

RFID for Surgical Instrument Tracking Saves Estimated 31,000 Hours for Rigshospitalet During Trial

Innovative Solution from Caretag Surgical and Xerafy Shows RFID is Highly Effective for Managing Sterilization and other Track-and-Trace Processes

HONG KONG, CHINA, April 2, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Read-on-metal UHF RFID tags from [Xerafy](#) proved their suitability and value for surgical instrument tracking during an 18-month trial at New Rigshospitalet hospital in Copenhagen, Denmark. Tracking surgical instruments with RFID could save the hospital 31,000 hours a year in operating room procedures alone while also improving patient safety and providing additional time saving and infection control benefits during sterilization and other processes. Dr. Henrik Eriksen, project director for the RFID trial, announced the results last month during a press conference in Copenhagen.

When surgical trays were prepared for use in the operating room (OR), an RFID reader was used to automatically identify and record all the items that were contained in the tray. The trays were read at several more process points before entering the OR to make sure counts were accurate. Trays were read again before they left the OR after surgery to make sure no surgical instruments were missing, and were read at the hospital's central sterile processing department to document the sterilization process for each item.

RFID readers can simultaneously identify the 60 to 80 individual items that a surgical tray typically contains. Rigshospitalet previously identified and verified tray contents by bar code scanning.

"RFID UHF technology provides unparalleled speed and accuracy advantages compared to bar code and other RFID technologies for tracking surgical instruments in sterilization processes and operating rooms," said Dr. Eriksen, "Rigshospitalet is characterized by a very high quality and strong focus on patient safety, and our leadership in technology allows us to also realize the cost benefits of tracking medical devices and the workflow optimization associated with them."

Rigshospitalet tested the "Tag, Track and Trace" (TTT) surgical instrument tracking system developed by [Caretag Surgical](#), a global RFID solutions company headquartered in Copenhagen. Xerafy's read-on-metal Dash XS passive UHF RFID tags were attached to a variety of surgical instruments to support item-level tracking and traceability processes. Surgical supply vendors that participated in the



Xerafy RFID UHF tag attached to the surgical instrument. With UHF technology, it is possible to get a good read range from many tags simultaneously

trial attached the Dash XS tags to their products using permanent adhesive developed by [Dana Lim A/S](#).

During the trial Rigshospitalet learned that the small tags did not impact the balance of instruments or how surgeons used them. The high-quality tags withstood more than 1,000 autoclave sterilization processes, which most tags could not do because they cannot survive the temperatures, harsh chemicals and pressure.

Xerafy Dash XS series tags comply with ISO 18000-6C and GS1 EPCglobal Gen 2 passive UHF standards, are IP68 rated and can withstand autoclave sterilization. They measure just 12.3 by 3 by 2.2 mm (0.5 by 0.13 by 0.09 inch), weigh 0.44 g (0.016 oz.) and have read range up to 1 m (3.3 ft.) with a handheld reader.

The trial was considered successful because it validated the business case for tracking medical devices at the item level and showed RFID could increase patient safety, improve the traceability and management of surgical instruments and reduce cost with better efficiency and productivity.

The trial also showed RFID tagging together with Caretag's Tag, Track and Trace system can save time enough time for hospitals to increase productivity. Approximately 75,000 surgeries are performed each year at Rigshospitalet, and Dr. Eriksen estimates the RFID system saves 31,000 hours at that volume.

The time savings documented above are specific for operating room processes and do not include additional time savings at sterilization centers and other inherent benefits from improved traceability, such as better infection prevention, improved patient safety, inventory savings and reduced asset losses.

"Hospitals today face growing surgical volumes and limited resources but are overburdened with requirements to track and trace instruments, and keep records of instrument usage and the workflow process," said Caretag founder and Managing Director Soren Bilsoe. "Caretag Surgical's TTT system ensures the right instrument are always in the proper instrument tray for an operation and allows accurate and automated lifecycle management for instruments. It automatically builds records of which operations the instruments have been used, the patient associated with the surgery, the person who performed surgical and cleaning procedures, where the instrument is located, how long it is in stock, etc."

"The success of this program validates the RFID UHF technology readiness and business case for surgical instrument tracking," said Xerafy founder and CEO Dennis Khoo. "Xerafy's innovative technology is enabling a paradigm shift in the way OR and SPD processes are managed and will be one of the most disruptive breakthroughs to affect healthcare over the next five years."

About Xerafy

Xerafy's innovations have changed the price-performance ratio for RFID tags and made it possible for customers to track assets in a wide range of harsh environments. Xerafy provides read-on-metal tags that can be embedded directly into assets to meet a full range of needs for RFID asset tracking in the aerospace, industrial, data center, healthcare, energy and other industries. Xerafy is headquartered in Hong Kong and maintains U.S. sales and support offices in Dallas, and additional offices in the U.K. and China.

Learn more about Xerafy by visiting www.xerafy.com.

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