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Tools of the Trade: Instrument Stringers for Reprocessing

Written by Matt Smith, Marketing Analyst, Healthmark Industries | April 13, 2012

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Proper reprocessing of surgical instruments is an ongoing challenge for central supply departments in healthcare facilities. CSSD professionals constantly look for ways to be more efficient and simplify the process of instrument cleansing and sterilization. One of the most innovative tools created for the CSSD is the "surgical instrument stringer," an easy-to-use tool to prepare instruments for sterilization.

One simply places the stringer in the base and strings one instrument upon another. When full, close-off the stringer, lift it out of the base and place in use.

Traditionally, stringers have been used primarily in the preparation of instruments inside of a tray for sterilization. These stringers usually are 2 to 3 inches in width. More recently, however, stringers are finding their way to the "dirty-side" of the CSSD. The Association of Advancement of Medical Instrumentation stresses in ST79 section 7.5.6 the importance of disassembly of multi-part instruments and the need to place all hinged instruments in an open state to ensure all surfaces are exposed for effective cleaning. Stringers used in decontamination are typically 5 to 6 inches in width to maximize the openness of the instruments for the spray action of the washer.

These have been effective tools, but did create the need for double inventory of stringers — until recently. A new type of product was introduced to the healthcare industry that made surgical instrument reprocessing even more efficient, the "adjustable stringer." This new tool adjusts to the size of instruments for more effective cleaning of hard to reach areas containing bioburden, and can also be adjusted to the optimal width for placement of instruments inside a tray for terminal sterilization.

The new adjustable instrument stringers are just one of many tools for effective instrument reprocessing. Remember to always follow manufacturer instructions and test your mechanical washers at least once a week in compliance with AAMI and Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses guidelines.

Matt Smith is the marketing analyst for Heatlhmark Industries. A veteran of marketing, he has over 12 years experience that additionally includes automotive and energy efficiency programs. Mr. Smith graduated from Grand Valley State University with bachelors of science in Advertising/PR. He is a former collegiate athlete that still enjoys playing baseball, going to the gym and being outdoors.

More Articles on Reprocessing:

Healthmark Industries Launches Adjustable Stringer 4 Risk Factors for Immediate Use Steam Sterilization

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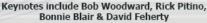
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