

Revolutionary Noddle™ Device allowing Disabled Patients to Communicate With Care Givers with a Simple Tongue Click or Eye Blink



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Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
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CEOCFO: *Mr. Bird, what is the focus at Voxello™ today?*

Mr. Bird: Our vision is to overcome patient / caregiver communication barriers. The noddle™ is the device that we have currently developed that is the central pillar in terms of meeting that goal.

CEOCFO: *Patient care, communication; please breakdown what that means, very simply.*

Mr. Bird: Imagine being in the hospital and intubated or trached, unable to speak, maybe immobilized and very, very limited in order communicate what your needs are, but being cognitively intact. How is your caregiver going to know what is going on with you; if you are experiencing pain or heat or cold or whatever you are experiencing? How are they going to deal with that? That has been a huge, huge problem! In fact, it is such a big problem that the Joint Commission; that is the body that accredits our hospital, has now mandated that we provide effective communication for these patients.

“We reduce those preventable adverse events, we save the hospital a huge amount of money, we give dignity back to the patient, we improve patient satisfaction and family satisfaction and nurse satisfaction and communication. I just see that the impact that we are going to have on the healthcare system as being really, really tremendous!” - Rives Bird

CEOCFO: *What have you figured out to make this happen?*

Mr. Bird: The device was developed out of the University of Iowa through the IMIG Group; the Iowa Medical Innovations Group. It is the senior project at the University of Iowa. A group of students of various disciplines get together and they get a professor or scientist or physician from the University to be their mentor. Therefore, it would be a small group, maybe four people, possibly comprised of finance person, a couple of engineers and perhaps a business major. In this particular case they got Dr. Richard Hurtig, who at the time was the Chair of the Speech and Communications Disorders Lab at the University of Iowa. That is the number one lab of its type in the country by US News & World Report. He had dealt with hundreds of patients that could not autonomously communicate in the hospital. He would go down to his lab and would come up with a one off solution that would give them a means of communication in some form or fashion with their caregiver. However, that is obviously not a scalable situation. Those were all unique solutions and most places do not have someone like Richard Hurtig, so they really do not have a way of solving this problem very well. Therefore, it was that group that came up with that idea of the noddle. The noddle is a way of allowing a patient to use any single voluntary gesture to access both the nurse call and a speech generation device. Now, with a very simple gesture; it could be a