

Patient Safety Alert

April 10, 2020

COVID–19 Product Substitution

In response to the COVID–19 pandemic, some rules and regulations around supply chain management have been relaxed to address unprecedented equipment shortages.

Facilities may receive emergency supplies from other facilities or different manufacturers than they normally use. This can create patient safety concerns due to staff using supplies that they are unfamiliar with.

Risk reduction strategies should be implemented to most safely manage the integration of equipment and supplies coming into the facility that are different than current stock.

Consider:

- Examine any new products to ensure compatibility with existing supplies, e.g., IV pumps and tubing sets.

- Try to limit the different types of equipment used in one area. For example: If three different types of ventilators are in use, try to restrict use of each one to a separate location, or have staff assigned to patients with the same type of ventilator.
- Educate staff on how to operate the equipment and create a process to answer questions and demonstrate use prior to implementation.
- Keep instruction manuals in easily accessible locations.
- Track near misses and safety events for future evaluation.

If you have any questions regarding equipment/supply substitution, contact your patient safety liaison or email PatientSafetyAuthority@pa.gov.