

Case Study

Evergreen Health Care Reduces Injury Costs With Zoom

Situation

Out of 69,420 nursing injuries in 2003, approximately 50% were the result of patient handling. With the increasing challenge of transporting patients on a variety of surfaces and at varying degrees of incline, in addition to an escalating amount of bariatric patients (9% of adults in the U.S. are obese), hospitals are experiencing an increase in patient handling injury reports¹.

The state of Washington, recognizing this as a mounting issue, passed the House Bill 1672 on March 8, 2006. Evergreen Health Care in Seattle, Washington, is one such facility improving their practices to align with this new legislation in an effort to bring a solution to their transporting issues.

Evergreen's data tracking system produced visibility to the high number of claims related to push/pull injury from transport equipment in the MedSurg unit. In an effort to reduce this number, the Employee Health Department began seeking ways to improve patient transport and minimize caregiver strain.

Rationale

As an industry leader for more than 60 years in patient handling equipment, Stryker Medical recognized that job-related injuries are a major concern. Acknowledging this need, Stryker was first to market with a motorized stretcher. Launched in 2003, this self-propelled stretcher helps ease pushing and turning effort for the caregiver. Exclusive ergonomic features such as a lift-assist backrest with drop-seat design, no-crank hydraulic knee gatch, integrated patient scales, litter-mounted O₂ bottle holder, 700 lbs weight capacity and best-in-class low height make Stryker stretchers benchmarks in the industry.

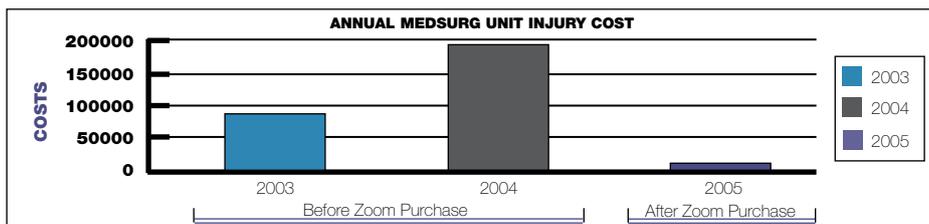
Methodology

Stryker designed a mobility option consisting of load cell technology which allows the stretcher to completely mimic the use of "normal" non-powered stretchers with one key difference — the significant reduction in the amount of effort to start, cruise, and stop the stretcher on any surface or incline with up to a 700 lbs patient load. By pressing forward on the handles, the "driver" accelerates the stretcher forward. When the pressure is removed, the stretcher maintains the same speed until pressure is placed on the handles encouraging the unit to speed up or slow down. The invention is known as "Zoom."

Evergreen sought to compare their incidence of work injury statistics in the MedSurg unit before and after their Zoom investment.

Results

Evergreen's safety coordinator compared data prior to the Zoom purchases in 2003 and 2004 to data obtained once the Zoom units were in use. Evergreen evaluated the data and concluded that their investment in Zoom significantly reduced their cost in injuries.



Conclusion

With the investment to purchase the Zoom stretchers coupled with using the Zoom units for primary transport instead of beds, Evergreen was able to recognize \$191,000 cost savings to their bottom line and reduced their injury rate by 98%.

¹ Feletto, Mario and Walter Graze. "A Back Injury Prevention Guide for Health Care Providers." Cal/OSHA Consultation Service.

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Literature Number: MTX14906302006



CE MTX5507/GS 10/09
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