10 out of 11 categories in the uSwitch Broadband Customer Satisfaction Awards 2010.
- O2 was launched on 1 May 2002 and now has more customers than any other UK mobile network.
- O2's UK mobile network covers 99% of the UK's population. O2's 3G network covers over 84% of the UK population and is fully HSDPA-enabled, providing speeds of up to 7.2 Mbps for customers with an HSDPA-enabled device.
- Telefónica Europe also owns 50% of Tesco Mobile, which operates in the UK and Ireland, and 50% of Tchibo Mobilfunk in Germany.
- For further press information about O2 go to [www.o2.co.uk/news](http://www.o2.co.uk/news)

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<sup>i</sup> McKinsey Research