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Hospital reduces time spent responding to IV pump alarms during trial of IV-ARMOR® from Dale

IV alarms are a common nuisance in the in-patient setting. Nursing staff hear an alarm every 90 seconds on average, according to the Joint Commission, Office of Quality Monitoring.[1] As a result, patients experience sleep disturbance, anxiety, and interruption of medication.[2] For the nursing staff, nuisance alarms can cause anxiety, frustration, alarm fatigue (sensory overload resulting in desensitization and missed alarms), and reduced job satisfaction.

IV-ARMOR from Dale is a flexible protective overlay designed to preserve and protect the IV line. IV-ARMOR minimizes downstream occlusions caused by patient movement by reducing the risk of kinking and catheter movement. Made of soft, flexible material and skin-friendly adhesive, IV-ARMOR also protects the IV site from patient tampering.

Case Report

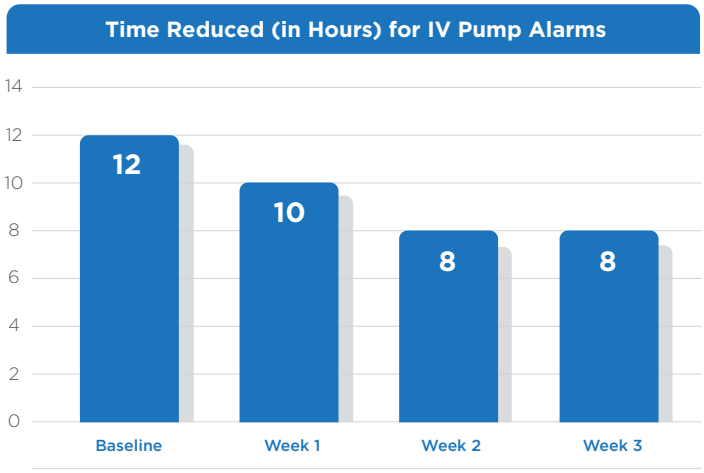
A 30-patient medical/surgical/telemetry unit in a major southeastern regional hospital implemented a 3-week trial of IV-ARMOR as part of its efforts to reduce its total number of IV alarms and the amount of time nurses spent answering them.

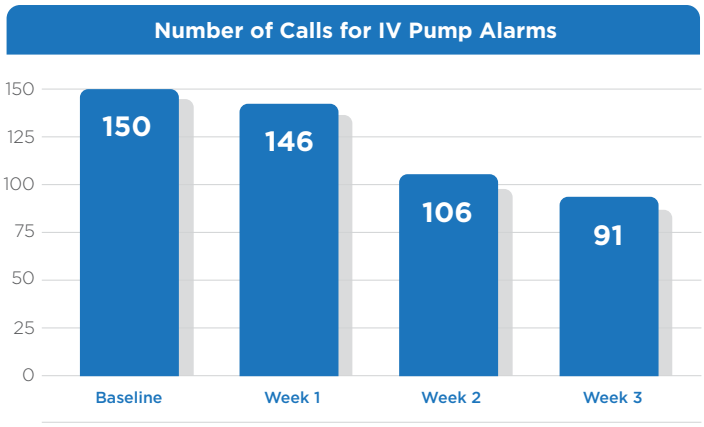
The patient population in the unit typically includes patients admitted from the emergency department, telemetry patients and patients with acute disease. A high proportion is elderly.

Nursing staff collected baseline data before the trial began. The staff of 8 nurses during the day and 7 at night spent 11.6 hours responding to 150 call bells over the course of a week.

After the introduction of IV-ARMOR, call bell response time fell to 10.2 hours, 7.97 hours and 8.08 in three subsequent weeks. Number of call bells fell to 146, 106 and 91.

While the introduction of IV-ARMOR may not have been the only factor involved, the product did appear to reduce IV beeping. After the trial, supervisors decided to continue to make IV-ARMOR available to nursing staff.





Patient Perspectives

By minimizing nuisance alarms, IV-ARMOR has the potential to improve patient ratings of 5 of the 10 measurements of the HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) survey:

- Responsiveness of hospital staff
- Pain management
- Quietness of hospital environment
- Overall rating of hospital
- Willingness to recommend hospital

Conclusion

IV-ARMOR from Dale can help to improve the patient experience while enabling nurses to focus their attention on optimal patient care.

1. The Joint Commission, Office of Quality Monitoring. (2013). Sentinel Events. Retrieved from: http://www.joincommission.org/sentinel_event.aspx.
2. Infusion Nurses Society. Infusion Nursing Standards of Practice. J Infus Nurs 2006;29(1suppl):S1-S92.

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