

5 Reasons to Automate Tissue Management

Manual tissue management can have a complexity of challenges, including inefficiencies and a greater risk for error in comparison to automated tissue tracking. Although more than half of surveyed perioperative nurses perceived automated tissue tracking through the use of radio frequency identification (RFID) or barcode technology as a benefit for improving tissue tracking, only 13% claimed to use these technologies, according to results from a survey published in the September 2015 issue of the AORN Journal.

Perioperative nurses typically track required chain of custody information, and safety requirements for biological implants through manual, cumbersome processes. Manual approaches are complicated, inefficient, and can cause inaccurate documentation, which can impact the health system's ability to meet regulatory documentation requirements

"Perioperative leaders evaluating the cost and benefit of automated tissue tracking need to assess whether they can afford not to automate," said Marvella Thomas, RN, MSN, Cardinal Health, a former nurse manager with 35 years of clinical leadership experience in surgical services, central sterile processing, and administrative services.

One solution: automation

WaveMark™ supply management and workflow solutions provides a total OR cloud-based solution with advanced analytics for accurate data capture and helps hospitals meet chain of custody requirements of The Joint Commission. RFID tags and RFID-enabled Smart Cabinets and Smart Wands accurately track high-dollar biological implants such as tissue. Materials management records require data for biological implants on the tagged product, which registers the tissue as inventory and shares the data with the hospital's medical record system. Waving an RFID tagged product at the point of use associates tissue data with the patient and the procedure. The solution supports tissue stored in both ambient and non-ambient environments, including cryogenic freezing environments, according to Ruth Damron, RN, MBA, Cardinal Health™ WaveMark™, a former OR nurse manager with experience in clinical resource management and perioperative supply chain value analysis.

Damron and Thomas outlined five ways WaveMark™ supply management solutions ensure safe, efficient, and cost-effective tissue management:

1. Bi-Directional Traceability

Each biological implant and its safety information are registered into the organization's electronic system, allowing access to tissue data by stakeholders.

2. Better Tracking of Storage Conditions

Cold Chain Smart cabinets allow automated tissue monitoring and visibility without manual cycle counts, decreasing the risk of temperature variations to non ambient tissue. Tissue storage conditions are tracked through a digital implant card.

3. Standardized Workflow

Automatic data capture streamlines the registration process, storage, and use of each biological tissue implant, including charge capture, resulting in a simpler workflow

4. Supports patient safety

The solution helps clinicians ensure each tissue is safe and associated with the correct patient. Real time product inventory visibility, including proactive tracking of expired and recalled products helps ensure compromised products are not used for patient care

5. Traceable Communication in the Patient Record

All required information is stored in the digital implant card that supports chain of custody. Data can be pushed to patient's electronic health record, including safety information, compliance requirements, and cost.

"With automation, leaders can now take an accurate and collaborative look at biological tissue management to make smarter purchasing decisions," Thomas said.

Interested in learning more?

Contact WaveMark at wavemark@cardinalhealth.com and visit cardinalhealth.com/wavemark to learn more.