

Peconic Bay Medical Center Improves Scrub Quality, Reduces Inventory Costs with Cintas Scrub Rental Program

“Having an abundant inventory of clean scrubs on hand for nurses and doctors is crucial for providing comprehensive and quality healthcare services,” said Artie Crowe, VP of Hospital Services and Chief Information Officer, Peconic Bay Medical Center. “Through our scrub rental program with Cintas, our medical staff always has the essential surgical attire they need to perform effectively.”



Opportunity

Located in Riverhead, NY, Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) is a 182-bed, not-for-profit medical facility serving nearly 120,000 residents along the East End of Long Island. With a 200-member medical staff performing nearly 3,700 surgeries annually, PBMC wanted to improve its scrub apparel program in order to provide the best care possible and help keep surgeon and patient satisfaction high.

Previously, PBMC purchased its scrubs and placed them on an open shelf for staff, with tops and bottoms of the same size bound together in a set. When employees needed scrubs, they often took more than one set in order to ensure they had the correct sizes available. With the absence of an inventory control system, clinical personnel and physicians could run out of clean scrub sets when they were needed most. In order to prevent this from occurring, environmental service (EVS) or linen staff had to regularly monitor stock, taking their focus off of more critical job responsibilities.

In addition to hoarding, laundering issues also plagued PBMC's scrub program. If employees kept scrubs in their lockers or wore them home, they would likely home launder them, which is a violation of AORN's 2010 Recommended Practices for Surgical Attire. Sets returned to PBMC were sent to an outside laundry

service for cleaning. However, the laundry often lost items or mismatched them with inventory from other local healthcare operations. To compensate for missing scrubs, the hospital had to frequently order new sets, sacrificing quality by purchasing cheaper garments due to the added expense associated with an inability to maintain inventory.

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Artie Crowe, VP of Hospital Services and Chief Information Officer, PBMC

“Scrub supply issues were regularly a discussion item during staff meetings,” said Artie Crowe, VP of Hospital Services and Chief Information Officer, PBMC. “Doctors and nurses became frustrated because they were spending too much time tracking down clean scrubs. We knew we needed to make a change in the system.”

Solution

To enhance its value to patients and improve employee satisfaction, PBMC partnered with Cintas to implement a scrub rental program. Through the program, Cintas handles scrub inventory by purchasing scrub tops, bottoms and long-sleeved jackets, which are then loaded into a dispensing machine.

To obtain scrubs, staff members simply swipe their existing identification card, which prevents use by unauthorized personnel. Unlike many similar systems, Cintas scrub dispensing machines allow users to select different sizes for tops and bottoms, ensuring a better, more comfortable fit. This unique feature, along with the machine's ability to hold 400 sets of scrubs, allows inventory to last much longer.

Each week, Cintas collects soiled scrubs, launders them to healthcare standards, poly-wraps tops and pants individually and then restocks the machine. When tops and bottoms are dispensed, they are neatly folded rather than rolled to prevent wrinkling and ensure medical personnel maintain a professional appearance.

The Cintas machine also provides an easy way for users to return scrubs – they simply place soiled scrubs inside a door in the machine and close it. This encourages employees to wear a fresh set of scrubs each shift and, to further curb hoarding and the loss of inventory, users are limited

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in the number of scrubs they can take before soiled sets are returned. Cintas is able to provide detailed reports identifying who returns their scrubs and when, which helps ensure that scrubs are being properly used and maintained.



Results

“With our new scrub rental program, EVS and linen staff no longer feel like they are in the scrub business,” said Tim McGuire, Director of Support Services at Peconic. “It’s freed up their time so they can focus on their core job responsibilities.”

Cintas’ scrub rental program benefits PBMC by:

- Ensuring continual availability of scrub garments in the proper size
- Monitoring compliance with AORN guidelines
- Enhancing the image of staff by equipping them with clean, high-quality surgical attire
- Improving infection control efforts by laundering scrubs according to healthcare standards and individually wrapping each item
- Reducing inventory cost
- Improving overall employee and patient satisfaction with scrub availability, quality and cleanliness
- Promoting sustainability by reusing scrubs that last longer

“These machines are user-friendly and effectively control the entire scrub rental process throughout the hospital,” added Crowe. “Cintas’ services guarantee that availability, cleanliness and quality of scrubs are no longer an issue, improving staff morale throughout the hospital.” ■

