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New Mexico Program Offers First-of-its-kind Captioned Phone Free to Residents with Hearing Loss

State offering breakthrough amplified phone with FCC-certified captioning service at no cost to New Mexicans with hearing loss

Albuquerque, New Mexico – The New Mexico Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing (NMCDHH), the State Government Agency that distributes specialized telecommunications equipment, is now offering New Mexicans with hearing loss a first-of-its-kind amplified phone that allows users to read as well as hear conversations.

Clarity – a division of Plantronics (NYSE: PLT) – and ClearCaptions joined together to develop Ensemble, a breakthrough phone that captions conversations in real time through its innovative seven-inch tablet display while amplifying incoming sound up to 50 decibels. Launched in January of 2013, Ensemble provides the most accurate phone conversation possible for people with hearing loss.

New Mexico residents who are certified as having a hearing loss can easily obtain Ensemble by completing an application, providing a copy of a phone bill, a copy of an audiogram or hearing test and a copy of a driver's license or state issued identification card. For more information, call NMCDHH at 1-800-489-8536 or visit <http://www.cdhh.state.nm.us/TEDP.aspx>.

“Our agency works to provide New Mexico’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing community with the best possible solutions for their needs, and Ensemble is precisely what we need,” said Shannon Smith, NMCDHH’s Director of Telecommunications & Technical Assistance/Relay Administrator. “With Ensemble, we’re bringing our program participants the latest in phone technology—precise text coupled with amplified voice—so they have the ability to communicate with friends and family, which is critical but often taken for granted by those of us who do not have hearing loss.”

When an individual places or receives a call on Ensemble, the other party’s words are transcribed through ClearCaptions, a Federal Communications Commission (FCC)-certified telephone-captioning service that is similar to closed captions for television. As the user listens,

captions appear on Ensemble’s touchscreen display in a large, easy-to-read font that can be enlarged or adjusted with the swipe of a finger.

Simultaneously, Ensemble amplifies incoming voice through a patented digital sound processing technology that functions like a hearing aid to make soft sounds audible and keep loud sounds in a comfortable range. With its intuitive touchscreen interface, users can adjust the tone or amplification settings to customize Ensemble to their unique degree of hearing loss. Ensemble is also equipped with ClarityLogic™, an award-winning customer service technology that allows customer service representatives to remotely access the phone and make adjustments for the user.

“We’re thrilled that NMCDHH will make Ensemble available for free to New Mexicans with hearing loss” said Carsten Trads, president of Clarity. “Our hope is that Ensemble will change lives in New Mexico, helping more people reconnect with loved ones or stay engaged in the world.”

About NMCDHH

The State of New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides effective leadership, education, advocacy and programs to reduce barriers to the social, economic, educational, cultural and intellectual well-being of Deaf and Hard of Hearing New Mexicans and their families, friends and colleagues. For more information, call 1-800-489-8536 or visit www.cdhh.state.nm.us.

About Clarity – Smart for Seniors™

Clarity, a division of Plantronics (NYSE: PLT), creates smart communication solutions that help seniors live richer, more engaged lives. For more than 40 years, Clarity’s innovative products—such as amplified telephones, notification systems and assistive listening devices—have helped people with hearing loss, low vision, limited mobility, dexterity issues and other health challenges. Clarity has pioneered many firsts—from digital sound processing in 2005 to remote-access customer service in 2010. Millions rely on Clarity to communicate at home, at work and throughout their lives. For more information, please visit www.clarityproducts.com or call 1-800-426-3738.

About ClearCaptions – Get the whole conversation™

ClearCaptions is an advanced telephone captioning service created by Purple Communications, Inc. Purple is a leading provider of video relay and text relay services, on-site interpreting services and video remote interpreting. Offering a wide array of options designed to meet the varied communication needs of businesses and customers, ClearCaptions’ vision is to enable free-flowing communication between people, inclusive of the differences in abilities, languages or locations. For more information on ClearCaptions, visit www.clearcaptions.com.