

HOSPITAL STORAGE

- Emergency Room
- Surgical Units
- Medical Supply Closet
- Health Center
- Physical Therapy Center
- Extended Care Facility

PROBLEM

This hospital's cancer and orthopedic center had an outdated storage system—using multiple rooms on different floors and in different buildings with old cabinets and standard metal shelving to store wheelchairs, stretchers, crutches, equipment for traction and rehab, and all the related medical and mechanical supplies. Keeping track of inventory and finding exactly what was needed became a growing problem as supplies became more scattered and the storage rooms became overcrowded and chaotic.

In some cases, equipment was simply heaped on shelves, and it became extremely difficult to locate what was needed in a timely way. Staff wasted extra time on search and recovery missions. In one extreme case, overcrowding of a storage room forced staff to lay equipment on top of stretchers. The hospital director finally realized that when stretchers were being used as shelves, the situation was definitely out of hand and needed to be fixed.

OBJECTIVE

To implement a high density mobile storage system that greatly improved space usage so that all equipment and supplies—hundreds of items from bulky wheelchairs and weights to IV bags and bandages—could be centralized in one area instead of multiple areas on different floors. In addition, the system must make for quick and easy location of the proper equipment and supplies, and generally add some logic and ease-of-use to a storage process that was outdated, chaotic, and had become totally unacceptable for a healthcare provider.

SOLUTION

The primary storage solution used is a high density mobile storage system. Utilizing different shelving types allowed us to render a completely customized solution. Everything from big bulky items to awkwardly-sized hanging items is now stored where all items can be viewed at a glance. No more climbing over items to look for other items. This not only provides more efficient use of space, but also makes all items readily visible and accessible to staff members. No more search and recovery missions.



CASE STUDY

In addition to high density mobile storage systems, rotary filing systems are used to create smaller lockable storage areas for sensitive drugs and expensive equipment. The versatile system is also fitted with a section of large rollout drawers that enable the safe storage of a variety of supplies from IV fluid bags to tubing to smaller items like pulleys and fittings that were frequently lost or misplaced. A second storage system is installed closer to the nursing station so hundreds of smaller items like dressings, bandages, and office supplies used daily by dozens of nurses and support team members are now literally at the staff's fingertips. The high density mobile storage system enables the storage of five times the supplies that the old system accommodated and employs an easy-to-use hand crank that rotates the shelves quickly and quietly so staff can get exactly what they need without having to move from shelf to shelf, room to room, floor to floor, or, in some cases building to building. Now everything is centrally located in one area as opposed to many rooms on multiple floors—resulting in significant savings on both space and labor costs.

