

Medical instrument tracking could reduce health risks

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A paper on the benefits of using RFID technology in healthcare applications, published by RFID Journal, suggests a technological solution to address the problem of infections transmitted via medical instruments.

According to the authors Brad Sokol and Patni Corporation, the concept of micro modularity suggests that the tracking of medical instruments could reduce the threat of transmitting infections through the placement of RFID tags on the instruments and then transmitting the instrument's TTL (time, temperature and location). This article is copyright 2004 UsingRFID.com.

This ability to track the TTL elements of any medical instrument would ensure that each instrument was properly sterilised, and that instruments are left in the right place at the right time. RFID could also be used to track each instrument's full history regarding involvement in patient surgical procedures.

"Our paper, *'The future of RFID in the Healthcare Industry'*, addresses the issue of instruments causing exposure to life threatening diseases due to inefficiencies in the sterilisation procedures," said Sokol. "The sterilisation process is efficient 99.9% of the time; however, due to human errors and/or machine errors, instruments can sometimes pass on infections during surgical procedures."

According to Sokol, it is estimated that the cost of infections caused by medical instrumentation during the year 2003 resulted in some US\$3.1 billion in claims paid to affected patients in the USA.

For additional information:

- Visit Patni Corporation at <http://www.patni.com>
- Visit RFID Journal at <http://www.rfidjournal.com>
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Source: Patni Corporation

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