A Standardized Approach to Cleaning Disposable Telemetry Lead Systems
Michelle L. Johnson, RN, BSN, PCCN
Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Fort Worth
Michelle Hampton

**Problem:** Inconsistent cleaning and lack of established protocol for cleaning reusable telemetry lead systems can lead to increased nosocomial infection rates (Arias, n.d.; Brown, 2011), abnormal waveforms, and product deterioration (General Electric Healthcare, 2004).

**Purpose:** The purpose of this project was to develop and promote an evidence based practice solution to eliminate potential transmission of microorganisms and maintain system integrity without further increasing unit costs.

**Evidence:** Single patient use equipment has been shown to reduce potential cross contamination; however, cost can be significant. A recent study found a significant difference in pathogen growth when reusable leads were cleaned with Sodium Hypochlorite as opposed to standard care. Improper cleaning has also been associated with degradation of system performance. Cleaning with Sodium Hypochlorite is also recommended by the APIC, CDC and OSHA (Arias, n.d.; Brown, 2011).

**Strategy:** When investigating existing cleaning standards, it was discovered there was a lack of knowledge regarding cleaning methods, frequency, and responsibility. An assessment of current telemetry lead replacement trends, baseline knowledge of cleaning protocol was conducted and collaboration with infection prevention was done to develop and implement a standardized protocol that included policy development, and staff education.

**Practice Change:** Establishment of a hospital wide protocol for cleaning and storage of reusable telemetry systems based on evidence based practice.

**Evaluation:** Ongoing evaluation of knowledge and compliance with the protocol will be needed to target areas requiring additional education.

**Results:** Policy development is complete and targeted education efforts are underway.

**Recommendations:** Assess cleaning practices across facilities within the system is recommended. Further exploration of the recommendations required for cleaning frequency during prolonged hospital stays is also recommended.
Lessons Learned: Inconsistent understanding amongst staff regarding cleaning disposable lead systems (specifically who cleans the units, and how to clean units) Consistent cleaning protocol will lead to changes in practice that are simple and feasible resulting in improved patient outcomes.

References:
