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Portugal

Access to Health Information and Care Expanded by Portuguese Health Helpline

Saúde 24 (S24), a telephone based service offering clinical assessment, health advice and health information in Portugal, has gained the trust of the Portuguese people by significantly improving direct access to healthcare advice, and is planning further expansion.

The national helpline directs callers to the most appropriate level of care and aims to ease pressure on more traditional branches of the healthcare service. It also enables the Portuguese Public Health System to allocate its resources more efficiently, ensuring the right level of care meets the right people, whilst the patients benefit from quick reassurance of their condition and advice on the best course of action to take. The top five most common ailments or symptoms registered by S24 are abdominal pain, nausea, coughing, a headache or a sore throat, with self care being the most frequent outcomes for a patient caller.

Launched in April 2007, the service has progressively gained widespread awareness and recognition (independent research reported 94 per cent of awareness in June 2010) and now handles an average of almost 1,800 calls per day, with a reported 100 per cent user satisfaction in August 2010.

For more information, please visit: www.clinicalsolutions.com

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