

## Managing Endoscope Maintenance May Lead to Unexpected Savings

Endoscopes are an investment. The devices, an essential vehicle for minimally invasive surgeries, can cost from \$6,500 to nearly \$15,000, depending on the type of scope.

Additionally, repairs can be equally as expensive. If you put a scope into the hands of someone who doesn't know how to use it or care for it properly, you can spend thousands of dollars on a repair or exchange. Therefore, ensuring that these highly useful—but delicate—tools are always ready to be used requires special attention to maintenance and handling.

### Maintenance Begins Early

The first time maintenance needs to be considered is before an endoscope is purchased. Any contract to acquire an endoscope needs to have a related plan for repairs and maintenance. An original equipment manufacturer can add maintenance and repair terms to the purchase contract, but it's imperative to carefully examine those terms.

The total cost of ownership—not just the purchase price—must be considered when negotiating a contract. There is also the option of negotiating with a third party to provide the maintenance and repairs to the scopes.

When calculating the total cost of ownership, the following items need to be included in the equation:

- > Will service be done at the hospital or the vendor's site?
- > If the scope has to be sent out for servicing, who pays for shipping and handling?
- > Will the vendor loan a scope to the hospital while the regular scope is being repaired or serviced? If so, at what cost?
- > What are the costs for regular maintenance?

### Training Is Needed

An endoscope generally will need to be serviced a number of times per year, depending on how frequently it is used in surgical procedures. Additionally, since endoscopes are relatively fragile, hospital employees have been known to accidentally damage the devices, which leads to more service time and costs.

Damage can also be introduced during procedures or reprocessing. Because so many hands touch the instrument, it can be difficult to determine where problems are introduced.

Fortunately, there are steps a hospital can take to try to minimize damage and keep repair costs to a minimum.

First, it's important to educate staff on the proper handling of endoscopes. Use the original equipment manufacturer to educate staff on proper handling and cleansing of the scopes. A logbook should also be kept outlining the type of scope, usage, and all repairs that are done to each particular scope. Additionally, proactively inspecting the endoscopes may prevent further damage or reduce instances when a scope isn't available for a procedure.

### Proper Maintenance and Repair

Ultimately, the hospital needs to decide what type of maintenance and repair agreement works best for the institution. It's up to the clinical staff to properly handle the scopes each day. Proper care will control repair costs while ensuring safe, functioning, patient-ready endoscopes. This will provide better patient care and reduce costs. ☞

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analyses linking data from multiple tables.

### What to Do with the Inventory

This inventory becomes quite valuable when it comes time to link together data collected from several applications to provide analyses and actionable information to stakeholders. Some database applications will not permit you to join data on fields with different data types or field lengths. In other cases, it minimizes the chance that two sets of data will be joined on incomparable fields.

By knowing the format of the data contained in the fields, it increases the confidence level that the parameters specified in the query will include or exclude the appropriate data from the data set. This ensures that the supply chain and other departments produce high-quality analyses in a responsible, consistent, and trustworthy way.

### Building a Reputation

While performing an inventory of the hospital's intangible data assets requires an investment of time and resources, the

results can pay big dividends. As the supply chain's role expands from only managing product and process to providing information necessary for strategic decision-making, knowing what data we have and where to find it becomes a critical success factor. After all, our reputation is only as good as the last analysis we have presented. ☞

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