

HEADS UP...

TOPIC: Inspection, testing and maintenance of high-risk equipment

SETTING: Nursing Care Centers (NCC)

Why is this important?

The inspection, testing and maintenance of high-risk equipment is vital to patient care and safety. High-risk equipment is often used in emergency situations leaving no room for equipment malfunction or failure. However, organizations continue to be frequently cited for findings related to this standard and EP (EC.02.04.03 EP 2) for nursing care centers.

Scope of the Problem:

Time period: **January 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020**

Number of full surveys performed: **382**

Number of surveys which had moderate and high-risk findings related to related to the inspection, testing and maintenance of high-risk equipment (EC.02.04.03 EP 2): **26 (7%)**

Observations identified within a specific topic area (e.g., high-risk equipment) may reveal systemic areas for improvement across the organization. These deficits might be reflected in additional standards/EPs within the human resources chapter and/or other chapters/standards/EPs: EC.01.01.01 EP 1, EC.02.01.01 EP 5, EC.02.04.01 EP 3-6, EC.02.04.03 EP 1, 2, EC.02.05.05 EP 4

Sample survey observations [from surveyor notes] (and contributing factors)

- During the building tour staff verbally reported that she/he checked the AED daily for functionality but there was no written documentation to support the daily checks.
 - There was no documentation that AEDs were inspected (daily, weekly, monthly) or maintained per manufacturers' instructions.
- The emergency/crash cart was not checked daily or checked each shift according to the organization's policy.
- AEDs and suction machines were found to not work upon inspection.

Potential contributing factors:

- Failed to audit compliance and did not designate individuals responsible for daily cart checks.
- Lack of awareness of the requirement, therefore, no documentation had been created or was in place to track the ongoing inspection, testing, and maintenance of life-support equipment.
- Lack of or incomplete checklist or equipment log with all high-risk equipment that need to be monitored and inspected (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)
- Leadership had failed to ensure that the policy and procedures correctly outlined the equipment maintenance requirements (per IFU).

How to identify potential problems in your organization

Review your policies and procedures

- Does the organization have policies and procedures for ensuring the inspection, testing and maintenance of high-risk equipment (and supplies)?
 - Is this process periodically reviewed?
 - Is this process in alignment with manufacturers' instructions for all high-risk equipment?
 - Does the policy indicate how often inspections should occur for high-risk equipment?
 - Does the policy indicate how to respond when medical equipment fails?
 - Does the policy and procedure address staff responsibilities (e.g., who is responsible for the inspections, testing and maintenance? Who is responsible for reviewing that corrective actions are being completed?)

Interview staff

- Can staff demonstrate knowledge regarding preventive maintenance, quality checks, and associated documentation needed for high-risk equipment?
- Are staff knowledgeable regarding the frequency that high-risk equipment needs to be inspected and tested?
- Are staff aware of the steps/process to take when high-risk medical equipment fails inspections?

Assess your environment

- Is there an available equipment checklist that outlines the schedule and type of inspections and tests that need to be completed?
- Does the organization document the outcomes from inspections and tests on all high-risk equipment?
- Are the high-risk equipment manufacturers' instructions readily available? Are inspections and maintenance performed according to the manufacturers' instructions?

Evaluate implementation

- Conduct periodic checks of emergency equipment and carts for the operability of high-risk equipment.
- Review/monitor maintenance and supply logs.

What are some resources that can assist in mitigating risks in these areas?

- The Joint Commission. Big Book of More Tracer Questions. 2019
- Consult manufacturers' instructions for use (IFU) and user guides for guidance regarding inspection, testing and maintenance.