NEWS

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FCC/FDA JOINT MEETING SCHEDULED TO STREAMLINE REVIEW PROCESS FOR LIFE-SAVING WIRELESS MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

Washington, D.C. – Following up on the National Broadband Plan's recommendation to use the power of broadband to improve health care, the nation's lead agencies overseeing communications and medical devices have scheduled a joint meeting to discuss ways to promote investment and innovation in health technology by streamlining government processes.

The joint public meeting on July 26-27 between the Federal Communications Commission and the Food and Drug Administration reflects a commitment by the two agencies to work even more closely to ensure the safety and reliability of wireless broadband-enabled medical devices while increasing their availability to consumers and health care providers. This collaboration is a critical step in the development and approval of new wireless medical devices and applications that hold great promise for improving the quality of health care and reducing costs.

"This joint initiative reflects a shared commitment on behalf of the FCC and FDA to promote investment and innovation in the health technologies that will save lives and help address some of our nation's health care challenges," said FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski. "I enthusiastically support this effort and applaud the teams in place at the FCC and the FDA working diligently to ensure that these medical innovations can safely and swiftly be brought to market."

WHAT: Public Meeting on Impact on Regulation of Converged Communications and Health Care Devices
WHO: FDA & FCC Officials
WHERE: FCC Commission Room, 445 12th St. SW Washington, DC
WHEN: July 26-27, 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. EDT.
WEB: http://fcc.gov/live
PUBLIC NOTICE: http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-10-1071A1.doc

Pre-registration: Email registration by 5 p.m., July 19, to fcc-fdameeting@fcc.gov

Wireless medical devices, such as wireless heart monitors and wirelessly programmable pacemakers and defibrillators, have been available for many years. Now, medical device and wireless technologies have evolved to a point where they can be combined in synergistic ways that open a new realm of patient monitoring and treatment possibilities.

These networked devices can closely monitor patients after they leave the critical care ward and identify downward spirals in health in time to prevent irreversible damage. Patient health monitoring can continue outside the hospital, and key health data can be sent to physicians over a broadband wireless network.

The FCC and the FDA each play a vital role in bringing the benefit of these and other wireless medical devices and applications to the health care industry and the American public, with the FCC providing access to the airwaves and the FDA ensuring that the devices are safe and effective. As wireless medical technology has progressed, the process for bringing these solutions to the market is sometimes uncertain, which can discourage investment. The FCC and FDA are committed to working together and with all stakeholders to provide much needed clarity and streamline the process as much as possible while continuing to ensure the safety of the devices and the integrity of the airwaves.

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More information about the National Broadband Plan is available at www.broadband.gov