

Key Recommendations

- Develop a policy statement on patient-owned medical and nonmedical equipment that clearly states restrictions and allowances.
- Provide education and guidance to patients, providers, and staff on the policies.
- Ensure that physician approval is obtained for the use of patient-supplied medical devices and that pertinent staff are knowledgeable about their operation.
- Work with legal counsel to develop forms/waivers for patients regarding patient responsibility and liability.

See page 17 for more Action Recommendations.

Supplementary Material

- Appendix A: Policy and procedure for patient electronic equipment
- Appendix B: Electrical Safety
- Appendix C: Nurses' guide for managing patient-supplied equipment
- Appendix D: Patients' guide for bringing appliances to the hospital
- Appendix E: Policy: Inpatient portable ventilators
- Table. Categorizing Patient-Supplied Medical Devices

For more tools on this topic, see the HRC Members' Web site at <http://www.ecri.org>.

► Patient-Supplied Equipment

Patients sometimes ask to bring personal electronic devices like CD players and laptop computers—and even their own medical equipment like continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) units and insulin pumps—into the hospital to use during their stay. Patients may enjoy the comfort of knowing how to use and operate their own equipment and/or may wish to avoid the additional costs of using hospital-owned equipment.

Healthcare organizations have a duty to ensure the safety of equipment and devices used in their institutions. When they allow the use of patient-supplied equipment, they may also assume responsibility for the equipment's performance and safety. This places facilities at risk because they have never had control over the equipment's use or evidence of its proper maintenance, repair, or storage.

WHAT HRC FOUND

There is no need for onerous restrictions on the use of patient-owned nonmedical equipment, including grooming equipment, entertainment devices, and more sophisticated equipment like laptop computers. Basic precautions should be taken to prevent the use of damaged or potentially dangerous equipment. However, the use of patient-supplied medical devices should generally be prohibited. The use of some devices can be allowed for cases in which the hospital has carefully reviewed the issues and taken appropriate safety measures.

Route To:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical/biomedical engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Recall coordinator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patient safety officer | |