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Radio Frequency Detection Technology To Aid In Prevention Of Retained Surgical Items

CHEVERLY, MD— Prince George’s Hospital Center (PGHC) has selected the RF Surgical Detection System for use in all its surgical suites. The RF Surgical Detection System, based on radio-frequency (RF) detection technology, is designed to identify and prevent retained surgical items (RSI) from remaining inside a patient following surgery. PGHC is using the system, as an adjunct to the standard practice of manual counting, to enhance patient safety in all its operating rooms. Since adoption, PGHC reports there have been zero incidents.

While manual counting procedures remain a standard-of-care in preventing retained surgical objects, the ability to detect surgical materials immediately and verify counting, provides assurance in reducing and eliminating costly errors and improves patient safety. When the system is activated and the wand is passed over a patient, an audible and visible alarm alerts the OR surgical team that a surgical sponge or other material fitted with an RF tag, is remaining inside a patient’s body. With this information, clinicians can potentially prevent repeat surgeries and unnecessary x-rays.

“The RF Surgical Detection System is a critical safety net that enhances surgical staff confidence in a setting where quick and efficient decision-making is mandated,” H.S. Ajrawat, MD, chairman, department of surgery, Prince George’s Hospital Center. “Our mission is to achieve zero mistakes and this easy-to-operate technology can help patients avoid unnecessary complications when a surgical sponge is inadvertently left behind.”

An estimated 1,500 to 2,000 retained surgical item cases occur each year in the United States[i]. According to a summary of sentinel events reported to The Joint Commission, the number of RSIs nearly doubled in 2010 compared with 2008. Unintended retention of a foreign body is among the top ten sentinel events reported to The Joint Commission[ii].

“At Prince George’s Hospital Center we strive to provide the very best care for our valued patients. The use of an adjunctive technology to further help prevent medical errors in the surgical setting is an important tool in providing the highest quality of care of patients and support for our dedicated surgical staff," John A. O’Brien, president, Prince George’s Hospital Center. “I am thrilled to be able to offer this valuable check and balance technology in our surgical suites.”

“RF Surgical is pleased to announce the successful implementation of the RF Surgical Detection System at Prince George’s Hospital Center. The RF Detection System embodies the most advanced technology designed to detect and prevent surgical sponges from remaining in a patient post surgery," said Dr. Jeffrey Port, founder and chairman of RF Surgical. “We are committed to supporting and servicing Prince George’s Hospital Center as they continue to demonstrate their leadership and commitment to patient safety.”

About Prince George’s Hospital Center

Prince George's Hospital Center, located in Cheverly, Maryland, is a 256 bed acute care hospital with Maryland’s busiest Level - II Trauma Center, serving all of Southern Maryland. In addition, the Hospital Center has a full service cardiac care program. PGHC provides comprehensive inpatient services from intensive care to medical-surgical acute care. More than 18,000 individuals are admitted annually for inpatient and observation care. The Emergency Department serves approximately 50,000 patients annually. HealthGrades, recognized Prince George’s Hospital Center in 2010 as being among the top 5% of hospitals across the nation for successful outcomes. Prince George’s Hospital was cited this year as among the Washington Metropolitan area’s best hospitals by US News and World Report. Prince George’s was among the first in Maryland to be designated a Cardiac Intervention Center for heart attack victims. Prince George’s Hospital Center is a proud member of Dimensions Healthcare System, the largest not-for-profit healthcare system serving Prince George's County and southern Maryland (Charles, St. Mary's and Calvert Counties). Visit www.DimensionsHealth.org for more information.