

SUMMARY OF:

THE FINAL STEPS IN CONVERTING A HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATION TO A LATEX-SAFE ENVIRONMENT

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BACKGROUND

The Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions began converting to a latex free environment in 1997 by putting together a Latex Free task force. After many years, and looking at all variables, they began the conversion to two different glove manufacturers and 5 different non-latex gloves in May 2007.

OVERVIEW

The article describes Johns Hopkins' journey through the implementation of a latex free environment. It was not just a product (glove) change, it included leadership buy-in, on-going education, personnel involvement, and training.

RESULTS

Johns Hopkins looked at new alternative ways in which to convert their facilities into all Non-latex Sterile Gloves. They explored sole manufacturing supplier opportunities, gained organizational support throughout the hospital, and buy-in from chiefs of surgery. They sent out RFPs to 4 glove manufacturers and eventually chose the 2 lowest bidders to evaluate. Upon evaluation it was decided to use both companies.

CONCLUSION

Upon the evaluation of the two glove manufacturers, 412 health-care workers completed 608 evaluation forms. There was a high overall acceptance rate of non-latex sterile gloves. If only one manufacturer was chosen, 25% of the staff would not be happy with the chosen manufacturer. Through leadership buy-in, continued education, surveillance, and a systematic approach to a latex free environment Johns Hopkins was able to make a cultural change for the better.

References 1. Brown et al., The Final Steps in Converting a Health Care Organization to a Latex-Safe Environment. *Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations*. April 2009: Volume 35, Number 4.

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