Reprocessing continues to be one of the most impactful sustainability initiatives employed by U.S. hospitals. This has long been the case, but the message is gaining momentum. The Association for Medical Device Reprocessors (AMDR) estimates that if just one or two percent of all medical devices labeled by the manufacturer as single-use were able to be reprocessed, the U.S. healthcare industry would save nearly $2 billion every year. The savings potential is immense, a reality that affirms how the greatest challenge to achieving smart healthcare—efficient spending through quality care—is one of resource management.

How can medical technology companies offer value to hospital partners amid a challenging landscape of rising costs and regulatory uncertainty? There is now increasing consensus that reprocessing programs are a big part of the answer. This wasn’t always the case.

Stryker distinguished itself among its peers in December 2009 by becoming the first original equipment manufacturer to recognize reprocessing as an essential strategy for reducing costs without compromising care, and acquired Ascent Healthcare Solutions. Stryker saw the strategic value of reprocessing, and understood that it complemented, not threatened, the OEMs’ legacy of device innovation and technological advancement. A second milestone for the industry occurred last fall, when Ethicon-Endo Surgery (EES), a historic reprocessing foe, acquired SterilMed. That reprocessing’s largest critic embraced the practice as a sound business strategy was both symbolic and a major leap forward for the future of smart healthcare. The reprocessing industry is changing, and though the economic, political and regulatory challenges facing healthcare are daunting, Stryker is proud to be on the forefront of change as we move toward a culture of responsible resource management.

The relationship between hospitals and suppliers is evolving to respond to a new economy. Reprocessing programs are increasingly attractive to hospitals seeking value-based

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The healthcare industry is saving hundreds of millions of dollars each year through reprocessing programs. These are savings that may enable hospitals and surgery centers to reallocate financial resources to initiatives that enhance patient care, such as hiring more nurses or purchasing much-needed equipment. Reprocessing not only supports financial viability, it’s also the right thing to do for the environment. Its programs help hospitals divert millions of pounds of medical waste from landfills each year. As hospitals change their preferences for products and invest in new technologies, Stryker aims to provide its customers with the most relevant products, services and comprehensive programs that support the conservation of hospital and environmental resources.

Stryker Sustainability Solutions is pleased to announce its most recent 510(k) clearances to reprocess the LigaSure Impact™ Hand Activated Sealer/Divider originally manufactured by Covidien and the 2515 NAV Variable Electrophysiology Catheter originally manufactured by Biosense Webster. These clearance additions enable Stryker to lead the charge in bringing sustainability solutions to healthcare providers.

**Stryker Reprocessed LigaSure Impact™ Hand Activated Sealer/Divider**

Stryker’s clearance for the LigaSure Impact™ Hand Activated Sealer/Divider represents an immediate savings opportunity of up to 45% of the cost of the original device (typically $720), providing hospitals and surgery centers with a solution to more effectively manage device expenses and contribute to the bottom line.

The Stryker Reprocessed LigaSure Impact™ Hand Activated Sealer/Divider is a bipolar device designed for use in open surgical procedures with the ForceTriad™ energy platform. It is cleared for use to seal vessels up to and including 7mm in diameter, lymphatics, tissue bundles and to seal pulmonary vasculature when used in conjunction with the ForceTriad™ energy platform. Surgical specialties in which the Reprocessed Hand Activated Sealer/Divider may be used include: general surgery, gynecological surgery and urological surgery. The most common procedures in which the Reprocessed Hand Activated Sealer/Divider is utilized include:

- colectomy
- abdominal or vaginal hysterectomy
- partial or complete cystectomy
- nephrectomy

The Stryker Reprocessed LigaSure Impact™ Hand Activated Sealer/Divider is reprocessed according to validated processes that include: disassembly, cleaning and decontamination, inspection, testing, packaging and sterilization. Each device undergoes multiple inspections and tests to verify that it is safe and effective for another patient use. Each device is marked using biocompatible dye in accordance with the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act (MDUFMA) and a bar code for traceability prior to sterilization with Ethylene Oxide (EO) to a minimum Sterility Assurance Level of 10^{-6} ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11135-1:2007.

**For more information**

Please contact your local Stryker Sustainability Solutions Sales Representative.
Acquisition Signals Big Win for the Future of Smart Health Care Delivery

In the November 2011 issue of DOTmed Business News, Dr. Lars Thording discusses how Ethicon-Endo Surgery’s acquisition of reprocessor SterilMed is both symbolic in its irony, and a significant leap forward for the future of smart healthcare. Relationships between OEMs and reproprocessors have historically been strained. Some OEMs have resorted to campaigns criticizing the safety and efficacy of reprocessing. Today, some OEMs have exhibited a shift in mindset, recognizing that reprocessing is a safe and effective solution for their healthcare partners. In fact, all 17 U.S. News & World Report “Honor Roll” hospitals rely on reprocessing to achieve savings, and both Stryker, and now Ethicon, have been leading the way. To read the article, visit: http://tinyurl.com/7tfbfg3.

Huge Savings Shows Sustainability isn’t just for the Environmentalists

Just like hospitals and health systems, surgery centers can achieve huge savings with reprocessing. The administrator and director of nursing at a Florida surgery center cited reprocessing single-use devices as an environmental and financial best practice in her organization. The surgery center saves 40% to 50% on every device it buys back, which saves the facility approximately $45,000 a year in disposable purchasing costs. Buying reprocessed devices has also reduced the amount of regulated waste generated by the facility by 75%. To read the article, visit: http://tinyurl.com/6oblvf4.

Stryker Reprocessed 2515 NAV Variable Electrophysiology Catheter

Stryker is the only reprocessor with the FDA 510(k) clearance (K112292) to reprocess the 2515 NAV Variable EP Catheter originally manufactured by Biosense Webster. Stryker Sustainability Solutions’ clearance, which includes 12-electrode (LN122515CT) and 22-electrode (LN222515CT) models, represents an immediate savings opportunity of an average of 40% OFF of the cost of the original device (typically $1500 - $1600), providing hospitals with a solution for more effectively managing device costs.

The Reprocessed 2515 NAV Variable Electrophysiology Catheter is specially designed for electrophysiological mapping of the atria of the heart when used with the CARTO® 3 EP Navigation System and a reference device. This EP catheter is equipped with a location-sensor, allowing the rapid creation of CT-like images drawn as quickly as the EP catheter is moved. This catheter features a Nitinol loop design that allows the expansion and contraction of the loop to custom-fit veins with different sizes, ranging from 25mm to 15mm diameter (± 15%).

Because the catheter may be visualized through the CARTO® navigation system, there is decreased reliance on fluoroscopy and cases can be performed with less x-ray exposure to the patient. These features give electrophysiologists additional flexibility as they work to improve procedure outcomes.

The Stryker reprocessed 2515 NAV Variable Electrophysiology Catheter is reprocessed according to validated processes that include: cleaning and decontamination, inspection, testing, packaging and sterilization. Each device undergoes multiple inspections, electrical profiling and continuity testing to verify that it is safe and effective for another patient use. Each device is marked using individualized serial numbers in accordance with the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act (MDUFMA) for traceability prior to sterilization with Ethylene Oxide (EO) to a minimum Sterility Assurance Level of 10^-6 ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11135-1:2007.
purchasing platforms. Reimbursement rates are constantly declining—the purchasing alliance Premier says healthcare providers can expect cuts in reimbursement payments of up to 15 to 20 percent of current levels by 2017. Similarly, participation in group purchasing organizations is up, and more than 50 percent of U.S. hospitals now belong to integrated delivery networks (IDNs) to share savings and improve bargaining power. Hospital executives no longer view cost-reduction measures as a hindrance or compromise, but as a critical part of their business plan.

That executives, supply chain directors and even surgeons embrace reprocessing programs means tremendous strides have been made in the awareness of reprocessing, and how it helps redirect significant savings to patient care. Though awareness is an excellent start, there is plenty of work to be done before we can realize the full savings potential of third-party reprocessing.

The Stryker Sustainability Solutions team understands that the secret to maximum savings lies in the integrity of the program, the quality of the vendor, and compliance with mutually determined performance standards. Though it’s a good thing that more reprocessing programs are available in the marketplace, it’s critical for customers to differentiate between reprocessors and understand how they can utilize their program for maximum success. Choosing the right reprocessor optimizes your savings potential.

To ensure the best results, hospitals should ask the following key questions throughout the life of their reprocessing program.

The best reprocessors are always available as a resource and committed partner in your hospital’s quest to realize meaningful bottom-line savings.

- Is the collection program designed to ensure optimal compliance?
- Is executive leadership engaged in the success of the program?
- Do hospital staff understand reprocessing and support its implementation?
- Does the reprocessor understand that, ultimately, program compliance will generate more savings over time than initial device pricing?
- How will reprocessed devices integrate into the supply chain?

The reprocessing landscape is changing at a fast clip. Stryker has taken the lead in the industry by offering solutions to providers that reduce supply costs without sacrificing innovation. To this end, there’s plenty more in store in the relentless pursuit of smart healthcare. Stay tuned, and happy new year.

Tamara Cutler is Stryker’s vice president of public affairs.