



APPLETON MEDICAL CENTER

SITUATION: A new concept of inpatient care in a general medical unit at Appleton Medical Center (AMC), Appleton, Wis., lowered the cost of care in the unit by 21 percent – while also reducing the length of patient stays by 17 percent and greatly minimizing the opportunity for Hospital Acquired Infections (HAIs). The new approach drove the need to reinvent how equipment and medical supplies are stored and accessed on patient floors.

OVERHAULING STORAGE ON PATIENT FLOORS: AMC is part of ThedaCare™, a four-hospital health system that includes 21 physician clinics and a host of specialty services. ThedaCare introduced its proprietary method of inpatient care in a 14-bed unit at AMC staffed by 32 nurses. The new approach, known as “Collaborative Care,” incorporated a number of key goals related to supplies storage. Specifically, ThedaCare wanted to:

- Maximize storage of equipment, supplies and medications inside patient rooms – giving nurses more time for patient care.
- Store essential items in a way that minimizes the frequency of traffic in and out of patient rooms.
- Complement the strategically designed footprint of patient rooms and make the most of each room’s highly valuable, yet limited storage space.
- Streamline materials management as a way to lower costs.

STORAGE SOLUTION: Working with architectural firm, Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc. (HGA), ThedaCare redesigned the 14-bed unit to eliminate traditional clean utility storage rooms. Doing so created the need to efficiently store frequently accessed supplies inside the patient room. For help with its storage challenge, ThedaCare teamed with Spacesaver and its local representative, Storage Systems Midwest, Inc., to design and install a breakthrough storage system – CoreSTOR™ patient server, a unique and highly adaptable innovation that serves as a decentralized nurse supply station.

Built into the wall that separates the corridor and patient room, the CoreSTOR system can be configured to match virtually any hospital’s materials management strategy and its approach to patient care. To maximize limited storage space, ThedaCare’s system is divided into upper and lower sections housed behind cherry-wood doors that open and close individually.

The upper portion of the CoreSTOR unit features custom-designed shelves to store 85 percent of the most frequently used, everyday items inside the patient room. Equipment, supplies, linens, and medications are always within arm’s reach; reducing time nurses spend “hunting and gathering” and allowing more time with patients. For added efficiencies, ThedaCare tailored the lower portion of the system to store basic items, as well as a wheeled cart for dirty linen. Infrequently accessed items are stored nearby the patients’ rooms.

APPLETON MEDICAL CENTER (Continued)

In the corridor, the materials management team gains full access to the CoreSTOR system for supplies stocking without entering the patient room. Staff easily slide the shelving unit out of the patient room on the uniquely designed, fully extending carriage system. All the while, the door inside the patient room remains closed. With the ability to slide the unit into the corridor, the system reduces the amount of patient interruptions – a proven factor in speeding patient recovery times. Less patient room traffic is critical to ThedaCare, which uses a number of best practices to minimize the potential for HAIs.



STORAGE SOLVED: ThedaCare's visionary Collaborative Care model has succeeded on all counts. By combining a new approach to patient care and redesigning the patient floor with a number of unique innovations, such as the CoreSTOR system, the 14-bed unit:

- Lowered the cost of care by 21 percent
- Reduced the length of patient stays by 17 percent
- Functioned 270 days (nine months) without an HAI incident
- Produced 100 percent compliance in nearly all quality measures
- Achieved patient scores above 90 percent for overall satisfaction
- Locates 85 percent of the most frequently used, everyday items inside patients' rooms, increasing the amount of time nurses spend with patients.
- Reduced unproductive hunting and gathering time an average of 2.5 hours per 12-hour shift.
- Reduced traffic in patient's rooms by as much as 75 percent.

Based on the results of the pilot, Collaborative Care is at the heart of ThedaCare's \$90 million initiative to redesign AMC and Theda Clark Medical Center. Planners will adapt the CoreSTOR system for use on a host of additional units, which range from patient floors to surgery to in-patient rehabilitation, as the pioneer in healthcare continues to transform and enhance the quality of care.