

Temperature Management In The OR

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What should surgical professionals consider when purchasing temperature management equipment in order to achieve adequate temperature in the OR for both patients and surgeons?

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With the CMS normothermia measure (SCIP-Inf-10) now a reality, hospitals will likely be warming patients that, in previous years, may have gone unwarmed. This is a great improvement for patients and will also benefit hospitals in the long run as they avoid the costs of complications associated with hypothermia, which can add an estimated \$2,500 to \$7,000 per patient.

The warming of more patients also means warming products with broad clinical flexibility and proven efficacies are more important than ever.

I encourage hospitals to study the evidence and features behind the various warming products. Ensure the products being considered have significant clinical evidence to demonstrate that they can help patients achieve normothermia—after all, that’s what the measure is about.

In addition, it’s important to remember that not all products are created equal. Take the time to focus on some of the less-touted but very important features, such as drain holes in an underbody product that may not be included in a lower-cost option. There also is a need to effectively warm patients undergoing procedures that are sometimes considered difficult to warm—for example, surgeries taking place on spinal tables or those using lithotomy positioning.

Lastly, I recommend that facilities study the potential impact a product may have in other areas, like patient satisfaction. Solutions that are versatile and comfortable provide a proven way to help improve patient satisfaction and set a hospital apart from its competitors.

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