

the screen. Accordingly, because a number of individual kiosks are provided, the patient is not required to wait in a line in order to inform facility personnel of their arrival.

[0032] According to the present embodiment, a patient is instructed, via the display device, to slide or scan his or her personal identification card into the system by using a card reader or scanner provided on each of the kiosks. A sample "screen shot" representative of what the display of the kiosk might look like when the system instructs the patient to scan his or her identification card is illustrated at FIG. 3. Further, according to the present embodiment, the display device is a touch-screen display such that patients can easily touch the appropriate portion of the screen in response to various instructions and/or queries.

[0033] The data read from the card uniquely identifies the patient by using a unique alpha-numeric combination or some other type of data that corresponds only to the one individual patient. The data can be stored on the card in a magnetic strip, bar code, or any other suitable format for storing data. Only after the identification of the person corresponding to the data on the card has been established can any personal or medical information with respect to the patient be accessed. Accordingly, to maintain each patient's privacy, personal health information, or otherwise sensitive data corresponding to each patient, is not accessible or displayed at the kiosk display device until the patient's identification is made based on data read from the card.

[0034] It should be noted, although the present embodiment includes a card reader for security purposes, it would be clear to one of skill in the art that such security measures may be dispensed with if desired. For example, instead of providing a personal identification card to the system, a patient could be requested to merely enter his or her name or other identifying information on the touch-screen display and the patient's individual medical-related data could be accessed and processed, accordingly.

[0035] According to this embodiment, once the patient's identification has been confirmed at the kiosk, certain personal data corresponding to the patient is then verified. For example, the display screen at the kiosk displays various inquiries regarding the patient's contact information, e.g., home and work addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, etc. A sample "screen shot" representative of what the display might look like when the system is querying the patient about contact information is illustrated at FIG. 4. Additionally, relevant data regarding the patient's insurance information can be updated as well. For example, the display device at the kiosk is controlled to query the patient about primary and secondary insurance coverage as well as any other relevant forms of personal or third party payment. A sample "screen shot" representative of what the display might look like when the system is querying the patient about insurance coverage information is illustrated at FIG. 5. The patient is asked to confirm or update all information necessary to facilitate expeditious payment.

[0036] As mentioned above, each kiosk, 10a-10n, is connected via bi-directional communications links to various medical records networks, DB1-DBn. For example, in accordance with the present embodiment, each kiosk 10a-10n is linked, via server 20, to various legacy databases, such as CHCS, ICDB and CHCS II. Once the personal data pertaining to the individual patient is recorded and/or

updated by a processor at the kiosk, the data is utilized to form a query from the relevant databases. For example, a structured data language (SQL) query can be formed to access data from the CHCS database to obtain the patient's latest medical history, including recent test results, blood pressure, etc.

[0037] In accordance with a further aspect of the invention, the system permits patients to retrieve data regarding future pending appointments during the check-in procedure as a reminder to patients. For example, a sample "screen shot" representative of what the display might look like when the system informs the patient about scheduled appointments is illustrated at FIG. 6. In other words, after the system verifies the patient's identity and retrieves the patient's relevant information from the necessary database(s), the patient is reminded about any appointments the patient has scheduled for that day. Additional information such as the name of the doctor or personnel the appointment is with, the location of the appointment, directions to that location, time of the appointment, etc., are displayed.

[0038] According to another aspect of the invention, by accessing the patient's medical records via the various databases (DB1-DBn), the system is able to notify the patient if there are any suggested upcoming preventive health measures that should be addressed, such as health screenings, examinations, shots, etc. Additionally, the patient can be informed whether the suggested tests, etc., are upcoming or past due. For example, a sample "screen shot" representative of what the display might look like when the system informs the patient about suggested preventive healthcare issues is illustrated at FIG. 7.

[0039] In addition to displaying the suggested preventive healthcare tests, etc., on the kiosk display device, a further aspect of the present invention permits the patient to printout any information that is displayed on paper. An additional embodiment adds a preventive health report card that would provide information regarding, for example, cardiovascular risk (previous blood pressure or recent LDL cholesterol score), women's health (PAP or mammography), cancer screening (e.g., colorectal cancer), immunizations, and obesity (e.g., Body Mass Index based on previous visit statistics).

[0040] An alternative embodiment provides an interactive voice response system for reporting laboratory results that are normal/routine.

[0041] Once the patient has been checked into the facility system and all relevant data has been verified and/or revised, and the patient has been provided with suggested known preventive measures, the kiosk then notifies the appropriate facility personnel that the patient has checked in and is ready for his or her appointment. For example, the kiosk is equipped with a wireless paging device that automatically pages the nurse or other personnel that the patient is ready for his or her appointment.

[0042] As mentioned above, an exemplary embodiment of a medical kiosk 10 in accordance with the present invention is illustrated in FIG. 2. The medical kiosk illustrated in FIG. 2 includes a stand (or housing) 11 holding a computer (or other processing device) 12 that interacts with the healthcare network (including legacy medical databases such as CHCS) via a server 20 (FIG. 1), creates the user interface, prints out