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EXCELA HEALTH SELECTS NEXT-GENERATION RADIO FREQUENCY DETECTION TECHNOLOGY TO PREVENT RETAINED SURGICAL ITEMS

RF Assure System Improves Patient Safety in Operating Rooms System-wide

Greensburg, PA—July 15, 2011— [Excela Health](#), a not-for-profit health system in Westmoreland County, announced it has selected the [RF Assure™ Detection](#) System for use in its surgical suites system-wide to prevent the occurrence of [retained surgical items](#) (RSI). The RF Assure Detection System is a next-generation platform that utilizes evidence-based radio-frequency (RF) detection technology to mitigate the risk of leaving RSIs, such as a piece of gauze or sponge, from remaining inside a patient post-surgery.

Excela Health is using the RF Assure system as an adjunct to the standard practice of manual counting to provide added assurance and enhance patient safety in operating rooms at all three of its hospitals, including Frick Hospital, Latrobe Hospital and Westmoreland Hospital as well as its outpatient surgery center at Norwin Medical Commons, to eliminate this highly preventable medical error. When the RF Assure Detection System is activated, a soft detection mat, installed on the surgical table under the patient, scans the surgical site and alerts operating room (OR) staff if a surgical sponge or other materials fitted with an RF tag is remaining inside a patient's body. Clinicians can prevent unnecessary X-rays and repeat surgeries, potentially lowering anesthesia time.

“The RF Surgical Detection System offers an added safety measure to what is standard across the country,” said Marc Costa, MD, chair, Department of Surgery, Excela Health. “This addition to the manual inventory taken by Operating Room staff of sponges used during each case ensures that no sponge is left behind. In 80 percent of the cases where a sponge was not retrieved, there was still an accurate count, Excela Health wants all counts to be correct, and eliminate that margin for error.”

Excela Health is leading the way in the Pittsburgh region in adopting this technology. The system does not replace manual counting as required by the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN). Instead it reinforces the AORN protocol by adding an extra level of

safety and verification without adding secondary counting procedures or additional time consuming processes.

An estimated 1,500 to 2,000 retained surgical item cases occur each year in the United Statesⁱ. 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 Commissionⁱⁱ.

“The RF Assure 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 Excela Health as they continue to demonstrate their leadership and commitment to patient safety.”

About Excela Health

Excela Health, Westmoreland County's largest employer, joins together some 800 physicians in 35 specialties to provide award-winning health care to the residents of Westmoreland County and parts of Fayette and Indiana counties. With a workforce of 4,800 employees, Excela Health offers leading edge clinical and physician services in primary care, orthopedic care, cardiovascular services, advanced robotic surgery, urology, bariatric surgery, gastroenterology, general surgery, neurosurgery, obstetrics and gynecology, wound care and diabetes, among other services. Excela Health provides an extensive array of laboratory, imaging, rehabilitation and specialty services through convenient outpatient locations in the region as well as inpatient care through hospitals in Greensburg, Latrobe and Mount Pleasant, home care and durable medical equipment services, to rank as the region's third largest healthcare network.

About RF Surgical Systems, Inc.

RF Surgical Systems, Inc. is the market leader in the detection and prevention of retained surgical sponges. The RF Surgical Detection System is the preferred solution in more than 1,500 operating rooms, trauma and labor and delivery suites nationwide. Since January 2011, more than 50 hospitals and surgical centers have joined the fast-growing list of care providers using RF Surgical Technology. RF Surgical Systems is based in Bellevue, Washington with R & D facilities in San Diego, California. The advanced technologies used in the RF Surgical Detection System are protected by U.S. patents. Regulatory clearance to market the system was granted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in November 2006. The company is online at www.rfsurg.com.

ⁱ Gibbs, Verna, MD, FACS. NoThing Left Behind® project. <http://www.nothingleftbehind.org/>

ⁱⁱ The Joint Commission, Summary Data of Sentinel Events Reviewed by The Joint Commission

http://www.jointcommission.org/sentinel_event_statistics_quarterly/