

Baxter

News Release

BAXTER LAUNCHES IV PRODUCTS WITH ENLIGHTENED^{HR}BC BAR CODING SYSTEM, WHICH PROVIDES EXPANDED INFORMATION

Baxter Highlights Leadership in Patient Safety at Industry Meeting on Bar Code Initiatives

DEERFIELD, Ill., March 27, 2003 - Baxter Healthcare Corporation reinforced its long-standing commitment to patient safety with the launch of its innovative, high-resolution ENLIGHTENED^{HR}BC bar code technology for its flexible IV containers, marking the next phase in the company's ongoing plans to apply bar coding to its entire line of IV fluids and medications.

At an industry meeting this week that will focus on strategies for implementing bar code systems for patient safety, Baxter plans to voice support for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) recent proposal to require bar coding on medications. The company noted that its next generation bar code technology, the ENLIGHTENED^{HR}BC bar code system, exceeds anticipated industry requirements by providing information that may be useful in enhancing patient safety beyond the product identification.

On March 13, 2003, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson proposed regulations for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that would require a supermarket-style bar code on every dispensed drug, including prescription drugs, and some over-the-counter drugs and vaccines. Under this plan, all patients admitted to hospitals would be given a bar coded identification linked to the patient's medical records. Under the proposed guidelines, the bar code would, at a minimum, contain the drug's National Drug Code number, which uniquely identifies the drug, its strength, and its dosage.

Baxter's ENLIGHTENED^{HR}BC bar code features a 14-character Uniform Code Council/European Article Number (UCC/EAN), which is a globally recognized identifier used for automated tracking of products. The UCC/EAN also incorporates the National Drug Code registered with the

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FDA. A secondary bar code of the ENLIGHTENEDHRBC bar code features the lot number and expiration date, which is scanned to help hospitals ensure that drugs subject to recall will not be delivered to patients, and that patients will not receive medication that has expired.

"Reducing medication errors is one of the largest challenges facing hospitals today," said David Bonderud, president of Baxter's Medication Delivery business in the United States. "The FDA's vision of using information technology, such as bar codes that link to computer-based hospital information systems, to address a major health concern is a reality that Baxter is helping to create."

Baxter anticipates that the vast majority of its IV containers will have the ENLIGHTENEDHRBC bar code by the end of 2003, a timetable aimed at accelerating the use of technology to help hospitals reduce the potential for medication error and help promote safer health care practices in hospitals.

"We appreciate this important action by Baxter. It can only help to facilitate adoption of bar-code-enabled point-of-care (BPOC) systems in hospitals, improve medical product safety and help protect patients from medical errors," said Michael R. Cohen, president of the nonprofit Institute for Safe Medication Practices.

"Our commitment to patient safety, built over the last 70 years, has resulted in a number of innovative technologies, including bar coding, that provide safeguards against the potential for medication error. Not only are we among the first to make available our IV products with enhanced bar coding technologies, we're also continuing to design our products and delivery systems to work together to offer patient safety enhancements throughout the entire continuum of patient care," said Bonderud.

Another example of Baxter's commitment to the use of bar code technology to help further patient safety is the [Baxter's Patient Care System](#). [Baxter's Patient Care System](#), formerly called the AUTROS system, is a wireless patient information and medication management system that uses hand-held computer devices. This system helps provide caregivers with access to the real-time information they need to safely and correctly administer medications. [Baxter's Patient Care System](#) is being designed to receive communication from the company's COLLEAGUE CX infusion pump. This connectivity will allow access to infusion information at the bedside and is designed to help enable the nurse to verify that the pump setting matches

the physician order before starting the IV infusion.

Together, these innovative technologies provide a comprehensive, integrated approach to the delivery of medication in a hospital environment and is one example of the initiatives that exist across several of its businesses aimed at creating a safer health-care environment.

Baxter Healthcare Corporation is the principal U.S. operating subsidiary of Baxter International Inc. (NYSE:BAX). Baxter International Inc., through its subsidiaries, assists health-care professionals and their patients with treatment of complex medical conditions, including cancer, hemophilia, immune disorders, kidney disease and trauma. The company applies its expertise in medical devices, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology to make a meaningful difference in patients' lives.

More information about Baxter's ENLIGHTENEDHRBC bar code technology can be accessed at www.baxter.com.

(ENLIGHTENEDHRBC, AUTROS, and COLLEAGUE CX are trademarks of Baxter International Inc. and its affiliates.)

This news release contains forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties, including technological advances in the medical field, product demand and market acceptance, actions of regulatory bodies, the impact of competitive products and pricing, and other risks detailed in the company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These forward-looking statements are based on estimates and assumptions made by management of the company and are believed to be reasonable, though are inherently uncertain and difficult to predict. Actual results or experience could differ materially from the forward-looking statements.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

 View the [Technical Background / Fact Sheet](#).

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