

## Customer Success Story

# ERIE COUNTY MEDICAL CENTER



## Omnicell Anesthesia Workstations Provide Erie County Medical Center with Automated Secure Medication Storage

### Challenges:

- Hospital Operating Rooms have unique medication and supply requirements
- OR suites often lack secured storage at the point-of-care
- Charge capture and cost management breaks down with paper processes

### Solutions:

- Omnicell Anesthesia Workstation: automated dispensing cabinet specifically designed for anesthesia workflow
- Automated inventory and reporting mechanisms

### Results:

- Increased charge capture leading to improvement in bottom line revenue
- More accurate tracking of drugs eligible for the 340B Drug Pricing Program
- Improved efficiency for Anesthesiology and Pharmaceutical Services staff

### Case Study

Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) prides itself on first-class patient care. With 550 inpatient beds and ten operating rooms, the hospital offers treatments at the forefront of innovation and is a regional center for trauma, burn, rehabilitation and cardiac care. It is also a major teaching facility for the University at Buffalo in New York.

Under the direction of Randy Gerwitz, RPh, the Department of Pharmaceutical Services at ECMC adheres to rigorous patient safety guidelines and regulations set by groups such as The Joint Commission, a not-for-profit healthcare accrediting organization. At the same time, Gerwitz and his team strive to maintain low inventory levels and maximize medication revenue capture throughout the hospital.

For more than 10 years, Omnicell automated medication dispensing cabinets have helped the Pharmacy at ECMC meet its patient safety and operational efficiency objectives. Over 60 cabinets are currently installed throughout the nursing areas. But in the surgical suite, nearly all doses of medication were billed via a manual process that captured a mere 10-15 percent of anesthesia charges. ECMC knew that it was time to take the next step and look at Omnicell medication automation solutions designed for the operating room.

"We spent a lot of time pouring over policies and procedures to optimize efficiency and charge capture data in the hospital's specialty areas," added Gerwitz. "With paper capture systems it can be a real challenge to be compliant. Plus, when you are negotiating with third party payers you can't really negotiate a fair rate if you have no idea what supplies are costing you to begin with."

### Solutions for Anesthesia Providers

While attending an industry conference, an anesthesiologist at ECMC discovered the Omnicell Anesthesia Workstation. The automated system addresses the unique medication workflows and storage requirements for anesthesia providers. The anesthesiologists at ECMC were particularly impressed that the storage capacity of Omnicell's mobile unit exceeded that of competing solutions. The cabinet securely stores sufficient anesthesia medications and supplies to support a day of cases.

The administration at ECMC recognized the Omnicell Anesthesia Workstation as a tool to increase efficiency and charge capture. 10 workstations were installed in May 2007.



# Addressing the Unique Needs of the Operating Room

*"There has been a clear benefit to the hospital's bottom line revenue.*

*Inventory and cost management are key elements to improving both quality of care and operational efficiency."*

*– Sue McCarthy,  
chief financial officer,  
Erie County Medical Center*

## Increase in Charge Capture

The Anesthesia Workstation facilitates charge capture through a straightforward user interface. Prior to removal, all medications must be associated to a patient. Controlled substances, locked within unit-dose bins, may be accessed through a touch screen. Other medications and supplies may be withdrawn and scanned from drawers that unlock upon login.

Today, all charges from the Anesthesia Workstations installed at ECMC are sent automatically to the hospital's Meditech billing system. "The implementation of Omnicell Anesthesia Workstations has been a really nice feather in everyone's cap," said Gerwitz. "We've been able to bring charge capture rates up to 90 percent or greater for OR medications and supplies. Additionally, for a single drug such as glycopyrrolate which is used nearly to exclusion by Anesthesiology, a tremendous increase in doses billed has been documented."

As a 340B eligible facility, accurately documenting pharmaceutical use at ECMC is especially important. The 340B Drug Program provides discounted medications for use in outpatient procedures to hospitals that offer care to the medically underserved. Nearly half of the OR activity at ECMC is outpatient, so Gerwitz is pleased to fully realize the savings from accurate charge capture.

## Decrease in Case Turnaround Time

Omnicell Anesthesia Workstations have brought another benefit to the OR – a decrease in surgical case turnaround time. The in-room cabinet has eliminated mid-case calls as well as trips by the OR staff to the Pharmacy to stock additional items between surgical cases. In addition, the unique Anesthesia Work Drawer allows secure preparation prior to cases, a favorite time-saving feature of the anesthesia providers. Medications and supplies are now easily accessible – literally at their fingertips – and paper charge documentation is a thing of the past. In turn, the Pharmacy staff spends less time reconciling controlled substances.



Omnicell anesthesia workstations can support medication and supply requirements for a full day in the operating room.

Sue McCarthy, chief financial officer of ECMC, is equally delighted with the results. "There has been a clear benefit to the hospital's bottom line revenue," said McCarthy. "Inventory and cost management are key elements to improving both quality of care and operational efficiency."

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