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Founder and CEO of Arrowsight, Inc.

Video Surveillance Can Save Lives

Hospitals take many efforts to be the safest place for admitted patients from having easily accessible hand sanitizers, germ zapping robots zipping around hospital floors, Indigo-Clean lights in operating and waiting rooms and copper being reintroduced on high-touch surfaces.

With 16.2 million emergency room visits resulting in hospital admissions and nearly triple that amount of inpatient surgeries performed, hospitals are taking even more precautions to keep patients safe through implementing video surveillance technology. Much of the technology aims to ensure safety protocols are followed to help save lives. This includes minimizing the occurrence of unintended retention of foreign objects in patients (URFOs) and curbing the incidence of hospital acquired infections (HAIs). A JAMA editorial titled, "**The Power of Video Recording Taking Quality to the Next Level**", supported the use of video surveillance proving that people act differently when being watched.

Commonplace in other industries, but new for healthcare, is the latest installment of third-party remote video auditing (RVA) technology. For instance, North Shore-LIJ Health System has pioneered the use of real-time RVA since 2008 for a wide range of patient safety solutions in healthcare ranging from 90%+ hand hygiene performance in ICUs to 95%+ surgical safety checklist performance in surgical suites.

The recent news that the FDA is ordering a trio of manufacturers of duodenoscopes to conduct studies within 30 days to evaluate how the transmission of the superbug, carbapenem-resistant enterobacteriaceae (CRE), can be prevented, highlights even more the need for cleaning at the highest level of a device that is used in 500,000 life-saving endoscopic procedures (ERCPs) a year. Improper cleaning of the device has exposed 250 people to the superbug from North Carolina to Illinois to Washington. Duodenoscopes, like other medical devices, are considered a key tool in detecting and treating medical problems in a minimally invasive way. The use of RVA allowed in endoscopy suites is a way for hospitals to be proactive in making sure their cleaning technique is done to perfection so they can prevent issues, like those encountered with duodenoscopes before they start.

Recognizing that RVA technology could be used to improve safety in not just the OR, North Shore-LIJ just announced the expanded use of that technology to nearly every area of the hospital such as in emergency rooms to help speed up patient flow to intensive care units (ICUs), labor and delivery/C-section areas and endoscopy.

With this expansion, patients will be in and out of the ICU quicker, ER staff will be prepared to follow Level II Ebola preparedness training and in endoscopy, sanitation measures will be enforced to ensure instruments, like duodenoscopes, are cleaned properly--all of this will ultimately improve patient flow and save more lives.

When patients are admitted to the hospital, they should fully know that they are in the safest place possible and that every measure is taken for a very high level of safety to not be compromised. Taking full advantage of the technology that exists allows health systems to stay vigilant monitors of hospital safety.

Tags: cleaning, duodenoscope, emergency room, endoscopy, hospital safety, infection control, infection prevention, Intensive Care Unit, labor and delivery, operating room, remote video auditing, rva, superbug

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