



Philips Sounds tones down the traditional sounds of monitor alarms¹

Transforming the sound of care

A reimagining of alarm sounds for Philips IntelliVue patient monitors.

A more pleasant experience for patients, families, hospital clinicians and staff.



The challenge

Walk into any healthcare facility and one of the first sounds you hear is the steady hum of medical equipment. That rhythmic beeping of technology-patient monitors, ventilators and other devices contributes to a rise in hospital noise levels² and can be a source of stress and anxiety.



The solution

Through a collaboration with patients, clinicians and world-leading sound experts, Philips took a fresh look at monitor alarm sounds. This led to a set of sounds enhanced and prioritized to be more pleasing to the ear, which still serving the needs of the caregivers.



The impact

With over 1 million IntelliVue patient monitors in use³, an improvement in our monitor sounds means the potential to enhance and change the soundscape in healthcare facilities worldwide, helping to evolve sound management and advance the healing environment for both patients and hospital staff.

¹ Philips IntelliVue software Revision P is required for Philips Sounds 2021

² Topf, 2000; Basner, 2011; Shivers et al., 2013; Basner et al., 2014; Sakallaris et al., 2015; Sen & Sen, 2020

³ Based on internal sales data



An innovative approach to noise management, helping to address the stress and anxiety of hospital alarms.



Hospitals have an average of 350 alarms per patient per day, with 85-90% as false positives^{4,5}. Philips saw an opportunity for improvement and directed focus to an area with little innovation — the sounds themselves.



We actively involved clinical customers throughout the process to identify which sounds were the most functional and important.



Working with world-class sound designers and musicians, tones were then softened and rounded out to reveal sounds more pleasing to the ear while also helping the clinician better decipher what they hear.



Currently, the monitor is a very dominant person. I wish it would be more of a sensitive person, more of a partner that is supporting me”

— ICU Nurse



Creating a more peaceful environment inside the hospital is an important part of the healing process and Philips continues to innovate in this area. For more information, videos and to hear a sample of the sounds themselves, visit www.philips.com/alarm-sounds

⁴ TO'Carroll TM. Survey of alarms in an intensive therapy unit. *Anaesthesia*. 1986 Jul;41(7):742-4. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2044.1986.tb12844.x. PMID: 3463228
⁵ Graham KC, Cvach M. Monitor alarm fatigue: standardizing use of physiological monitors and decreasing nuisance alarms. *Am J Crit Care*. 2010 Jan;19(1):28-34; quiz 35. doi:10.4037/ajcc2010651. PMID: 20045845.

