

Critical Questions Surrounding Rental Equipment

How important is quality when it comes to moveable medical equipment (MME), specialty beds and other rental equipment? A new bill entitled “Ensuring Patient Safety through Accountable Medical Device Servicing,” (H.R. 2118) was introduced in Congress in early 2017. The bill is intended to ensure that all entities that service and supply medical devices to healthcare organizations have appropriate federal oversight and are held to consistent quality, safety and regulatory requirements.

The mere existence of this bill confirms that the quality of rental equipment in hospitals is an issue worth monitoring — and it draws attention to the fact that improperly serviced equipment can pose a significant patient safety risk. Although many assume that those patient incidents are few and far between, reports show that during a four-year period the FDA received 56,000 reports* of adverse events associated with infusion pumps alone. From a hospital perspective, it is imperative to take steps to reduce that risk by ensuring that any rental equipment is maintained according to the same stringent quality standards applied to OEMs. Few MME and bed rental providers voluntarily adhere to these standards, so it’s critical to monitor the level of quality being introduced to your hospital.



Protect Your Patients & Your Reputation by Asking Your Rental Provider These Questions



Do you purchase used equipment? If so, do you have a full service and maintenance history of the purchased equipment?



Do you substitute non-OEM replacement parts for your equipment? If so, can you supply evidence that you’ve validated their compatibility?



Do you follow the OEM instructions and preventive maintenance schedule for all the equipment you provide?



If there is a problem with a substituted non-OEM replacement part (malfunctions, recalls), do you offer traceability back to the serial number of the affected device?



Do you have documentation of ownership and prior service history for any used equipment you rent? Are these records open for inspection?



Are technicians with OEM certifications and two-year Associate Degrees (minimum) in electronics or medical device fields servicing all used equipment?



Do your technicians receive on-going clinical engineering training for a minimum of 20 hours per year?