Quick-Hitting Survey
Surgical Instrument Tracking & Management

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Executive Summary

Methodology

In August 2019, The Health Management Academy conducted a quick-hitting survey of Leading Health Systems to better understand health systems' processes for surgical instrument tracking and management, particularly with respect to the use of software tools. The 11 responding clinical executives represent health systems with an average Total Revenue of $5.0 billion that own or operate 100 hospitals and have approximately 1.2 million admissions per annum.

Key Findings

- Most health systems (73%) either currently use a software tool for surgical instrument tracking and management (64%) or are actively in the process of purchasing a software tool to assist with this function (9%).

- Among the health systems currently using or in the process of implementing a software tool, the most common vendor is Censis (62%).

- Health systems noted financing, workflow changes, or having no known issues with current processes as primary barriers to software tool adoption.

Results

Most health systems (73%) are currently using or actively in the process of purchasing a software tool for surgical instrument tracking and management, while the remaining health systems (27%) perform this process manually (Figure 1). Health systems using or purchasing surgical instrument management software cited the following as top reasons for implementing these products: better asset management (67%) and higher quality operating room experience (33%). Among the health systems currently using or in the process of implementing a software tool, the most common vendors include Censis (62%), T-DOC/Getinge (25%), and SPM/Microsystems (13%) (Figure 2). Among health systems not currently using a tool, barriers to adoption include financing (25%), required workflow changes (25%), or no known issues with their current process (25%).

Health systems using software tools were more likely to say that their health system's current process for surgical instrument management is efficient or very efficient. Among the 81% of health system executives who describe their health system's current surgical instrument management process as efficient (63%) or very efficient (18%), the majority (64%) are using a software vendor to manage this process. Two health systems using software tools cited challenges, including difficulty scanning single instruments (as opposed to trays of instruments), and logistical hurdles with remodeling sites.

Figure 1. Which of the following best describes your process for surgical instrument tracking and management?

In process of purchasing or implementing sofware tool

Use a software tool

9

27

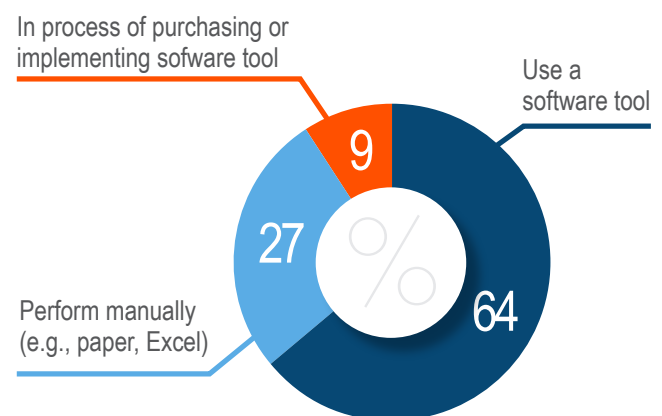Perform manually (e.g., paper, Excel)

64

Figure 2. If you use a software tool, which of the below vendors or products does your health system use?

Censis — 62%
T-Doc / Getinge — 25%
SPM / Microsystems — 13%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

Health systems are increasingly looking to software vendors for support with surgical instrument management. Of the health systems that do not currently use a software tool to assist with surgical instrument tracking and management, 75% say their health system is considering implementing a software tool in the next 1-3 years and that the tool does not need to integrate with their EMR.