

# PATIENT EDUCATION GRADUATES TO NEXT LEVEL WITH CARENOTES

Case Study

CLINICAL DECISION SUPPORT

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital

On any given day, up to 700 patients receive treatment at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia. So ensuring each of these patients receives and fully understands their post-hospitalization instructions is a major task.

It certainly was not a one-person job, but when the position was eliminated entirely, it affected every position on staff.

“We used to have a full-time patient education coordinator who pulled together specialty areas and created a large number of pamphlets. Our graphics department would design the pamphlets, we’d print them, and about every two years, we’d update them.” says Janet Paul, Clinical Specialist at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

But what happens when the patient has a specific need related to their prescription administration or after-care instructions? Or, what if protocol changed since the last update of instructions? In such cases, the staff at Thomas Jefferson Hospital found it necessary to orally communicate doctor’s orders to patients to ensure that patients clearly comprehend those orders.

Thomas Jefferson Hospital is a level-one trauma center, so the staff works in a number of critical care areas. The facility also has a world-class orthopedic service, does a great deal of patient rehabilitation, has one of the region’s largest cardiology and cancer clinical research centers, and is a teaching facility. Clearly, the needs are many and varied but, as with all facilities, staff time is at a premium.



With intense pressures to reduce hospital stays, patient education is increasingly critical for

Thomas Jefferson and is filled with challenges. But without the budget for a patient education coordinator and access to the required preprinted pamphlets, how could a facility like Thomas Jefferson meet patients’ varied needs?

## COURSE OF ACTION

After evaluating a number of potential solutions, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital selected the **CareNotes® Patient Education Solution** from the Healthcare business of Thomson Reuters for their patient education requirements.

CareNotes enables hospitals like Thomas Jefferson to conveniently provide patients with complete, easy-to-understand information about all aspects of their care and health. Available in both English and Spanish, CareNotes documents are concise, customizable, and can be printed on an as-needed basis.



**THOMSON REUTERS**  
INSIGHT AWARD 2008

**THOMAS JEFFERSON**  
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

**Location:**  
Philadelphia, PA

**Size:**  
925-bed academic medical center with more than 40,000 annual admissions; 5,680 employees; and 746 physicians.

**Scope and services:**  
Major programs for a wide range of clinical specialties, with an emphasis in oncology, cardiology, neuroscience, and orthopedics.



The documents help patients understand their condition, treatment, follow-up care, psychosocial issues, continuing health, and prescriptions.

CareNotes offers a number of features that Thomas Jefferson considers advantageous, including the ability to access the system without a password, thereby enabling allowing CareNotes to stay on the screen without requiring users to log on each time. Thomas Jefferson also considered it to be superior to products of competitors, particularly because it was written in the industry-recommended 6th- to 8th-grade reading level, is available in both English and Spanish, offers automatic updates, and is easy to use.

Before they made their final decision, Thomas Jefferson compared cost, access, ability to import documents and graphics, customization, number of documents, ease of use, readability, updating schedule, and compliance. And for each of these measures, CareNotes was considered the best choice.

CareNotes has more than 5,000 customizable documents covering a wide variety of topics including general care, inpatient information, drug information, and discharge instructions. CareNotes also includes added 3-D, color illustrations in over 350 of the documents that aid in comprehension and address the growing issue of "medical illiteracy" facing many of today's healthcare practitioners.

## RESULTS

The response to the CareNotes System has been very positive. Recently, Thomas Jefferson began to track CareNotes usage throughout the facility to provide a complete picture of who is using the product and how it's being used. Through this study, and during the staff's introduction to the patient education solution, Paul found staff members occasionally needed small suggestions to get used to the new system. They took advantage of the online training tutorials and printed training materials offered by Thomson Reuters to ensure that they could get the most out of CareNotes.

*"We compared CareNotes to competitors and found it to be the best product of its kind for our needs."*

### Janet Paul

Clinical Specialist  
Thomas Jefferson University Hospital

CareNotes provides unparalleled flexibility for a facility facing a large number of patient presentations. It enables users to modify patient care protocols to match their hospital's requirements and preferences.

Now with the addition of illustrations, hospitals have access to a powerful tool to assist patients who may have reading comprehension or language barriers.

Perhaps most important, CareNotes documents are reviewed and updated by the Thomson Reuters editorial staff each quarter. This ensures the latest information on best practices is in each and every CareNotes document. The staff at Thomas Jefferson feels confident knowing patient education experts are members of the Micromedex editorial board. Even the CEO of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital is aware of the CareNotes System. He is spearheading the drive to track usage and make the tool as valuable as possible.

"We would not consider going back to developing and printing pamphlets," said Paul. "CareNotes is our main source of patient education, and we're pleased with the way it is working."

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The Healthcare business of Thomson Reuters produces insights, information, benchmarks and analysis that enable organizations to manage costs, improve performance, and enhance the quality of healthcare. Thomson Reuters is the world's leading source of intelligent information for businesses and professionals. We combine industry expertise with innovative technology to deliver critical information to leading decision makers in the financial, legal, tax and accounting, scientific, healthcare and media markets, powered by the world's most trusted news organization. With headquarters in New York and major operations in London and Eagan, Minn., Thomson Reuters employs more than 50,000 people in 93 countries. Thomson Reuters shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: TRI); Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: TRI); London Stock Exchange (LSE: TRIL); and Nasdaq (NASDAQ: TRIN).

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