

# **PDA's and Healthcare: Roundtable Discussion Report**

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## **Sailing into the Future MLGSCA/NCNMLG Joint Meeting 2005**

### *Summary*

Members of the discussion group had a variety of levels of experience, and had used both Palm and Pocket PC platforms. Medical school students were largely seen as driving current use, although it was noted that other schools were beginning to use them as well, and that “hand-me-down PDAs” were reaching into many new areas. There are a broad variety of issues that contributed to frustration with PDAs, these are listed later. PDAs were generally seen as positive as quick look-up tools for applications such as Epocrates and Micromedex. The future of PDAs and the role of the library in their use are both still very uncertain. PDAs will likely morph into something different, as is evidenced by the new smartphones and tablet PCs. Some libraries are actively involved in PDA use, while others have adopted a much more hands-off policy.

### *PDA Issues:*

- Frustration with the technology
- Software issues are barriers
- Use has reached into less techno-savvy population groups
- Syncing phone to desktop
- Interoperability between different types of technology
- Quickly out of date – planned obsolescence
- Usability for lefties
- Learning and connection curve
- Fragility of machinery
- Introduction of tablet PC
- Introduction of smartphones
- Broad range of skill sets needed
- Role of libraries in use/support