Alert Fatigue Challenges
Alert screening is an expected component of clinical information systems, but there is no "one size fits all" solution for pre-determined alert settings that are effective across care settings, clinician types or specialties. Consequently, "Alert Fatigue" can be a major problem for hospitals and healthcare providers. Hospitals are concerned that if too many alerts are triggered when physicians order tests or medications, especially alerts that are not relevant to their patient’s situation, doctors will become desensitized and begin to ignore alerts that may be relevant.

How Does Medi-Span Help to Address Alert Fatigue?
Management of alerts and potential alert fatigue requires a balanced approach – it is more complicated than just turning off alerts. Our approach to alert screening and alert management is evolving to make alert screening more useful and to help combat alert fatigue. Medi-Span Clinical offers unique “Alert Control” functionality that licensees can implement at the site, department or user level. We strive to limit the generation of irrelevant alerts by providing content and data designed to work with practice and patient specific information to produce patient-relevant alerts. At the same time, enhanced Medi-Span content and tools are intended to promote patient safety. Our multi-faceted approach includes:

- **Alert Control Functionality with Medi-Span Clinical** allows for alert customization at the site, department or even end-user level, which enables the reduction of irrelevant alerts by user type

- **Contextual Alerting Content** considers available patient profile information regarding symptoms, age, weight, gender, body surface area and renal function to make clinical alerts better tailored to a particular patient’s situation

- **Unmatched Commitment to Editorial Excellence** delivers editorial policies and updated clinical screening content built on and adjusted to deal with changes in the standards of care, enabling the reduction of outdated relevant clinical alerts

- **Clinical Consulting for Customers/EMR Vendors** helps your system reduce noise and irrelevant alerts by recommending customized filter settings based on our more than 35 years of experience

The most effective approach to combating Alert Fatigue involves a combined effort on the part of Medi-Span, the application vendor, and the clinician end-user of the application. We focus on developing those partnerships to provide intelligent ways to address alert fatigue.
The 4 Key Areas of the Medi-Span Multi-Faceted Approach –
Meaningful alerts help to drive clinician acceptance

Alert Control Functionality with Medi-Span Clinical
Medi-Span Clinical is a modern API (application programming interface) solution that enables the implementation of alert control customization by site, department or individual end-user. This feature allows for dynamic customization of alert filters at various levels, while keeping patient safety in mind. At the individual user level, this feature can be embedded in the clinician’s workflow with a simple checkbox saying, “Don’t show me this alert again” or, “Don’t show me this alert again for this patient.” With this approach, neither individual users nor institutions need to spend large amounts of time reviewing all alerts in the database. At the group level, alerts can be suppressed for certain specialties (such as Oncology) or certain departments (such as Emergency), while leaving them active for other specialties and departments. Additionally, Medi-Span Clinical helps to reduce noise with the consolidation of common alerts between two or more drugs and with meaningful messaging for a variety of clinician types. Medi-Span also works with licensees to highlight new research or adverse event information that may impact commonly used filter settings so that those settings can be reviewed and changed when appropriate.

Contextual Alerting Content
Medi-Span is committed to developing alert screening that considers current standard of practice guidelines and available patient demographic and background information, just as clinicians do when evaluating an alert for a given patient. The best alert is one that takes the patient’s known health state into consideration and can help to zero in on the right information at the right time. Medi-Span enables alerts using the patient’s problem list and age, while dosing alerts can additionally include the patient’s weight, body surface area and renal function.

Coming Soon: Medi-Span is researching how to incorporate additional patient parameters, such as lab results and genomics, to improve the specificity of alerts.

Unmatched Commitment to Editorial Excellence
Medi-Span is committed to reviewing our clinical screening content and editorial policies in response to changes in standards of care in the clinical setting and feedback from our end-users.

In process: We are currently reviewing age- and gender-related precautions in order to help reduce alert fatigue. The goal is to code pediatric age condition alerts in the Medi-Span Precautions Database such that a pediatric age precaution alert will only occur for an age below which there is no acceptable labeled or off-label dosing information. We have recently completed a review of the pediatric dosing content available from Medi-Span for incorporation into our dose screening products.

Coming Soon: We are undertaking projects to re-validate and expand our content and editorial policies to include the peer-reviewed content available from Wolters Kluwer Health’s Lexicomp and UpToDate platforms. This effort is intended to allow Medi-Span to provide unmatched scope and improved editorial consistency across platforms.

Clinical Consulting for Customers and EMR Vendors
Medi-Span can work with licensees to review alert history and clinician action reports generated from actual de-identified site data so that alerts can be fine-tuned to improve effectiveness and reduce unnecessary delay and distraction. We can use historical system performance and user response to recommend application or process improvements for licensees and end-users. We can review licensee care settings, clinician types and specialties, and patient group information to recommend filter settings intended to increase the relevance of alerts. We can provide consulting services to EMR application vendors to assist them in implementing our content so that it is optimally displayed to end-users. At the same time, this information allows us to internally improve Medi-Span content. All of these services build on our more than 35 years of experience developing and providing alert screening content.