



# Reading Hospital automates supply replenishment to save costs, boost patient care

Reading Hospital, now part of Tower Health, recently opened a new 476,000 sq. ft. surgical center, including 24 surgical suites. The organization eliminated virtually all supply storage in its operating rooms. Using Infor®, it centralized its surgical supply inventory, and created a case cart system, using PAR replenishment, to stock approximately 90 supply carts. Savings of at least \$750,000 in operating room supply costs are projected, and staff and patient satisfaction have improved already.



**HEADQUARTERS**  
West Reading PA

**INDUSTRY**  
Healthcare

**EMPLOYEES**  
6,878

**BEDS**  
714

**INFOR PRODUCT**  
Infor Lawson Mobile Supply Chain Management

**WEB SITE**  
[www.readinghealth.org](http://www.readinghealth.org)

**“We shifted supply chain responsibilities from surgical staff to supply experts to enhance patient care and build cross-functional trust.”**

**Ann Paolini**  
Director of Business Systems and Analytics  
Tower Health

## Taking a mission-critical look at supply management

### Growth precipitates changes

Reading Hospital sought to centralize its many surgical services, which were previously spread across several buildings. As it completed its new Reading Healthplex for Advanced Surgical and Patient Care, its supply chain team was charged with maximizing efficiencies while ensuring there was no supply storage in the surgical suites. This was a vast departure from its previous system, which included numerous on-site supply closets, storage cabinets, and drawers where supplies were stockpiled and amassed to excess.

The surgical staff had been in control of their own supplies and expenses, offering the supply chain experts limited business visibility into product availability and costs. Most importantly, there were no systemic assurances that the right supplies were available, when needed, for staff and patients.

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**“Our accomplishments today are because of a tremendous team effort between clinical and supply chain teams. There’s a ton of mutual respect between our two teams, and it’s clear we have common goals to keep us moving forward with even more efficiency.”**

**Rita White**  
Senior Director of Supply Chain  
Tower Health

### Business results and efficiencies



**\$1 million**  
Projected supply cost savings



**63%**  
Reduction in pick time



**50%**  
Fewer FTEs needed to replenish carts



**109,000**  
Fewer annual supply touch points

With a plan to move to a case cart system replenished from a single, centralized location, Reading Hospital’s supply chain staff developed a solution within its existing Infor Lawson Mobile Supply Chain Management system. The automated system manages more than 2,000 SKUs and exists as a perpetual replenishment source for the 90 mobile surgical supply carts.

### Achieving clinician buy-in

When the Reading Hospital supply chain team presented its proof-of-concept to administrative and clinical staff, it achieved quick and critical buy-in and support. The system was implemented within three weeks.

Prior to this project, Reading Hospital had insufficient means for tracking the utilization of items, including expensive surgical products, which can cost more than \$1,000 each. With the new system, the organization can track inventory utilization by analyzing requisition history to identify excess and obsolete stock, and can carry low units of measure on carts.

The PAR is integrated into EPIC, so time needed to pick case supplies is greatly reduced. Supply chain staff members also work closely with clinical staff to review, assess, and recommend adjustments to their preference cards by querying procedure logs and supply usage. Supply utilization analytics are available, real-time, at a level of detail never possible, providing an actionable report of supply consumption within the organization.

With improved visibility into its supply carts and the inventory they carry, the organization projected it would save \$750,000 in operating supplies alone, with more savings expected as it rolls the system out to other areas, such as the emergency department and catheterization laboratory. Reading has already begun tracking efficiencies in a single cart, and realized \$50,000 savings in carrying costs.

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**“Having an automated mechanism for tracking when expiry checks are completed supports costs savings and our mission of care excellence by ensuring outdated products are removed from inventory.”**

**Rita White**  
Senior Director of Supply Chain  
Reading Health

## Opening the door to more savings and safety

### Enter the expiration project

Aside from Reading Hospital’s overall supply inefficiencies and associated costs, its previous manual system did not track unwanted or expired product. Staff would simply discover a box of unwanted or expired supplies, and send it to the supply chain department where items were disposed of as waste.

Today, with the new Infor Lawson Mobile Supply Chain solution, there are few unwanted products because only products that are needed are ordered, thus eliminating waste. If a product is set to expire, staff now knows that product’s exact dollar amount, to the penny, so it can be moved to another PAR location. Eliminating the risk of expired products entering the supply chain greatly enhances patient care and outcomes.

### Better patient care is ultimate reward

Today, clinical staff no longer experience supply delays or errors, and are assured they will have needed supplies, on schedule. Using the example of open heart surgery, the speed at which a case cart is picked has gone from 32 minutes, when the surgical center first opened, to 12 minutes today. That’s a 63% reduction in pick time.

The Reading Hospital staff correlates that to improved patient satisfaction and, of course, decreased potential for care delay or cancellation. In the rare cases where product or supply issues may come up, staff is in the process of implementing a tracking mechanism to quantify issues reported by operating room staff.

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