Best Practices

Case Studies
Title: PrePaK® Surgical Systems Pack Implementation
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Objectives:

Implement a re-usable surgical linen pack program to reduce the cost of providing surgical linens, previously disposable, throughout the hospital system, by establishing an optimized supply chain for surgical linen procurement, processing, and utilization. Also, to improve the level of protection for health care workers and patients by providing surgical products made of ComPel® family fabrics with appropriate, and superior to comparable disposables, barrier performance.

The PrePaK Team:

Standard Textile employs a team of surgical linen consultants through its PrePaK department. The PrePaK team includes experienced O.R. nurses who have used both disposable and re-usable surgical linens, and who are experts with Standard Textile surgical products. The team also includes operations engineers with expertise in all aspects of processing barrier fabrics, including ComPel. PrePaK consultants can direct the conversion in all phases of the project, starting with a financial impact analysis, and including design of the system, implementation of the system, and ongoing evaluation of system performance.

Strategy:
1. Define System Requirements

- Standard Textile’s PrePaK group consulted with Baptist Health System, Birmingham, Alabama, in both operational and clinical areas to determine parameters including surgical products, pack configurations, building and equipment requirements, inventory management, quality assurance, training support, and financial estimations. This planning phase involved multiple site visits to all processing areas and O.R.s to gather information so the PrePak team could customize the program to best fit with the facilities, standards, and procedures in place in the Baptist system.

2. Select site
Baptist Health System designated a building near the laundry for conversion to a surgical linen packroom and sterilization center, named the operation SteriPAC, and began to service nine hospitals from the unit. The building design and equipment requirements were provided by PrePaK consultants.

3. Prepare for Implementation

As the facility construction was underway, extensive training was taking place. A team of nurses from the hospitals came to Standard Textile's corporate headquarters in Cincinnati for a week of training with our nurses, with activities including site visits to our Repak laundry, packroom, sterilization center, and some hospitals where our product is in use. Also, a team of Operations Personnel, such as laundry and packroom management, visited Cincinnati for a week of training at our laundry, packroom, and sterilization center.

4. Implement

Following training of all processors and users of surgical linens, conversion to the new products was made with on-site support from Standard Textile. A team of PrePaK O.R. Nurses was stationed in the O.R. to assist with any conversion issues throughout the first week. An experienced operations engineer was also on site for two weeks at the time of the conversion to assist in training and quality assurance efforts.

5. Audit

Standard Textile continues to support the operation by providing the PrePaK team for the purpose of conducting audits of the system on a quarterly basis. These audits are performed by a team of nurses and engineers who both observe and actively question the processors and users of the product. Each audit results in a written report which specifies action plans for improvement of the system in either cost or quality.

6. Continuous Support

The PrePak team of consultants is a continuously available resource and primary liaison for ongoing support for all users and processors of our surgical linens. Based on the needs of the system, the entire Consultative Services Group is available to provide additional expertise in many other areas, such as quality assurance, regulatory affairs, laboratory science, product design, fabric performance, chemistry, inventory management, and finance.

Results:

In April, 1997, Standard Textile conducted a financial review of the operation. Annual operating expenses of the surgical pack operation, including laundry, linen, processing, delivery, and administrative overhead, were reviewed with the SteriPAC Manager. The cost of using comparable disposables during the same timeframe was estimated by listing the disposable items previously used, adjusting their usage rates based on procedure count trends, and then determining current, local costs for those disposable items. The savings, system-wide, were verified to be 42%.