

# COMPREHENSIVE CLINICAL ASSET MANAGEMENT IS CENTRAL TO BATTLING COVID

For both the immediate crisis, and the recovery that follows, visibility and availability are key.



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Helping health systems rapidly orient to the location, utilization, and condition of medical devices has never been more vital.

But enabling rapid and efficient reallocation of devices across and within sites of care, allowing systems to navigate the acute phase of the COVID crisis, will lay a foundation to support long-term recovery.

## COVID HAS BROUGHT ATTENTION TO ACCESS AND MAINTENANCE OF CRITICAL MEDICAL DEVICES. HOW CAN HEALTH SYSTEMS ENSURE THEY ARE IN THE BEST POSSIBLE POSITION?

**LA:** The first step is gaining visibility into medical devices across all sites of care. Visibility is not just knowing the number of devices a health system owns but also their location, condition, manufacturer information, parts availability, utilization data and when the next preventative maintenance is scheduled to occur. This ensures that devices get where they need to be and are functional, safe, and running at peak performance.

Building on this foundation of visibility, there are several strategic levers we would recommend any organization consider:

**CRITICAL EQUIPMENT DASHBOARD.** Our dashboard, which is updated hourly and includes the data above, displays all COVID-critical medical device. It marries this data with predictive analytics during peak volume, allowing systems, in real-time, to understand demand and to reallocate devices to appropriate sites as needed.

**PROACTIVE PM PREP.** Our supply chain team collaborates with our health system partners to proactively order parts and supplies based on COVID-critical device Preventative Maintenance schedules, ensuring parts are on hand, thereby minimizing risk of downtime.

**PRIORITIZED RESPONSE.** To ensure COVID-critical devices take priority in the event of a necessary repair, we flag these devices with a critical response indicator. This allows our clinical engineering team to prioritize work central to COVID cases.

## WHAT ARE OTHER CHALLENGES HAVE YOU SEEN HEALTH SYSTEMS FACING?

**LA:** The intensity of COVID care environments requires that critical medical devices are available when and where clinicians need them as providers are literally reconfiguring hospitals overnight.

Our Mobile Medical Equipment (MME) program dedicates resources to track MME location, use, cleanliness and readiness for patient care. We have added COVID-critical devices to our MME services, ensuring they are prioritized

for pick-up, proper cleaning and are ready where and when clinicians need them. Second, our MME teams have worked closely with our health system partners to ensure newly converted units are well prepared to take on new patients. At one particularly hard-hit site, our team has helped ensure the availability of equipment for:

- Three new ICU units
- Six COVID surge units
- Deployment of additional IV and feeding pumps to key units
- Management of CAPR distribution
- PAR level adjustments on all floors

The best practice here is maintaining a clear inventory of what equipment is needed, visibility into what a provider has available for use and tracking its location along with a record for where the equipment should be returned.

## WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES HEALTH SYSTEMS MAY FACE WITH THEIR MEDICAL DEVICES, POST-COVID?

Health systems that embrace the importance of medical device inventory management as a system-level asset, versus an individual site of care asset, will be well positioned for success. Through an IoMT (internet of medical things) platform, device tracking software (RTLS) or a robust MME program, health systems can also track availability and utilization of devices to make better decisions around reallocation of devices to different sites of care. This will likely include the expansion of medical devices into "hospital at home" environments or expansion into post-acute sites as patients continue to recover

The larger lesson is the importance of health systems employing objective data when deciding to replace, upgrade, retire or reallocate medical devices. Two things are clear: health systems can expect an economic hit and the impact of managing COVID will have on-going consequences. The keys to success from a medical device perspective are maintaining true visibility and adopting processes that continuously enable device availability. Health systems should prioritize the development of an objective plan to ensure capital dollars are deployed in the most efficient and effective manner. This will be the heart of the medical device agenda in the next year. ●

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