

NEW CENTRALIZED TELEMETRY MONITORING SPACE BENEFITS TECHNOLOGIST HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY

One South Carolina health system, with two hospitals located about 20 miles apart and serving the growing suburban and seasonal populations of the coastal low country, wanted to be able to centralize monitoring of telemetry patients at both hospitals at one site. Problem was, the main site's telemetry reading room was cramped, cluttered, and not designed for the task, so the health system chose to gut it and start over.

The architect leading the project recommended an ergonomic approach to increase staff comfort and improve workflow, which included ergonomic sit/stand desks to properly manage the large telemetry monitoring arrays. The ergonomic redesign has been very well received. The bottom line: The redesign overcame many existing challenges, making the space ergonomically friendly and its occupants healthier and more productive as a result.

REDESIGN ADDRESSES HOSPITALS' NEEDS, STAFF CONCERNS

"Many of the monitoring technicians, who work 12-hour shifts, complained about neck and back soreness and stiffness and swollen feet because they were sitting for so long, or had to move in awkward or inefficient ways to accomplish their daily responsibilities," says the health system's Clinical Director of Critical Care. Before the renovation, room organization was very poor. Some of the monitoring displays were wall-mounted while some sat on table mounts. The telemetry technicians often complained that it was difficult for them to reach some of the touchscreen displays to silence alarms and manage the system, and they frequently had to turn away from the monitoring displays to perform their patient charting responsibilities.

ERGONOMICS IMPROVES MONITORING TECH PRODUCTIVITY, WORKFLOW AND HEALTH

With ergonomics in mind, the room was furnished with two new cockpit-style, sit/stand tables and ComfortView™ monitor mounting solutions from RedRick Technologies. The corner shaped tables, both configured the same, were set up in adjacent corners of the room, giving the telemetry technicians adequate space to work. The new configuration also allows for the telemetry technicians to quickly and efficiently manage alarms and communicate with staff outside the monitoring room as all the necessary tools are optimally located.

Originally, the room had 10 telemetry monitors that were not properly organized. Now each sit/stand table includes 6 monitors at each workstation, displayed in two rows of three. The bottom row has a CPU screen for charting that is flanked by two touchscreens. Thanks to the adjustable monitor mounts, the top row of monitors can be fully angled and positioned so that the technicians can easily reach their touchscreens whether sitting or standing. As with the sit/stand tables, each technician can adjust the monitors to meet their personal preferences and accommodate their varying heights and arm lengths. The new desks and monitor configuration have all but eliminated the straining and repetitive movements that were unhealthy.



In addition, each monitoring station now provides ample space for the telemetry technicians to perform their charting responsibilities while continuously facing the telemetry monitors. Now they merely have to look up from their charting papers to manage alarms and view the status of any patient. The technicians greatly appreciate that they have the option of sitting or standing and can alternate their position throughout the day to remain comfortable, the Clinical Director of Critical Care reports.

Yet another benefit from having two identical and properly configured telemetry monitoring workstations in one room: workload balancing. Not surprisingly, the two hospitals have different patient populations and patient volumes. With the new configuration, the technicians can easily redistribute their workload. "If one technician is really busy and the

other not so, they can more easily share workloads, thanks to the standardization of the monitoring workstations and the room setup," says the Clinical Director of Critical Care. This health system found that centralizing monitoring in an ergonomically designed telemetry room provided multiple benefits:

- Improved monitoring tech efficiency and workflow by enabling them to chart and monitor patients without straining to see and touch the computer screens.
- Facilitated workload balancing amongst the multiple techs.
- Improved monitoring staff morale by making them feel heard and appreciated.