Selecting A Fluid Management System

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The following important factors and recommendations are provided to assist in selection of a fluid management system for your facility.

Important Factors

- Infection prevention should have highest priority in performing medical procedures.
- Risk of exposure to infectious fluids increases with each added step in disposal process.
- Fluid collection and disposal should isolate staff from exposure to infectious fluids.
- Spilled fluids present a challenge of protecting staff during the collection process.
- Floor drains and hoppers offer effective, low-cost disposal with low protection.
- Protective equipment (masks, gloves, gowns, etc. should be used to reduce exposure.
- Direct fluid disposal affords maximum staff isolation from exposure.

Recommendations

- Dispose of fluid as quickly as possible from the surgical field.
- Dispose of items exposed to fluid to prevent further exposure by staff.
- Exercise care and use protective equipment when handling potentially infectious fluid.
- Collect and dispose of spilled fluid as soon as possible
- Minimize system cost by minimizing necessary system accessories and

disposables.
- Conduct system maintenance diligently to assure satisfactory system performance.

Disposing of fluid directly to drain from the suction field is not only the most cost effective solution; it also minimizes possibility of staff or patient contamination due to inadvertent contact with fluid. Closed systems are available which collect fluid from the suction field and dispose of it directly down the drain to sanitary sewer. These systems have advantages over systems requiring fluid to be transported to a central disposal site. Any transport process introduces additional steps where exposure to fluid can occur.

Select equipment that meets fluid management needs of the facility and procedures anticipated. A lower-cost system may provide excellent fluid management for all but a few procedures. Organize surgical suites to use higher-cost systems only where fluid management cannot be achieved with lower-cost equipment, and conduct specialty procedures in those areas. Determine feature requirements such as fluid volume totalizing, and select equipment that offers such features. Evaluate space requirements in the procedure/operating room, and select systems compatible with space constraints and traffic patterns in the surgical suite.

Collecting spilled fluid from drapes or the floor is an important safety consideration in preventing slips and falls as well as minimizing risk of staff exposure. Carefully consider performance of available devices as well as costs when deciding on a solution for your facility.

When determining comparative ROI to select a system, consider cost savings over greater than one year to accommodate systems with higher initial capital investment. Some systems require higher initial costs, but later have fewer disposables, offering lower expenses in the long term. Cost payback may be longer than one year for these. In determining relative system expenses, maintenance and costs of protective equipment must be considered.

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