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Spain

The Tajo Hospital in Madrid started implementing an SMS reminder system for medical appointments at the start of October 2011.

This new means of communication has been made possible thanks to a new mobile device application developed by the hospital's Admissions Service and IT Department. The new software sends an SMS notifying patients of the date, time and location of a consultation 48 hours before the scheduled appointment.

This will help patients remember their planned appointments with specialists as well as the arrangement of new appointments; patients that are unable to attend a doctor's appointment on a given date and time can then call the appropriate service and cancel, thus allowing the hospital to fill cancelled time slots and provide enhanced service as a result.

The hospital dealt with 137,866 consultations in 2010 as compared to 124,819 in 2009, representing an increase of 10.5 %. The total number of patients that missed scheduled medical consultations was 10,245 and 10,383 in 2009 and 2010, respectively.

The hospital is committed to the take-up of new technologies and the first SMS notifications for October appointments were sent for pediatric services. This process will be rolled out gradually across other departments.

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