



US009298889B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Wekell et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,298,889 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** ***Mar. 29, 2016**

(54) **HEALTH DATA COLLECTION TOOL**

(71) Applicant: **Spacelabs Healthcare LLC**,
Snoqualmie, WA (US)

(72) Inventors: **William Oren Wekell**, Maple Valley,
WA (US); **Robert Boyer Koenig**,
Redmond, WA (US); **Joseph Charles**
Basta, Duvall, WA (US)

(73) Assignee: **Spacelabs Healthcare LLC**,
Snoqualmie, WA (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

This patent is subject to a terminal dis-
claimer.

(21) Appl. No.: **14/557,135**

(22) Filed: **Dec. 1, 2014**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2015/0134364 A1 May 14, 2015

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 13/973,862, filed on
Aug. 22, 2013, now Pat. No. 8,931,702, which is a
continuation of application No. 11/716,513, filed on
Mar. 9, 2007, now abandoned.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
G06K 19/00 (2006.01)
G06F 19/00 (2011.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **G06F 19/36** (2013.01); **A61B 5/02055**
(2013.01); **A61B 5/6826** (2013.01);
(Continued)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

USPC 235/435, 439, 454, 462, 472
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2,820,651 A 1/1958 Phillips
2,912,858 A 11/1959 Fuller

(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

CN 1688256 10/2005
CN 101194278 6/2008

(Continued)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Office Action dated Apr. 24, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/651,337.

(Continued)

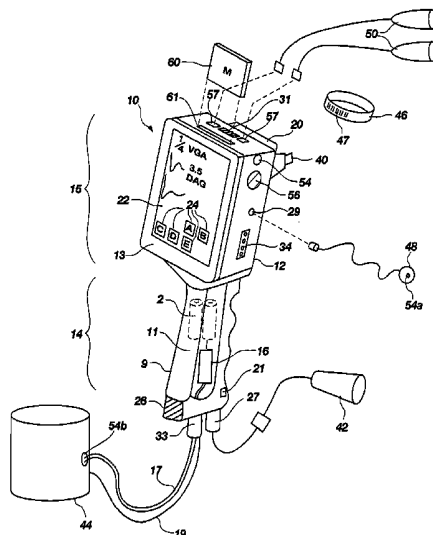
Primary Examiner — Matthew Mikels

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Novel IP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A portable health data tool permits a health care provider to assimilate and display a plurality of health care data from a patient and to associate the data with patient identifying information all stored in a memory contained in the tool. The tool includes a code reader for reading patient information into the tool from a bar code or other coded tag. The tool is associated with a plurality of different data assimilation devices stored with the tool's housing, including but not limited to, instruments for measuring, temperature, blood pressure, two-finger or lead wire ECG data, pulse oximetry data, sound data and picture data obtained from an optional digital camera integrated within the housing. The tool further includes data receiver and/or transmitter ports, which may be wireless or cable ports, for transferring data between the health data tool and a separate computer system that stores patient records.

9 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets



(51)	Int. Cl.		5,586,909 A	12/1996	Saba
	<i>A61B 5/0205</i>	(2006.01)	5,633,457 A	5/1997	Kilar
	<i>A61B 5/00</i>	(2006.01)	5,682,526 A	10/1997	Smokoff
	<i>G06Q 50/24</i>	(2012.01)	5,684,504 A	11/1997	Verhulst
	<i>H02J 7/00</i>	(2006.01)	5,687,717 A	11/1997	Halpern
	<i>A61B 5/022</i>	(2006.01)	5,692,494 A	12/1997	Pernetti
	<i>A61B 5/024</i>	(2006.01)	5,715,813 A	2/1998	Guevrekian
	<i>A61B 5/0404</i>	(2006.01)	5,718,235 A	2/1998	Golosarsky
	<i>A61B 5/145</i>	(2006.01)	5,724,025 A	3/1998	Tavori
	<i>A61B 7/04</i>	(2006.01)	5,724,985 A	3/1998	Snell
			5,749,367 A	5/1998	Gamlyn
			5,765,842 A	6/1998	Phaneuf
(52)	U.S. Cl.		5,779,305 A	7/1998	Hocking
	CPC	<i>A61B5/6838</i> (2013.01); <i>G06F 19/322</i>	5,787,298 A	7/1998	Broedner
		(2013.01); <i>G06F 19/323</i> (2013.01); <i>G06Q</i>	5,800,360 A	9/1998	Kisner
		<i>50/24</i> (2013.01); <i>H02J 7/0044</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B</i>	5,819,741 A	10/1998	Karlsson
		<i>5/002</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B 5/022</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B</i>	5,855,550 A	1/1999	Lai
		<i>5/02438</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B 5/0404</i> (2013.01);	5,868,133 A	2/1999	DeVries
		<i>A61B 5/145</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B 7/04</i> (2013.01);	5,904,328 A	5/1999	Leveridge
		<i>A61B 2560/0295</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B 2560/0406</i>	5,956,013 A	9/1999	Raj
		(2013.01); <i>A61B 2560/0431</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B</i>	5,975,081 A	11/1999	Hood
		<i>2560/0456</i> (2013.01); <i>A61B 2560/0475</i>	6,005,767 A	12/1999	Ku
		(2013.01)	6,024,089 A	2/2000	Wallace
			6,042,548 A	3/2000	Giuffre
			6,048,044 A	4/2000	Biggel
			6,050,940 A	4/2000	Braun
			6,063,028 A	5/2000	Luciano
			6,096,025 A	8/2000	Borders
			6,099,093 A	8/2000	Spence
(56)	References Cited		6,131,571 A	10/2000	Lampotang
	U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS		6,134,537 A	10/2000	Pao
			6,146,523 A	11/2000	Kenley
			6,155,255 A	12/2000	Lambert
			6,269,813 B1	8/2001	Fitzgerald
			6,322,502 B1	11/2001	Schoenberg
			6,338,823 B1	1/2002	Furukawa
			6,339,732 B1	1/2002	Phoon
			6,347,310 B1	2/2002	Passera
			6,383,136 B1	5/2002	Jordan
			6,396,583 B1	5/2002	Clare
			6,424,860 B1	7/2002	Karlsson
			6,435,690 B1	8/2002	Till
			6,443,889 B1	9/2002	Groth
			D467,001 S	12/2002	Buczek
			6,488,029 B1	12/2002	Hood
			6,536,430 B1	3/2003	Smith
			6,554,238 B1	4/2003	Hibberd
			6,571,227 B1	5/2003	Agrafiotis
			6,571,792 B1	6/2003	Hendrickson
			6,591,694 B2	7/2003	Tsai
			6,600,662 B1	7/2003	Emmert
			6,647,341 B1	11/2003	Golub
			6,650,779 B2	11/2003	Vachtesvanos
			6,674,837 B1	1/2004	Taskar
			6,692,258 B1	2/2004	Kurzweil
			6,692,436 B1	2/2004	Bluth
			6,699,187 B2	3/2004	Webb
			6,702,754 B2	3/2004	Ogura
			6,715,722 B2	4/2004	Roberts
			6,735,648 B2	5/2004	Onishi
			6,771,172 B1	8/2004	Robinson
			6,804,656 B1	10/2004	Rosenfeld
			6,824,539 B2	11/2004	Novak
			6,829,501 B2	12/2004	Nielsen
			6,931,795 B1	8/2005	Baloga
			6,933,931 B2	8/2005	Lubarsky, Jr.
			6,985,762 B2	1/2006	Brashears
			7,006,865 B1	2/2006	Cohen
			7,013,833 B2	3/2006	Lemberger
			7,024,569 B1	4/2006	Wright
			7,031,857 B2	4/2006	Tarassenko
			7,038,588 B2	5/2006	Boone
			7,076,435 B1	7/2006	McKeag
			7,081,091 B2	7/2006	Merrett
			RE39,233 E	8/2006	McGrath
			7,096,864 B1	8/2006	Mayer
			7,111,852 B2	9/2006	Woods
			7,117,438 B2	10/2006	Wallace
			7,128,709 B2	10/2006	Saruya

(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

7,137,951	B2	11/2006	Pilarski	2004/0103001	A1	5/2004	Mazar
7,193,233	B2	3/2007	Smith	2004/0116813	A1	6/2004	Selzer
7,216,802	B1	5/2007	De La Huerga	2004/0117209	A1	6/2004	Brown
7,223,007	B1	5/2007	Fredley	2004/0118404	A1	6/2004	Wallace
7,234,944	B2	6/2007	Nordin	2004/0147818	A1	7/2004	Levy
7,256,708	B2	8/2007	Rosenfeld	2004/0149892	A1	8/2004	Akitt
7,267,666	B1	9/2007	Duchon	2004/0153257	A1	8/2004	Munk
7,282,029	B1	10/2007	Poulsen	2004/0158132	A1	8/2004	Zaleski
7,315,825	B2	1/2008	Rosenfeld	2004/0172222	A1	9/2004	Simpson
7,336,980	B1	2/2008	Kaikuranta	2004/0186357	A1	9/2004	Soderberg
7,360,454	B2	4/2008	Kawashima	2004/0221077	A1	11/2004	Yen
7,371,214	B2	5/2008	Kouchi	2004/0236192	A1	11/2004	NecolaShehada
7,386,340	B2	6/2008	Schlegel	2004/0249298	A1	12/2004	Selevan
7,468,032	B2	12/2008	Stahmann	2004/0249673	A1	12/2004	Smith
7,469,601	B2	12/2008	Sugi	2005/0005932	A1	1/2005	Berman
D589,959	S	4/2009	Han	2005/0010165	A1	1/2005	Hickle
7,516,924	B2	4/2009	White	2005/0033124	A1	2/2005	Kelly
7,523,040	B2	4/2009	Kirchhoff	2005/0033188	A1	2/2005	Whitaker
7,529,083	B2	5/2009	Jeong	2005/0038332	A1	2/2005	Saidara
7,540,187	B1	6/2009	Dillon	2005/0038821	A1	2/2005	Wallen
7,566,307	B2	7/2009	Inukai	2005/0054920	A1	3/2005	Washburn
7,621,500	B2	11/2009	Ishizaki	2005/0059924	A1	3/2005	Katz
7,751,878	B1	7/2010	Merkle	2005/0065417	A1	3/2005	Ali
7,756,722	B2	7/2010	Levine	2005/0113650	A1	5/2005	Pacione
7,836,882	B1	11/2010	Rumph	2005/0124866	A1	6/2005	Elaze
7,945,452	B2	5/2011	Fathallah	2005/0139213	A1	6/2005	Blike
8,027,846	B2	9/2011	Schoenberg	2005/0146431	A1	7/2005	Hastings
8,033,686	B2	10/2011	Recker	2005/0151640	A1	7/2005	Hastings
8,147,419	B2	4/2012	Krauss	2005/0177096	A1	8/2005	Bollish
8,233,272	B2	7/2012	Fidacaro	2005/0229110	A1	10/2005	Gegner
8,344,847	B2	1/2013	Moberg	2005/0251232	A1	11/2005	Hartley
8,398,408	B1	3/2013	Hansen	2006/0004475	A1	1/2006	Brackett
8,413,271	B2	4/2013	Blanchard	2006/0022096	A1	2/2006	Chan
8,704,666	B2	4/2014	Baker, Jr.	2006/0042635	A1	3/2006	Niklewski
8,931,702	B2*	1/2015	Wekell et al. 235/472.01	2006/0058591	A1	3/2006	Garboski
8,940,147	B1	1/2015	Bartsch	2006/0094970	A1	5/2006	Drew
2001/0001179	A1	5/2001	Healy	2006/0142808	A1	6/2006	Pearce
2001/0018332	A1	8/2001	Lustila	2006/0155206	A1	7/2006	Lynn
2001/0027791	A1	10/2001	Wallace	2006/0155589	A1	7/2006	Lane
2001/0034475	A1	10/2001	Flach	2006/0199618	A1	9/2006	Steer
2002/0026941	A1	3/2002	Biondi	2006/0226992	A1	10/2006	Al-Ali
2002/0032386	A1	3/2002	Sackner	2006/0258926	A1	11/2006	Ali
2002/0060247	A1	5/2002	Krishnaswamy	2006/0280621	A1	12/2006	Kinugawa
2002/0108011	A1	8/2002	Tanha	2007/0007418	A1	1/2007	Lubbers
2002/0161291	A1	10/2002	Kianl	2007/0028921	A1	2/2007	Banner
2002/0193679	A1	12/2002	Malave	2007/0032749	A1	2/2007	Overall
2002/0196141	A1	12/2002	Boone	2007/0044578	A1	3/2007	Jones
2002/0196234	A1	12/2002	Gray	2007/0051861	A1	3/2007	Teramachi
2003/0028118	A1	2/2003	Dupree	2007/0060869	A1	3/2007	Tolle
2003/0029451	A1	2/2003	Blair	2007/0093784	A1	4/2007	Leonard
2003/0037786	A1	2/2003	Biondi	2007/0100213	A1	5/2007	Dossas
2003/0065536	A1	4/2003	Hansen	2007/0107728	A1	5/2007	Ricciardelli
2003/0076015	A1	4/2003	Ehrenreich	2007/0108291	A1	5/2007	Bhatia
2003/0114836	A1	6/2003	Estes	2007/0120763	A1	5/2007	De Paepe et al.
2003/0117296	A1	6/2003	Seely	2007/0176931	A1	8/2007	Tivig
2003/0120164	A1	6/2003	Nielsen	2007/0180140	A1	8/2007	Welch
2003/0130590	A1	7/2003	Bui	2007/0199388	A1	8/2007	Furkert
2003/0135087	A1	7/2003	Hickle	2007/0255116	A1	11/2007	Mehta
2003/0145854	A1	8/2003	Hickle	2007/0265533	A1	11/2007	Tran
2003/0171898	A1	9/2003	Tarassenko	2007/0276277	A1	11/2007	Booth
2003/0191373	A1	10/2003	Blike	2008/0033254	A1	2/2008	Kamath
2003/0197614	A1	10/2003	Smith	2008/0039701	A1	2/2008	Ali
2003/0209246	A1	11/2003	Schroeder	2008/0051667	A1	2/2008	Goldreich
2003/0210780	A1	11/2003	Pratt	2008/0103375	A1	5/2008	Kiani
2003/0216621	A1	11/2003	Alpert	2008/0154909	A1	6/2008	Dam
2003/0231460	A1	12/2003	Moscovitch	2008/0167569	A1	7/2008	Ermes
2003/0233129	A1	12/2003	Matos	2008/0170287	A1	7/2008	Champion
2004/0011938	A1	1/2004	Odds	2008/0177160	A1	7/2008	Al Ali
2004/0015079	A1	1/2004	Berger	2008/0177397	A1	7/2008	Davlin
2004/0021705	A1	2/2004	Baker	2008/0181465	A1	7/2008	Sauerwein
2004/0024303	A1	2/2004	Banks	2008/0221418	A1	9/2008	Al-Ali
2004/0032426	A1	2/2004	Rutledge	2008/0221495	A1	9/2008	Steffens
2004/0054261	A1	3/2004	Kamataki	2008/0228089	A1	9/2008	Cho
2004/0054295	A1	3/2004	Ramseth	2008/0249376	A1	10/2008	Zaleski
2004/0102687	A1	5/2004	Brashears	2008/0251003	A1	10/2008	Boston
				2008/0267790	A1	10/2008	Gaudet
				2008/0271736	A1	11/2008	Leonard
				2008/0275309	A1	11/2008	Stivoric
				2008/0281168	A1	11/2008	Gibson

(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2008/0281170 A1 11/2008 Eshelman
 2008/0287763 A1 11/2008 Hayter
 2008/0294057 A1 11/2008 Parlikar
 2008/0310600 A1 12/2008 Clawson
 2008/0319331 A1 12/2008 Zizzo
 2009/0005703 A1 1/2009 Fasciano
 2009/0015116 A1 1/2009 Arceta
 2009/0024008 A1 1/2009 Brunner
 2009/0054743 A1 2/2009 Stewart
 2009/0055735 A1 2/2009 Zaleski
 2009/0069642 A1 3/2009 Gao
 2009/0076345 A1 3/2009 Manicka
 2009/0099480 A1 4/2009 Salgo
 2009/0117784 A1 5/2009 Wu
 2009/0124239 A1 5/2009 Tsuei
 2009/0131805 A1 5/2009 O'Brien
 2009/0133609 A1 5/2009 Nethken
 2009/0149901 A1 6/2009 Jayne
 2009/0151720 A1 6/2009 Inoue
 2009/0182204 A1 7/2009 Semler
 2009/0192541 A1 7/2009 Ortiz
 2009/0193315 A1 7/2009 Gower
 2009/0200902 A1 8/2009 McKay
 2009/0206713 A1 8/2009 Vilkas
 2009/0209849 A1 8/2009 Rowe
 2009/0237264 A1 9/2009 Bobey
 2010/0004539 A1 1/2010 Chen
 2010/0007588 A1 1/2010 Zygmunt
 2010/0014229 A1 1/2010 Horie
 2010/0056875 A1 3/2010 Schoenberg
 2010/0070417 A1 3/2010 Flynn
 2010/0073915 A1 3/2010 Nittou
 2010/0094096 A1 4/2010 Petruzzelli
 2010/0110019 A1 5/2010 Ozias
 2010/0137729 A1 6/2010 Pierry
 2010/0164452 A1 7/2010 Ruan
 2010/0175695 A1 7/2010 Jamison
 2010/0179400 A1 7/2010 Brauker
 2010/0233891 A1 9/2010 Broeksteeg
 2010/0238138 A1 9/2010 Goertz
 2010/0259881 A1 10/2010 Choi
 2010/0261979 A1 10/2010 Kiani
 2010/0285771 A1 11/2010 Peabody
 2010/0294405 A1 11/2010 Longinotti-Buitoni
 2010/0298656 A1 11/2010 McCombie
 2010/0298718 A1 11/2010 Gilham
 2010/0324380 A1 12/2010 Perkins
 2010/0324384 A1 12/2010 Moon
 2011/0004071 A1 1/2011 Faiola
 2011/0071420 A1 3/2011 St. Pierre
 2011/0088694 A1 4/2011 Tobia
 2011/0130798 A1 6/2011 Elghazzawi
 2011/0138323 A1 6/2011 Skidmore
 2011/0152629 A1 6/2011 Eaton
 2011/0164074 A1 7/2011 Frank
 2011/0225771 A1 9/2011 Bartnick
 2011/0245579 A1 10/2011 Bruggeman
 2011/0257489 A1 10/2011 Banet
 2011/0279383 A1 11/2011 Wilson
 2011/0279958 A1 11/2011 Clark
 2012/0030610 A1 2/2012 DiPerna
 2012/0075327 A1 3/2012 Mackenzie
 2012/0095778 A1 4/2012 Gross
 2012/0105233 A1 5/2012 Bobey
 2012/0105774 A1 5/2012 Fletcher
 2012/0127103 A1 5/2012 Qualey
 2012/0209984 A1 8/2012 Gonzalez-Banos
 2012/0232398 A1 9/2012 Roham
 2013/0267861 A1 10/2013 Vassallo

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

EP 0686900 A2 12/1995
 EP 1054338 11/2000

EP 1227752 A1 8/2002
 EP 1852060 11/2007
 GB 2389290 A 12/2003
 JP 07163527 6/1995
 JP 2003210422 7/2003
 WO 9415523 7/1994
 WO 9918705 4/1999
 WO 03091841 11/2003
 WO 03102850 12/2003
 WO 2006094055 A2 9/2006
 WO 2010126916 11/2010
 WO 2010126916 A1 11/2010
 WO 2011001302 A1 1/2011
 WO 2011046636 A1 4/2011
 WO 2011047363 A1 4/2011
 WO 2011119512 A1 9/2011
 WO 2012068564 A2 5/2012
 WO 2012068565 A2 5/2012
 WO 2012068567 5/2012
 WO 2012068568 A2 5/2012
 WO 2012083276 A2 6/2012
 WO 2012083281 A1 6/2012
 WO 2012125135 A1 9/2012
 WO 2012128808 A2 9/2012
 WO 2012158720 A1 11/2012
 WO 2013056171 A2 4/2013
 WO 2013173520 A2 11/2013
 WO 2013173521 A2 11/2013
 WO 2014055660 A1 4/2014
 WO 2014194193 12/2014

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Notice of Allowance dated Sep. 3, 2014 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/973,862.

Office Action dated Aug. 28, 2009 for U.S. Appl. No. 11/716,513.

Office Action dated Mar. 23, 2010 for U.S. Appl. No. 11/716,513.

Office Action dated Aug. 1, 2011 for U.S. Appl. No. 11/716,513.

Office Action dated Jul. 2, 2012 for U.S. Appl. No. 11/716,513.

International Search Report for PCT/US2013/063087, Mar. 6, 2014.

Supplementary European Search Report, Nov. 25, 2009, Spacelabs Medical, PCT/US2006/007269.

Schoenberg, Roy, MD; Sands, Daniel Z., MD MPH; Safran Charles, MD; Center for Clinical Computing, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School, "Making ICU Alarms Meaningful: a comparison of traditional vs. trend-based algorithms" (AMIA '99 Annual Symposium), 1999, pp. 1-5.

International Search Report for PCT/US06/07269, Aug. 28, 2006.

International Preliminary Report on Patentability, PCT/US2006/007269, Sep. 11, 2007, Spacelabs Medical.

Notice of Allowance dated Oct. 31, 2014 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/114,689.

International Search Report for PCT/US10/32635, Jul. 23, 2010.

Office Action dated Feb. 26, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/768,714.

Office Action dated Aug. 14, 2014 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/768,714.

Office Action dated Nov. 21, 2013 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/768,714.

Office Action dated Jun. 18, 2012 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/768,714.

Office Action dated Jan. 17, 2013 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/768,714.

Office Action dated Dec. 10, 2014 for U.S. Appl. No. 14/165,193.

Office Action Dated May 31, 2013 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/052,883.

International Search Report for PCT/US2011/029278, Aug. 2, 2011.

International Search Report for PCT/US2011/61557, Apr. 23, 2012.

International Search Report for PCT/US2011/061554, Feb. 14, 2014.

International Search Report for PCT/US2011/061555, Apr. 17, 2012.

International Search Report for PCT/US2011/061558, Aug. 10, 2012.

International Preliminary Report on Patentability for PCT/US2011/061554, Feb. 25, 2014.

IntelliVue Patient Monitor; MP20/30, MP40/50, MP60/70/80/90, Release G.0 with Software Revision G.0x.xx (PHILIPS) Sep. 2008; pp. 4, 10, 19, 20, 46-49, 82, 326, 348, 420, 424, 452; Accessed on Sep. 30, 2013: <http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/documents/nursing-educationresources/files/MP20-MP90%20Instructions%20for%20Use%20Manual%20Rev_G_0%20%20English%20M8000-9001K.pdf>.

(56)

References Cited

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Office Action dated Nov. 12, 2014 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/300,462.
Notice of Allowance dated Jan. 28, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/300,478.
International Search Report, PCT/US2011/028007, Jul. 11, 2011, International Search Authority.
International Preliminary Report on Patentability, PCT/US2011/028007, Sep. 17, 2013, International Search Authority.
Office Action dated Nov. 21, 2014 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/045,539.
International Preliminary Report on Patentability, PCT/US12/38000, Nov. 13, 2013.
International Search Report for PCT/US12/38000, Oct. 23, 2012.
International Search Report for PCT/US10/34025, Aug. 9, 2010.
Notice of Allowance dated Mar. 13, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/906,081.
International Search Report for PCT/US2012/060125, Apr. 19, 2013.
International Search Report for PCT/US2010/052977, Mar. 18, 2011.
International Search Report for PCT/US2011/065676, Sep. 20, 2012.
International Search Report for PCT/US2011/065678, Jun. 29, 2012.

International Search Report, PCT/US2011/065685, May 8, 2012, International Search Authority.
International Preliminary Report on Patentability, PCT/US2011/065678, Jun. 18, 2013, International Search Authority.
International Preliminary Report on Patentability, PCT/US2011/065685, Jun. 18, 2013.
Office Action dated Sep. 22, 2014 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/329,186.
Notice of Allowance dated Jan. 8, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/329,259.
International Search Report for PCT/US2014/040225, Nov. 5, 2014.
Notice of Allowance dated May 27, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 14/165,193.
Supplemental Notice of Allowance dated Apr. 20, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 12/906,081.
Notice of Allowance dated May 11, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/300,462.
Office Action dated May 21, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/300,526.
Office Action dated Jun. 18, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/329,186.
Office Action dated Jul. 2, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/895,527.
European Search Report for EP12786443.7, Apr. 15, 2015.
Office Action dated Apr. 7, 2015 for U.S. Appl. No. 13/472,332.
Partial European Search Report for EP 12839321.2, May 26, 2015.

* cited by examiner

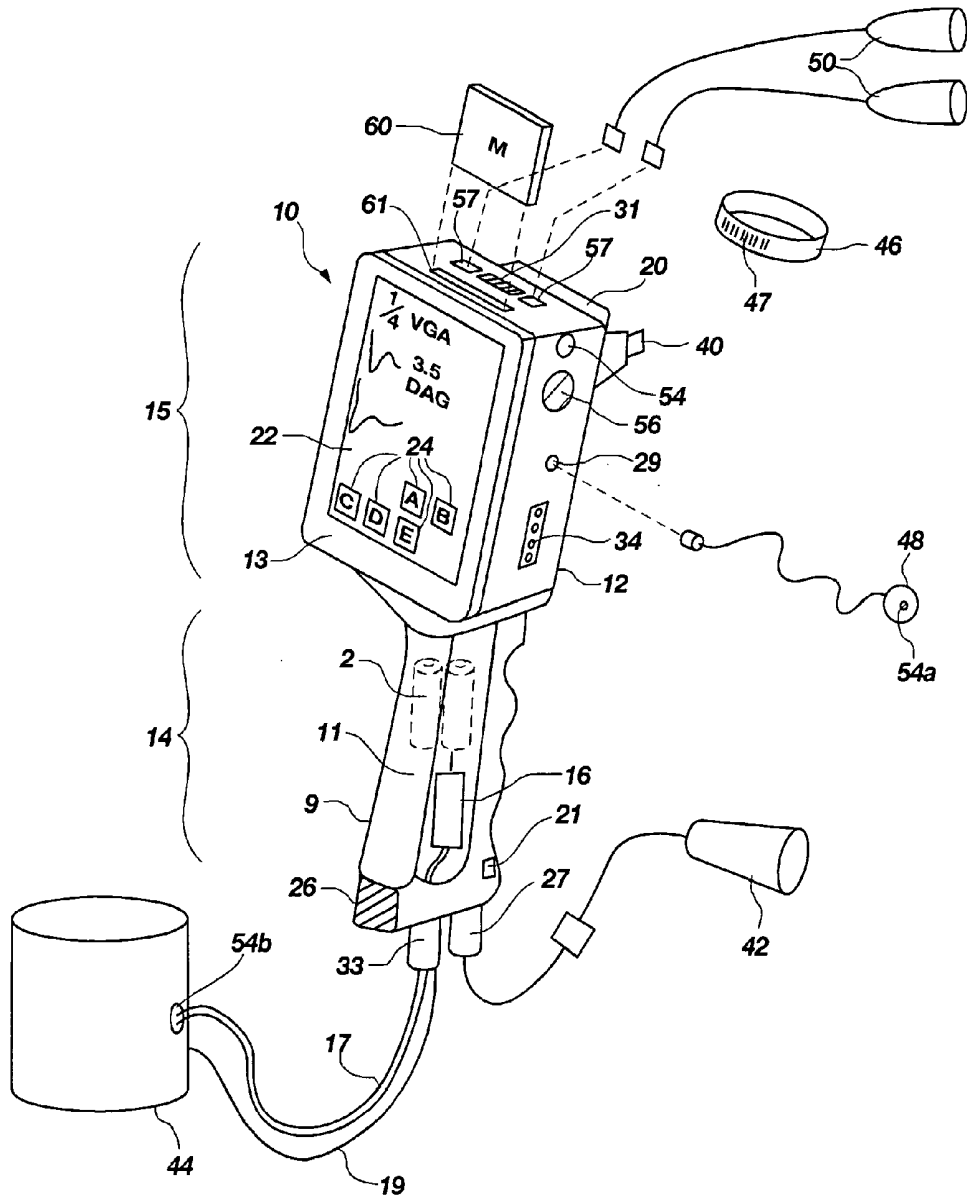


FIG. 1

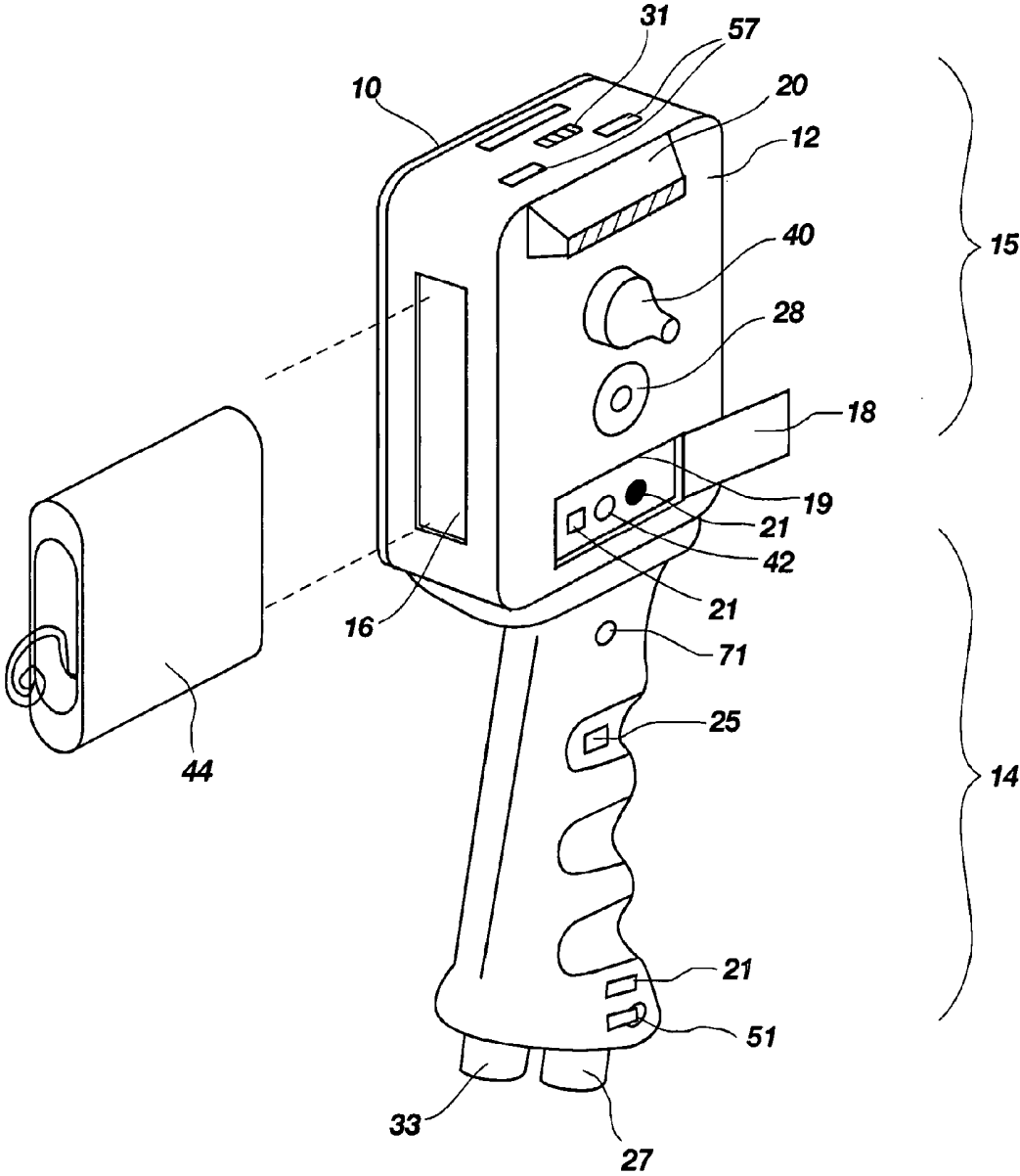


FIG. 2

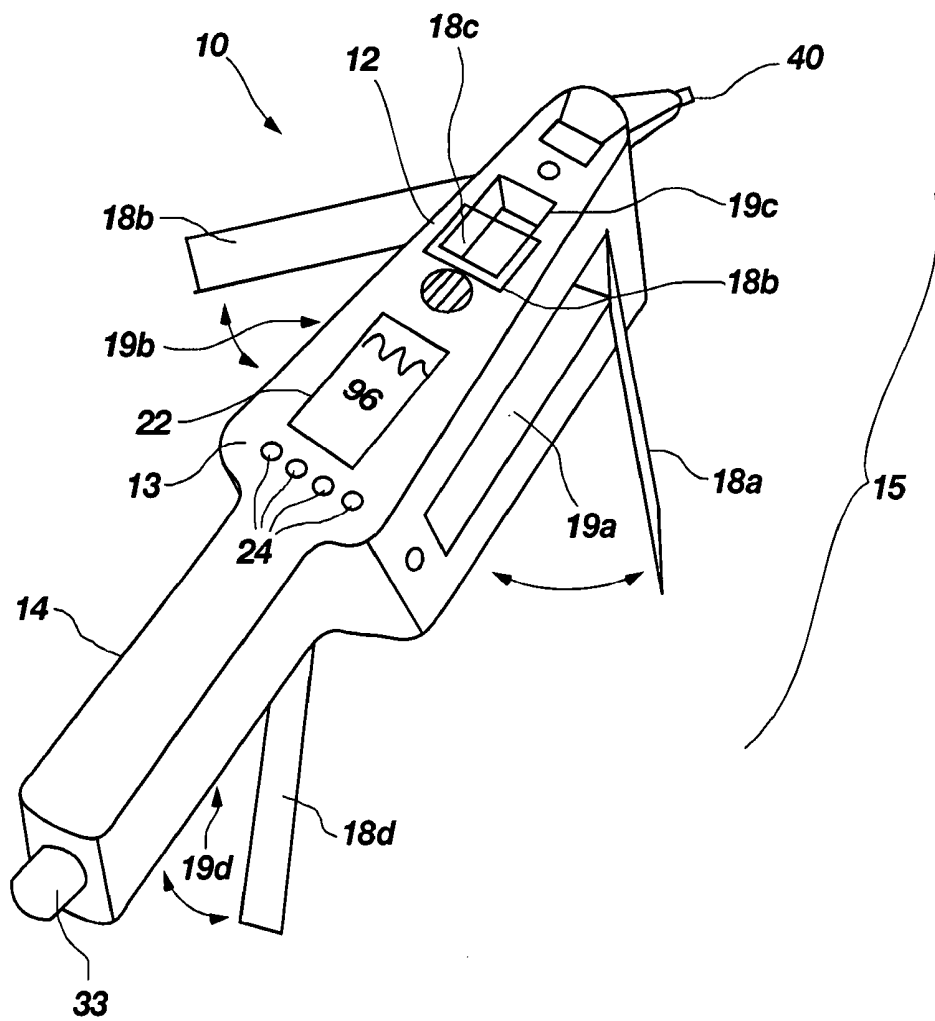


FIG. 3

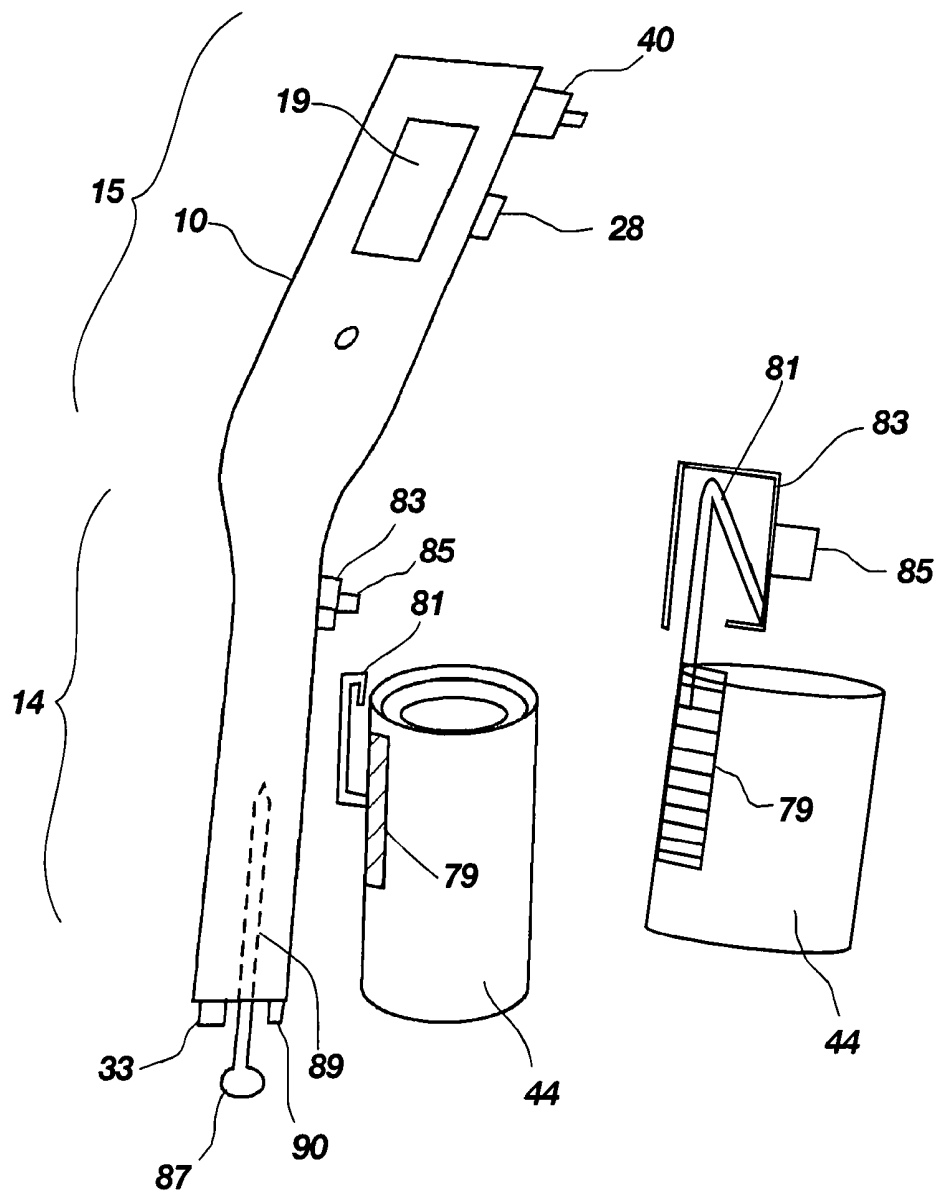


FIG. 4

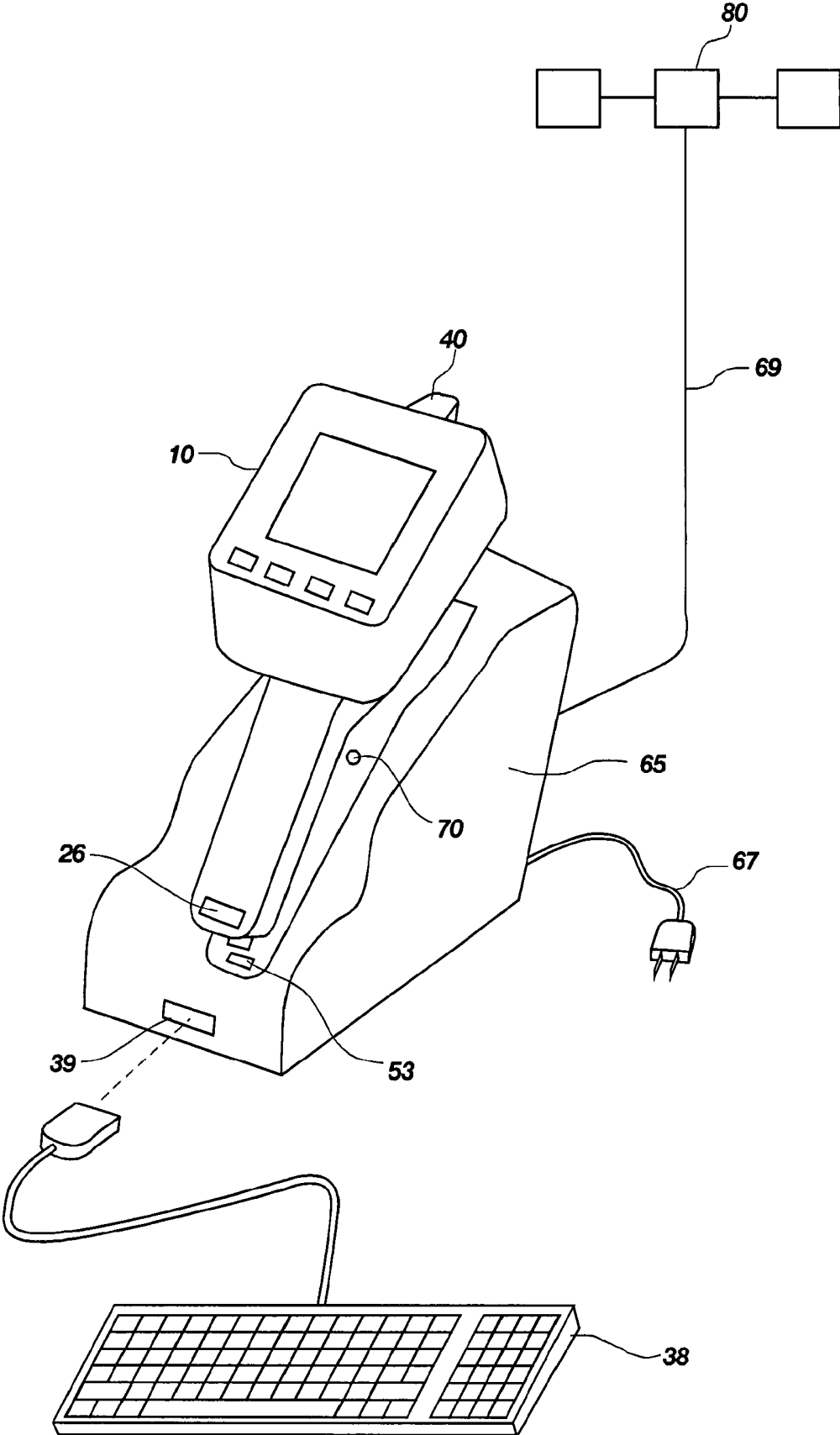


FIG 5

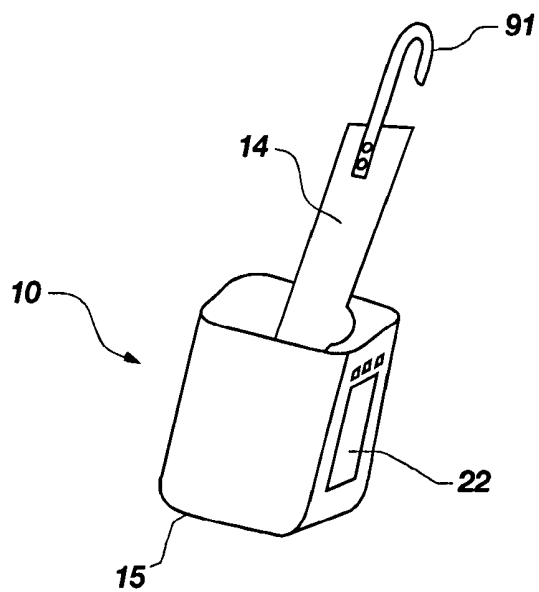


FIG. 6A

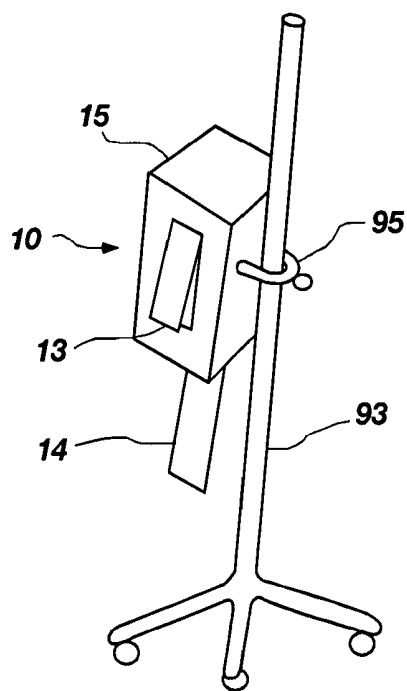


FIG. 6B

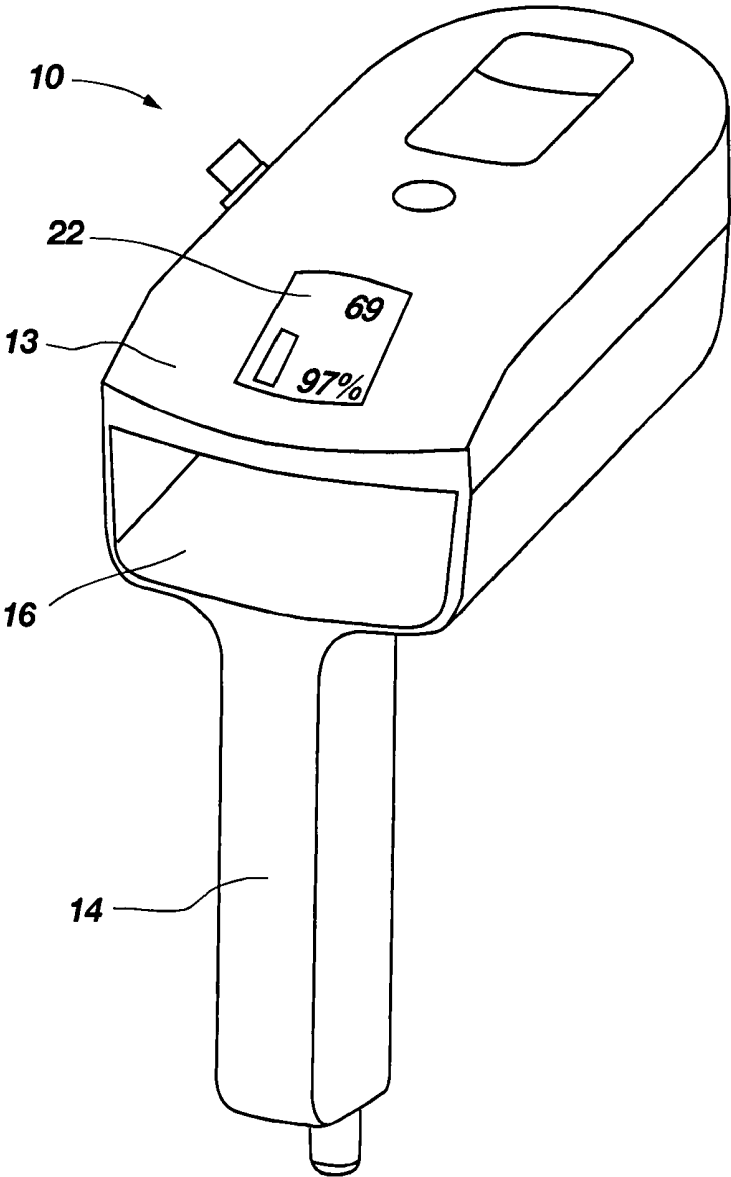


FIG. 7

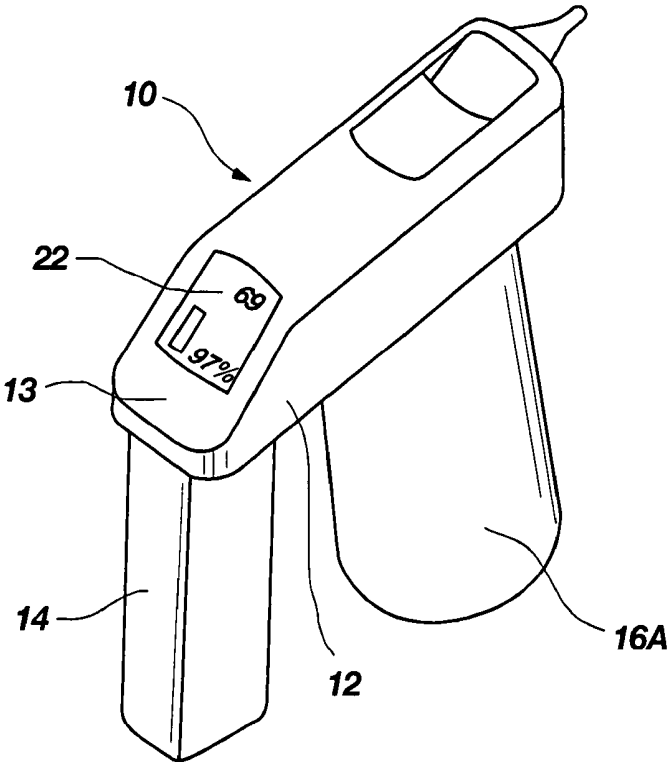


FIG. 8

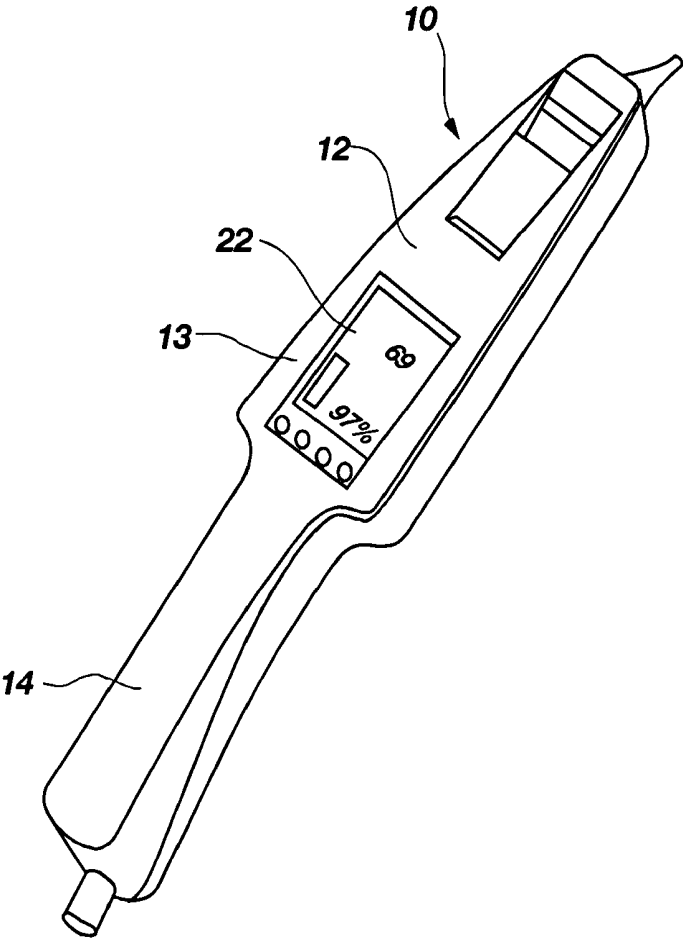


FIG. 9

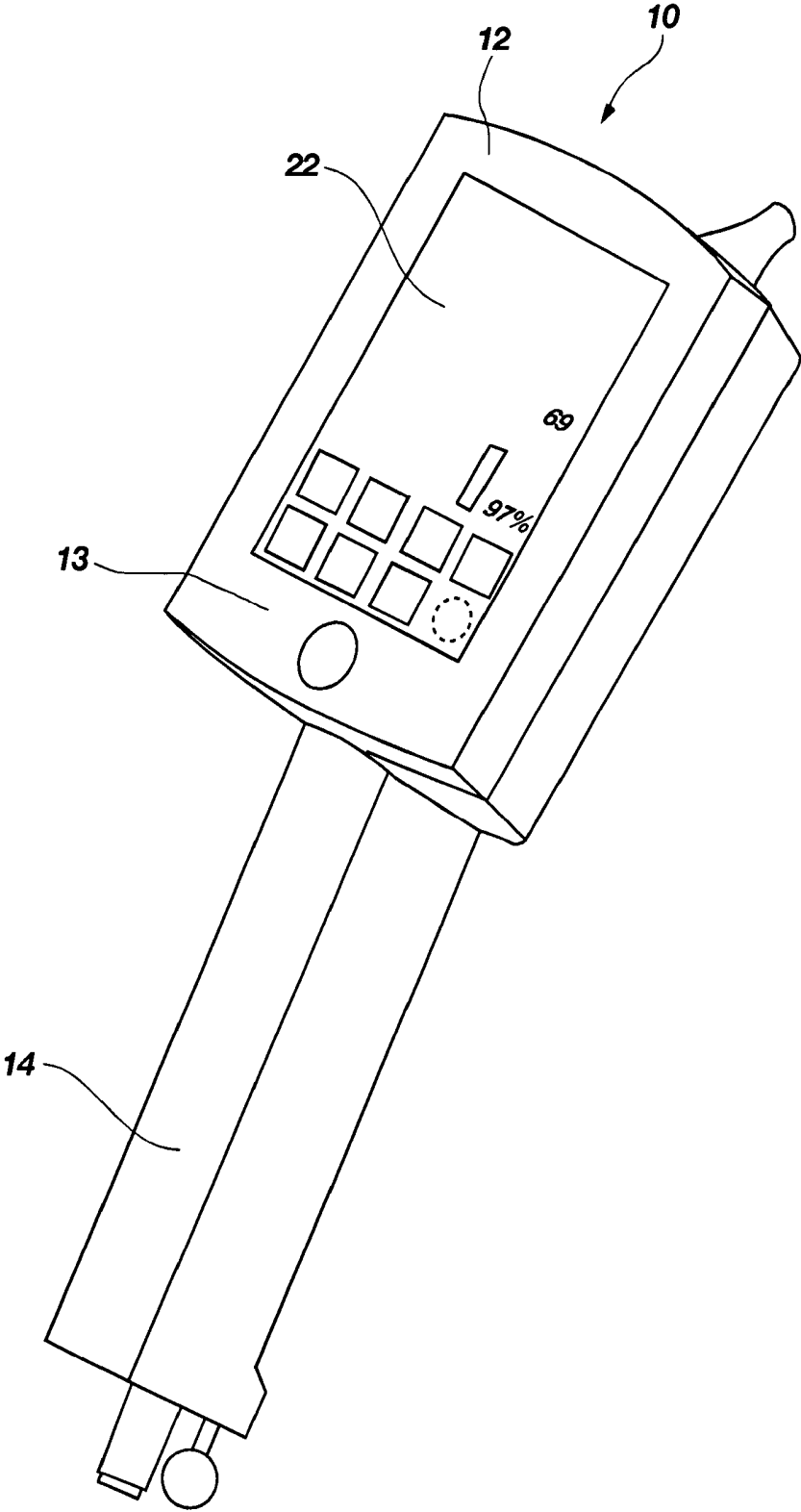


FIG. 10

HEALTH DATA COLLECTION TOOL

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to the field of health care devices for gathering, displaying and transmitting health care data concerning the vital signs of a patient, particularly to portable nursing devices for gathering such data, and still more particularly to portable devices that provide for assimilating a plurality of different types of health care data, including patient identity, using a single integrated device.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In a medical facility such as a hospital, clinic or doctor's office, the creation and maintenance of patient files is critical to recording vital data and history of a patient's treatment. Patient files include patient identifying information as well as a variety of health care data associated with the patient. Identifying information is routinely taken at intake of a patient and typically includes, for example, name, age, sex and insurance information, which is used to establish the base file for the patient. In addition, routine health care data such as temperature, pulse, blood pressure and the like are typically hand recorded at or near intake and included in a hard-copy paper file. The file is typically physically transferred to a patient examination room where further health care data and notes may be entered by a health care provider and manually recorded into the file.

If the patient is to be admitted to a hospital, an identification bracelet is typically created to be worn on the patient's wrist for follow-up care, and the patient's file is transferred to the patient's bedside. At the bedside, the file is manually updated upon periodic visits by a physician or nurse who manually records notes and other health care data into the file. Prescription and diagnosis information is also recorded in the file. In instances before or after a significant medical procedure such as birth or surgery, basic vital signs such as temperature, pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate, oximetry, electrocardiogram (ECG) or other data pertaining to the patient's body may be continuously monitored during the patient's stay. Specialized semi-portable monitoring instruments for obtaining and monitoring this type of health care data are part of a hospital's inventory of equipment that is assigned to individual patients on an as-needed basis and rolled into a patient's room on carts or roller stands. A large variety of semi-portable monitors are commercially provided by numerous manufacturers and distributors.

Fully portable devices that do not require a cart or stand are also commercially available. One example of a fully portable data health care data device provided by WelchAllyn is the SPOT VITAL SIGNS™ device that allows a health care provider to take non-invasive blood pressure, pulse, oximetry, and arterial pressure data, and which may be configured with a printer for recording the data. On routine visits, or "rounds," hard copy recordings of health care data obtained from such devices may be periodically printed and included in the files to create a vital signs history. Alternatively, the health care provider may manually record such data in the file with time and date information.

In the past, day-to-day patient intake and monitoring information was exclusively hand recorded in a paper file by a variety of health care provider personnel. Today, health care institutions are increasingly moving toward recording health care information in electronic patient files rather than in hard-copy files. In typical electronic file systems, patient files are maintained on a centralized computer system and patient

information and health care data are entered from a variety of distributed smart terminals positioned in intake rooms, examination rooms and hospital rooms. The smart terminals serve as a substitute for the hard copy files, permitting the variety of health care providers to enter and display a variety of health care information from a variety of locations without need for physically transferring the hard copy file.

Another improvement in recent years is that monitoring devices have been equipped with telemetry equipment to wirelessly upload health care data through a network of receivers that are positioned remotely from the monitors. In certain situations, such as with ambulatory patients requiring continuous monitoring of specific vital signs, or with ambulance patients being transported to a hospital under emergency situations, small, portable monitors with self-contained power and data telemetry units are used to continuously record and transmit health care data to a centralized computer system. Commercially available examples of such portable monitors are exemplified by the Micropaq™ and Propaq™ monitors provided by WelchAllyn. These monitors display ECG waveforms, heart rate, invasive or non-invasive blood pressure, temperature, pulse oximetry and respiratory data. In certain optional configurations, these devices can wirelessly transmit such data over a local area wireless radio frequency network (FlexNet™). In other configurations, data assimilated by the monitors may be transmitted via infrared data transmission.

While the provision of centralized electronic patient record files and portable health care data monitors equipped with telemetry options has improved the ease and efficiency of collecting, transmitting and storing health care data, there remains a need in the art to equip a health care provider with options for integrating the collected data with patient identification information, and for providing for additional types of data that can be collected using an inexpensive and fully portable device.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention provides a portable, multifunctional health data tool for use by a healthcare provider. The health data tool includes a housing configured to be of a shape, size and weight to permit the housing to be held in a hand of a health-care provider. It further contains a code reader associated with the housing configured to read coded information, such as information pertaining to the patient's identity or information pertaining to a drug or device used by the patient. The tool further includes multiple input ports for different data assimilation devices associated with the housing for inputting different health care data obtained from a patient into the health data tool. A display screen configured to display the health care data obtained from the data assimilation devices is also provided. Finally, the tool includes a data transmitter and a data receiver port to permit the health care data and other information to be transferred between the health data tool and a remote device that is separate from the tool.

In one aspect, the code reader is a bar code scanner that reads bar code information. In another aspect, the code reader is a radio receiver that receives a radio signal encoding the information. In another embodiment, the code reader is an optical character recognition device that reads character information. In yet another embodiment, the code reader recognizes a pattern of dots encoding the information.

In another aspect, the housing comprises an upper portion that houses the display screen and a lower portion downwardly extending from the upper portion that defines a handle dimensioned to fit within the hand of the health care provider.

The housing may include a plurality of storage compartments to store the plurality of data assimilation devices associated with the housing. A plurality of doors providing access to the storage compartments may also be provided to enclose the associated data assimilation devices within the health data tool. In most embodiments, at least one of the storage compartments should include a compartment for holding a blood pressure cuff. The blood pressure cuff storage compartment may, for example, be configured as a slot within the housing. In other embodiments, at least one of the data assimilation devices, such as the blood pressure cuff, is removably attachable to the housing by a spring actuated latch. The housing may be configured to store an air compressor for operating the blood pressure cuff, or the blood pressure cuff may be manually operated by a hand pump.

The health data tool further includes an electronic memory associated with the housing to store the health care data. The electronic memory may be configured to store health care data for a plurality of patients, typically in a database format.

In the following detailed description of exemplary embodiments of the invention, reference is made to the accompanying drawings, which form a part hereof, and in which are shown, by way of illustration, specific exemplary embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. In the drawings, like numerals describe substantially similar components throughout the several views. These embodiments are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention. Other embodiments may be utilized and structural, logical, electrical, and other changes may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the present invention. The following detailed description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limiting sense, and the scope of the present invention is defined only by the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front isometric view of an exemplary embodiment of the health data tool of the invention including exemplary data assimilation devices associated therewith.

FIG. 2 is a rear isometric view of an exemplary embodiment of the health data tool of the invention.

FIG. 3 is a front isometric view of another exemplary embodiment of a health data tool of the invention illustrating storage compartments incorporated into the health data tool.

FIG. 4 is a side elevational view of an exemplary embodiment depicting device attachment clips.

FIG. 5 is a front isometric view of an exemplary embodiment of a health data tool of the invention and a docking station for use therewith.

FIGS. 6A and 6B are isometric views of a belt attachment hook and a pole mount, respectively, associated with one embodiment of the health data tool of the invention.

FIG. 7 is a front isometric view of another exemplary embodiment of a health data tool of the invention.

FIG. 8 is a front isometric view of another exemplary embodiment of a health data tool of the invention.

FIG. 9 is a front isometric view of another exemplary embodiment of a health data tool of the invention.

FIG. 10 is a front isometric view of another exemplary embodiment of a health data tool of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

As used herein, "health care data" is the meaningful form of data, including at least in-part, data commonly known as "vital signs" that pertain to the health of a patient. Typical

types of health care data include, but are not limited to, temperature, pulse, blood O₂ level, electro cardiogram data, blood pressure, respiratory rate, appearance (such as may be recorded by a camera), sound information (such as obtained by a stethoscope) and the like.

The term "patient identifying data" refers to data that can be used to identify a patient. Typical types of patient identifying data includes name, age, sex, and insurance information.

The term "signal data" refers to the raw signal that is received from a health care data assimilation device before the raw signal is converted into meaningful health care data by the action of a microprocessor. Typically, signal data is in the form of an amplitude or a frequency of a voltage, a current, or optical analogues of the same, which has been transduced from a detector that detects changes in pressure, light, sound, temperature or other measurable attribute.

The term "associated with" as used with respect to a component part of the health data tool (described in more detail hereafter) means that the component part is physically stored in, attached, or coupled or connected to the health data tool. The attachment or connection may be fixed or removable.

FIGS. 1 and 2, illustrate front and rear isometric views, respectively, of one embodiment of a health data tool 10 of the invention. The health data tool 10 includes a housing 12 that houses a plurality of data assimilation devices 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 57 associated with health data tool 10. The housing 12 includes a lower handle 14 portion, which in advantageous embodiments, extends longitudinally downward with respect to a front display surface 13 of the housing 12. The housing 12 is configured to be of shape, size and weight to permit the health data tool 10 to be held in one hand of health care provider. In typical embodiments, the housing 12 is made of a plastic material and occupies less than about 2 or less than about 1 cubic feet of space and weighs less than about 10 pounds, less than about 5 pounds or less than about 3 pounds. The downwardly extending handle 14 and overall configuration of the health data tool 10 permits a health care provider to hold the health data tool 10 in one hand while manipulating data assimilation devices with the other hand and simultaneously observing data that is displayed on a display screen 22 located in an upper portion 15 of the housing 12. The data assimilation devices 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 57 and the display screen 22 are described in more detail hereafter.

In certain embodiments, the downwardly extending handle 14 is configured with an access door 9 that provides access to a hollow compartment 11. The hollow compartment 11 may be used to store one or more of the data assimilation devices. In the embodiment depicted in FIG. 1, the hollow compartment 11 in the handle 14 encloses batteries 13 used to power the health data tool 10 and, optionally, one or more of the data assimilation devices associated therewith. As depicted in FIG. 1, the hollow compartment 11 also houses a small air compressor 16 used to supply air through an air line 17 for automatic operation of a non-invasive blood pressure cuff 44. Of course, the batteries or air compressor 16 may be located elsewhere in the housing 12 so long as suitable electrical connections or tubing is provided to power the health data tool 10 and channel air flow to the air line 17. The air compressor 16 is not needed when the blood pressure cuff 44 is configured for manual inflation using a bulb.

The health data tool 10 includes a code reader 20 associated with the housing 12 to read information pertaining to the patient. In advantageous embodiments, the code reader 20 is integrated into the housing 12, although in other embodiments the code reader 20 may detachably coupled to the housing 12. The function of the code reader 20 is to read

coded information associated with or pertaining to the patient. The coded information typically includes personal information that identifies the patient and may also include information pertaining to drugs or devices that are to be administered or otherwise used in treating or monitoring the patient.

In one exemplary embodiment, the code reader **20** is a standard bar code reader. Typically, during an intake procedure at a health care facility a patient to be treated or admitted is supplied with an identity tag **46**, usually in the form of wrist bracelet, that includes the name of the patient, the date of admission, the administering health care provider or other information such as insurance provider and the like. Some or all of this information may be encoded in a bar code **47** on the identity tag **46**. The bar code reader **20** permits this identifying information to be rapidly and accurately entered into the health data tool **10**.

The patient may also be prescribed a drug therapy that includes a name for the prescribed drug, a dosage and frequency of administration. In certain cases the patient may bring a drug container to a health care provider upon admission to a health care facility to assist in diagnosis or treatment, while in other cases the health care provider at the facility may prescribe a drug treatment to the patient. Such prescription information, or parts thereof, may also be encoded in a bar code associated with the container that contains the drug. The bar code reader **20** permits the health care provider to enter the relevant drug information into the health data tool **10**. Similarly, an admitted patient may be assigned usage of various medical devices from an inventory of devices provided by the health care facility. These medical devices often include a bar code to identify the particular device for tracking, performance monitoring and inventory purposes. The bar code reader **20** allows the health care provider to associate a given medical device with a given patient identification in a memory record to facilitate these purposes.

While the bar code reader **20** may be the most universally adopted form of a code reader **20**, it is understood that that many other embodiments of the code reader **20** may be associated with the health data tool **10** to provide the same or similar functions. Another embodiment of the code reader **20**, for example, is a "dot" reader that scans a pattern of dots that encode information. Another embodiment is an optical character recognition scanner that scans an image in bit form and then converts the scanned image into alphanumeric characters. Another embodiment is a magnetic strip reader that extracts information magnetically encoded on a data strip. Yet another embodiment is a radio frequency (RF) receiver that receives electromagnetic waves transmitted from an RF identification tag in which information regarding the subject is encoded. Still another embodiment of the code reader **20** is a hologram reader that detects spectral or diffraction patterns emitted by an illuminated hologram and extracts information encoded therein from the pattern of spectral or diffraction patterns detected. Accordingly, the skilled person will understand that the code reader **20** can be embodied in many forms and with many variations, as long as the code reader **20** permits information to be extracted from a tag, card or other identifying device associated with a subject patient (or thing).

Turning now to the data assimilation devices **40**, **42**, **44**, **48**, **50**, and **57**, in various embodiments, the data assimilation devices associated with the health data tool **10** include at least two different instruments for measuring health care data from a patient. Example data assimilation devices include, but are not limited to, a pulse oximeter (SPO2 meter) **42** for measuring pulse rate and oxygen saturation of the blood, a thermometer such as tympanic thermometer **40** for measuring a

patient's temperature, a non-invasive blood pressure device **44** that includes a blood pressure cuff for measuring blood pressure, an electronic stethoscope **48** for detecting interior sounds from the patient's body, and a "two finger" electrocardiogram device **57** or an ECG lead wire set **50** for recording cardiac activity through finger electrodes. In some advantageous embodiments, the health data tool **10** also includes a digital camera **28** as a data assimilation device integrated within the housing **12** for recording digital pictures of the patient.

The housing **12** of the health data tool **10** also includes one or more device input ports **27**, **29**, **31**, **33**, and **34** configured to receive data output from the data assimilation devices **40**, **42**, **44**, **48**, **50**, and **57**. In certain examples, the input ports **29**, **31** and **33** are particularly configured to receive output from the data communication lines of particular data assimilation devices such as the stethoscope **48**, the ECG **50** and the blood pressure cuff **44**, respectively. Blood pressure input port **33** may be further configured for delivering air pressure to the blood pressure cuff **44** through air flow line **17** and to receive data from the blood pressure cuff **44** through data input line **19**. The input ports **34** may also be configured to receive data output from the ECG lead wire set **50**. The input port **27** is a standard two-way input/output computer interface port that receives a standard computer data communication cable, such as for example, a USB cable. Various commercially available data assimilation devices, exemplified by the SPO2 oximeter **42** depicted in FIG. 1, may be pre-configured or adapted to output data over such standard computer cables. One advantage of the two-way input/output port **27** is that it can be used to receive data from the data assimilation devices in one operational mode of the health data tool **10**, and used as a data transmitter or receiver port in another operational mode where the health care data is uploaded or downloaded into a remote computer system as will be described in more detail hereafter.

As illustrated in FIG. 2, the housing **12** also includes one or more storage compartments **16** and **19** for storing the data assimilation devices associated with health data tool **10**. The storage compartment **16** is an open slot configured for storing the blood pressure cuff **44** folded or rolled into a size that slips into the slot **16**. The storage compartment **19** is configured to store one or more smaller data assimilation devices, exemplified in FIG. 1 by SPO2 pulse oximeter **42**. The interior of storage compartments **16** or **19** may optionally be equipped with clamps, hooks, Velcro™ or other latching mechanism **21** for securely holding the data assimilation device within the storage compartment **16** or **19**. In addition, or alternatively, the storage compartment **19** may be configured with a door **18** for enclosing the interior of the compartment **19** with the stored data assimilation device. The door **18** in various embodiments, may be sliding door, a swinging door, or a removable door.

FIG. 3 illustrates another configuration of the health data tool **10** and depicting other locations of various storage compartments **19a** and **19b** with corresponding access doors **18a** and **18b**, which are located on side edges of the upper portion **15** of the housing **12**. Storage compartment **19c** with sliding door **18c** is located on the upper surface **13** of the health data tool along with the display screen **22**. Storage compartment **19d** with corresponding access door **18d** is located on the back side of downwardly extending handle **14**. Accordingly, the storage compartments **16** and **19** may be located anywhere in the housing **12** where there is room to accommodate a compartment without making the overall dimensions of the health data tool **10** too large to be comfortably handled by a health care provider.

The storage compartments 16 and 19 represent one example embodiment of means to associate the data assimilation devices with the health data tool 10 of the invention. Other means are also available. For example FIG. 4 is a side view of an alternative means for associating data assimilation devices 44 and 87 with the health data tool 10. In this embodiment, a thermistor type temperature probe 87 that is separate from the tympanic thermometer 40 is releasably inserted into a receptacle 89 situated in the handle 14 of the housing 12. The temperature probe 87 is secured within, and released from, the receptacle 89 by means of closing and opening a latch mechanism 90 provided on the bottom of the handle 14. Also in this embodiment, instead of using a slot 16 or compartment 18 to store the blood pressure cuff 44, the cuff 44 is rolled and banded with an elastic or Velcro™ band 79. The band 79 is attached to a flat spring clip 81 configured to be inserted into a spring receptacle 83 that securely holds the blood pressure cuff 44 in place on the handle 14 of the health data tool 10 by the tension of the spring clip 81 against the wall and ledge of the spring receptacle 83. The blood pressure cuff 44 is released from the spring receptacle 83 by operation of spring release mechanism 85, which compresses the flat spring clip 81 thereby releasing the tension of the spring from the walls and ledge of the receptacle.

Referring again to FIG. 1, in some advantageous embodiments, the health data tool 10 optionally includes a microphone 54 for collecting sound information. The sound information may include for example, oral notes made by a health care provider or patient or sounds emitted from the patients body, such as the sound of a heartbeat, organ function or flow of blood. Specialized microphones 54a or 54b may be configured with the stethoscope 48 or the blood pressure device 44 to amplify the sound of the patient's heartbeat, organ function or blood flow. A speaker 56 and associated amplifier (not shown) may optionally be associated with the health data tool to audibly emit the sounds received from the microphones 54, 54a or 54b.

The front surface 13 of the health data tool 10 also includes input keys 24 for selecting various functions to be executed by the health data tool 10. The input keys 24 may be touch-screen type input keys as depicted in FIG. 1 or conventional toggle input keys 24 integrated into the housing 12 separately from the display screen 22, as depicted in FIGS. 3-6. The display screen 22 is configured to display a plurality of different types of health care data obtained by the data assimilation devices and to display commands or status information selected by the input keys 24. In various embodiments the display screen 22 displays wave form data, alpha numeric data and/or image data.

In an example use, input key 24a is depressed to select a particular data assimilation device to acquire health care data. A name or other designation of the selected device is initially displayed on the display screen 22 to verify the selection. Toggling of the input key 24A sequentially displays the name of different input devices. The selected device is activated by the health care provider and the health data tool 10 is set to acquire and display the selected type of data by depressing enter key 24B. Alternatively, the input ports 27, 29, 31 and 33 may be configured with a plug-and-play type of switch to automatically set the health data tool for acquiring data from a particular data assimilation device when that device is plugged into the appropriate input port. The health care provider then withdraws the necessary data assimilation device from its storage location in the housing 12 and, in the case of data assimilation devices such as the blood pressure cuffs 44, the SPO2 pulse oximeter 42 or finger ECG electrodes 57, dons the instrument on the patient. Alternatively, in the case of

data assimilation devices such as the stethoscope 48, thermometer 40, or camera 28, the health care provider situates the instrument in the appropriate location to acquire the health care data.

Once donned or situated, the health care provider presses input button 24c to begin acquiring the health care data. In the case of a camera 28, the selection of that device activates trigger 25 to function as a shutter release so that when the trigger 25 is depressed, the camera takes a photo. In any case, the acquired data is displayed on display screen 22 in the appropriate form for the selected device. For example, if the selected data assimilation device is the two-finger ECG 57 or ECG lead wire set 50, then the wave form of the electrocardiogram signal is displayed on the display screen 22. If the selected data assimilation device is a blood pressure device 44, then the systolic and diastolic readings are displayed in alphanumeric form on the display screen 22. Similarly, if the selected data assimilation device is a thermometer 40, then an alphanumeric representation of temperature is displayed as it is being collected. If the selected device is the camera 28, then the recorded digital image is displayed on the display screen.

The health data tool 10 is optionally equipped with a speaker 56 associated with the housing 12. If the selected data assimilation device is a stethoscope 48, then the sound detected through the stethoscope microphone 54a is amplified and emitted through the speaker 56 to permit the health care provider to listen to the sound and readjust the position of the stethoscope as needed. Optionally, when the stethoscope 48 is selected, depressing input key 24c activates trigger 25 to cause the health data tool 10 to operate in record mode so that if a recording is desired, depressing the trigger 25 a first time begins the process of taking a digital sound recording and depressing the trigger 25 a second time ends the recording. Similarly, if the selected data assimilation device is a voice record, then depressing input key 24c activates microphone 54 to receive voice information and activates trigger 25 to function in record mode. Depressing the trigger 25 a first time begins the process of taking a digital voice recording and depressing the trigger 25 a second time ends the voice recording. In certain embodiments, the health data tool may also include a microprocessor programmed with voice recognition software to translate the sound recording into alphanumeric text.

When the data is a sound recording, ECG output, or other time-dependent data, such data is digitally recorded for a time period that in one embodiment, is selected by the health care provider. When such time dependent data assimilation devices are selected, input key 24E may be used to select the time period of the recording to store. In an alternative embodiment, the time period of the recording is the same as the time period that results from depressing the input trigger 25 on and off as described above. Alternatively, the health data tool 10 may be pre-preprogrammed to record and/or store particular types of health care data for a predetermined increment of time. For example, the health data tool 10 may be pre-programmed to record and store ECG data for a period of 60 seconds and to record and store stethoscope data for a period of 10 seconds.

The operation of the various input keys 24A-24E and trigger 25 described above is for exemplary purposes only. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the input keys 24 can be programmed to perform the functions of the health data tool 10 in a variety of configurations. For example, even a single input key 24 can be configured with programming to select functions from a menu of options displayed on the display screen 22. Similarly, the functions of the trigger 25 can be accomplished using an input key 24. Accordingly, any

arrangement of input keys **24** that allows the health care provider to operate the health data tool **10** to perform any of the functions described herein is suitable for the invention.

Furthermore, the embodiments of the health data tool **10** are described above as functioning in a sequential data assimilation mode, whereby one type of data assimilation device is activated at a time. In other advantageous embodiments, multiple data assimilation devices can be selected to simultaneously acquire different types of health care data, in which case the health data tool **10** functions as a multimeter, simultaneously acquiring and displaying a plurality of different data. In such embodiments, multiple devices are selected by sequentially depressing select input key **24a** and enter key **24b**. The display screen **22** initially displays each selected device in a list when entered. In one embodiment illustrated in FIG. **2**, when acquire input key **24c** is depressed, the display screen **22** is activated to display the different types of data on divided portions of the same display screen **22**. Alternatively, multiple screens **22** are used to display different data on different types of screens. In such embodiments, simple alphanumeric data may be displayed on simple low resolution LED display screens, while more information intensive data such as wave form data or image data is displayed on a field emission, plasma, or other type of high resolution display screen.

In advantageous embodiments, the health data tool **10** is also equipped with an electronic memory **60** to store patient information and the health care data assimilated through the various data assimilation devices associated with the health data tool **10**. As depicted in FIG. **1**, the memory **60** is shown as a removable memory card, such as a flash memory card, that is inserted into memory slot **61**. However, it is understood that the health data tool **10** may be configured with another type of memory such as conventional electronic memory **60** integrated within the housing **12**. In an example operation, depressing store data input key **24d** functions to store the health care data in the memory **60**. Alternatively, the health data tool **10** may be programmed to automatically store the data in memory **60** when acquisition is complete. In an advantageous embodiment, the data is stored in a record structure associated with the patient identification information acquired using code reader **20**. In certain embodiments, date and time information is automatically provided in the record, and time information is supplied from a clock (not shown) associated with the health data tool **10**.

In further advantageous embodiments, the memory **60** stores a plurality of health care data records for a plurality of patients in a database structure. In such embodiments, the health care provider can acquire multiple records from multiple patients, or for the same patient, over the course of a shift and later upload the recorded information into a centralized database on a remote computer **80**, as depicted in FIG. **5**, that stores patient records as will be described more fully hereafter.

In certain advantageous embodiments, the health data tool **10** is also equipped with one or more data transmission devices **21** and/or data receiver devices **26**. In one embodiment, the data transmitter **21** or receiver **26** device is a wireless data transmission device. Example wireless data transmission and receiver devices suitable for the invention include, but are not limited to, infrared and radio frequency transmitters and receivers. The data transmitter **21** is used to upload data stored in the memory **60** of the health data tool **10** into the remote computer system **80** via transmission of the data to remote infrared data or RF receiver. The data receiver **26** is used to receive an input of data into the health care tool **10** from a remote wireless data transmitter. Such remote

transmitters and receivers are typically situated in individual rooms where the patient is located, in which case the data can be transmitted or received simultaneously in a given patient's room. Alternatively, these remote transmitters and receivers may be located in a central location where multiple data records for multiple patients may be uploaded or downloaded in a single session. Data transmission or reception is accomplished either automatically or by selecting a transmit or receive function from one of the input keys **24**, which in certain embodiments, activates trigger **25** to function to initiate data transfer.

Another embodiment of a data transmission and receiver device is the computer input/output port **27**. An appropriate data communication cable is attached to the input/output port **27** and to an input/output port for the central computer system. An advantage of using a standard computer interface cable is that is adaptable for use with any modifications, upgrades or other changes that are made to the health data tool **10** or the remote computer system **80**.

Data transfer to the remote computer **80** may also be accomplished using docking port **51**. The docking port **51** is specifically configured to plug the health data tool **10** into a data transfer port **53** situated in a docking station **65** as depicted in FIG. **5**. The docking station **65** has a power supply cord **67** and outputs to a data transmission line **69** for transferring data between the remote computer system **80** and the data tool **10**. In addition, the docking station **65** may include a battery recharging port **70** adapted to fit into recharging receptacle **71** in the health data tool **10** for recharging the batteries **13** housed therein. The docking station **65** may also include a keyboard data receiver port **39**, which may be an infrared data port or cable type of port. Textual data may then be entered and stored into memory in the health data tool **10** via keyboard **38** that transmits the data either through the wireless receiver **21** associated with the health data tool **10** or through the data receiver port **39** associated with the docking station **65**. In an exemplary practice, input key **24e** is toggled to select a patient record stored into memory **60**. Input select key **24a** is toggled to select "text" data. The health data tool **10** is then activated to receive data entered from the keyboard **38**, which is displayed in text format on screen **22** and ultimately transmitted to the remote computer system **80** with the other patient record data stored in the memory **60** of the health data tool **10**.

The electronics required to operate the health data tool **10** are located within the housing **12**. The electronics include a microprocessor that is programmed to perform the various functions described above for the health data tool **10**. The operating electronics contains conventional busses, clocks, and logic necessary for communication between the microprocessor, the various data assimilation devices and the memory. The operating electronics also include the required circuitry for operating the display screen **22** responsively to the data output.

In certain embodiments, the data assimilation devices associated with the health data tool **10** contain separate microprocessors for converting the raw signal detected by transducers in the data assimilation devices into meaningful health care data. In these embodiments, only the converted health care data is input into the health data tool **10**, thereby simplifying the electronics and lowering the cost of manufacturing the health data tool **10**. These embodiments are adaptable for a wide variety of data assimilation devices now in existence or yet to be devised. In other embodiments, one or more microprocessors housed within the health data tool **10** are configured to perform the signal to data conversion functions of the data assimilation devices. In these embodiments, all or at least

a portion of the electronics needed to perform the functions of the various data assimilation devices is also contained within the health data tool. Each of the example data assimilation devices described herein are well known to those of ordinary skill in the art, as is the circuitry required to perform the signal to data conversion functions of the devices.

The health data tool 10 of the invention is a versatile tool that is primarily meant to be used for portable applications, such as in taking patient data during rounds. However, the health data tool 10 may also be used for longer term monitoring. To facilitate both portability and long term usage, the health data tool may optionally be configured with a belt hook 91 and/or a pole mount 95 illustrated in FIG. 6. The belt hook 91 may be advantageously located in the handle 14 of the health data tool 10 and is used to conveniently attach the health data tool 10 to a belt worn by the health care provider. For long term monitoring, the pole mount 95 allows the health data tool to be securely mounted on a standard medical device pole 93 positioned by the patients bed.

The overall structural configuration of the health data tool 10 can be implemented in numerous other forms as exemplified in FIGS. 7-10. FIG. 7 illustrates an "L" shaped configuration where the downwardly extending handle 14 is positioned at one end of the upper portion of the housing and perpendicular to the front surface 13 of the health data tool 10. The slot 16 for storing the blood pressure cuff 44 is positioned beneath the front surface 13 of the housing between the display 22 and the downwardly extending handle 14. FIG. 8 illustrates a variation on the "L" shaped configuration where a cylindrical blood pressure cuff compartment 16A is attached to a back surface opposite the front surface 13 of the housing 12. FIG. 9 and FIG. 3 illustrate "spearhead" configurations where the downwardly extending handle 14 has an upper surface that is continuous with the front surface 13 of the housing and upper surface of the housing containing the display 22 is flared at a medial position to define a junction between the handle 14 and the upper portion of the housing 12. FIG. 10 illustrates a "bent-T" shaped configuration where the downwardly extending handle 14 extends downwardly at an acute angle relative to the upper surface 13 of the health data tool 10.

From the foregoing it will be appreciated that, although specific embodiments of the invention have been described herein for purposes of illustration, various modifications may be made without deviating from the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, the invention is not limited except as by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A hand held health data tool defined by a housing having an upper and a lower portion, wherein a front surface of the upper portion supports a display screen and a plurality of input keys, and wherein the lower portion extends downwardly from one end of the upper portion at an angle relative to said front surface, the health data tool comprising:

a plurality of data assimilation devices, wherein more than one of said plurality of data assimilation devices simultaneously acquire a plurality of signal data related to a patient for simultaneous display on the display screen, and wherein at least one of said plurality of data assimilation devices is associated with the upper portion and at

- least another one of said plurality of data assimilation devices is associated with the lower portion;
 - a plurality of input ports associated with said plurality of data assimilation devices, wherein at least one of said plurality of input ports is a two-way input/output computer interface port, and wherein at least another one of said plurality of input ports is a plug-and-play switch port to automatically set the health data tool for acquiring signal data from a data assimilation device plugged into said plug-and-play switch port;
 - a code reader to associate the plurality of signal data with a plurality of patient information extracted from an identifying device associated with the patient;
 - a plurality of spaces configured to carry said plurality of data assimilation devices, wherein at least one of said plurality of spaces is associated with the upper portion and at least another one of said plurality of spaces is associated with the lower portion, wherein said plurality of spaces are configured as at least one of a hollow compartment or a receptacle, and wherein said plurality of data assimilation devices are securely held within said plurality of spaces using at least one of a door, a clamp, a hook, Velcro or a latch;
 - a microprocessor located within the housing for converting the plurality of signal data into health care data; and an electronic memory, located within the housing, to store said patient information and the health care data.
2. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein said angle is 90 degrees.
 3. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein said angle is an acute angle.
 4. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein said lower portion has an upper surface that is continuous with the front surface of the upper portion, and wherein said front surface is flared at a medial position to define a junction between the lower portion and the upper portion.
 5. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein said plurality of data assimilation devices comprises at least two of a blood pressure sleeve, a thermometer, a pulse meter, an oximeter, a blood pressure measurement device, a stethoscope, a finger electrocardiogram unit, a lead wire electrocardiogram wire set, a digital camera, a microphone, or a hand pump configured for operating a blood pressure cuff.
 6. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein said patient information comprises at least one of information pertaining to the patient's identity and information pertaining to at least one of a drug or device used by the patient.
 7. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein said receptacle is configured for releasable insertion of a data assimilation device therein, and wherein the data assimilation device is secured within, and released from, said receptacle by closing and opening a latch mechanism.
 8. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein the display screen displays any one or combination of wave form data, alpha numeric data or image data.
 9. The health data tool of claim 1, wherein the health data tool is configured to occupy not more than 2 cubic feet of space and weigh not more than 10 pounds.

* * * * *

