Right instruments at right time for patient care: Tracking sterile procedural sets in Central Sterile Service Department (CSSD)

Au Yeung SH, Chan SW, Chau KH, Ma OF, Lam CS
Central Sterile Service Department & Theater Sterile Supply Unit (CSSD&TSSU), United Christian Hospital

Keywords:
Instrument tracking system

Introduction
Annually around 400,000 sterile procedural sets are processed in CSSD and then returned to wards for patient service. Distribution of right sets at right time to right wards/units is a big challenge. There has been no tracking of where such high-volume procedural sets are delivered to. Incorrect sets have been delivered to wards, which affect patient service and cause users’ frustration.

Objectives
Distribution of all sterile procedural sets was logged and their delivery location was tracked to ensure accuracy.

Methodology
Every sterile procedural set was given a unique serial number and labelled with a QR Code. All the procedural sets had to be scanned by CSSD staff before they were distributed to wards. CSSD staff used a handheld terminal to scan the unique QR Code on the issue form. Then they scanned the QR Code on each procedural set to ensure that it match with the issue form. If the set was about to expire or did not match with the form, an instant warning message would prompt on the screen of the handheld terminal. The scanned records were stored inside the handheld terminals and uploaded to a computer database for system review and audit.

Result
1. Increased accuracy of distribution of sterile procedural sets. The location of the sets was tracked. 2. Lean management of the process: one staff was relieved from the activity of counter checking. The saved manpower was delegated to perform quality improvement work. 3. Users’ satisfaction of the service because they received correct sets and quantity 4. Patient safety: correct sets and quantity were available at right time for patient service