

WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE IT THAT WAY!

Team Leader: Sally Sackett, RN, BSN, CPAN, CAPA
Rochester General Hospital, Rochester, NY

Cross-contamination from patient to patient via multiple use items has been evidence-based as causing hospital acquired infections. The Day of Surgery Admissions Unit (DOSA) had always used the “IV Bucket” which was carried from patient to patient, and was not cleaned between patients.

In an effort to better meet the objective of preventing cross-contamination, different single-use disposable containers were reviewed. The first container was a plastic round bowl which was already supplied in our central stores. This container was used effectively but was expensive and not environmentally friendly. Another search located a rectangular paper tray that proved to be economical, environmentally safe, and a more user-friendly shape. The tray is resistant to moisture, able to be processed in commercial-scale composting, and provides a cost savings of over 50% per item when compared to the plastic bowl.

We now use the paper single use disposable trays to gather supplies to start IVs. These are also used to collect the contaminated supplies to dispose of in a proper waste container. The implementation has improved our infection control practice to prevent cross-contamination, hospital-acquired infections, improve efficient collection and discard of supplies, address our environmental concerns while also a financial cost savings.

We need to examine simple everyday tasks in the perianesthesia arena to make sure that we don't do it because “WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE IT THAT WAY”. We need to use evidence-based strategies and by doing so, we may find extra bonuses such as financial and environmental improvements.