

Association Roundtable

*Insights and advice
from leaders of local and
state biomedical associations*



What is the biggest medical device challenge your members say they are facing, and how are they trying to solve it?



"We are extremely challenged to reduce technology support costs. Many of us are expected to reduce our same store budgets by 15-20% while maintaining or improving safety levels/uptime—all this while regulatory requirements and expectations are being imposed on us. This is not new for biomed. We have been

identifying cost reduction opportunities and right-sizing our programs for years. We are meeting this challenge by supporting AAMI and others in understanding appropriate regulatory expectations. At our facilities, we are using benchmarks, such as support costs/equipment value, to show improvement in support cost efficiencies. To get there, we continue to look at insourcing and outsourcing opportunities and alternative approaches to maintenance. However, to truly achieve the types of reductions being requested of us, it is clear that we must collaborate with clinical and financial leaders at our facilities to identify non-profitable systems and/or service lines for decommissioning and review and adjust the scope of services provided to the communities we serve. Many of our senior leaders recognize this and are looking to us to help in the decision making."

*Gary Barkov
Vice President
Clinical Engineering Association of Illinois*



"The biggest medical device challenge our members are facing right now is integrating the output of different pieces of medical equipment into the electronic medical record keeping. The next challenge they face is finding ways to get information technology (IT) professionals and biomed to work together."

*Russ Magoon
President
Oregon Biomedical Association*



"One of the biggest medical device challenges our members say they are facing and trying to solve is asset tracking. Several hospitals have installed asset tracking systems and some have prioritized equipment to try to meet The Joint Commission standards. Some members have added the responsibility to the departments assigned."

*Horace Hunter
Executive Director
Georgia Biomedical Instrumentation Society*



"The biggest challenge we are facing is the ever-increasing need for medical devices to be networked throughout the hospital and across hospital systems. This brings on multiple challenges—from network security and antivirus protection to patient safety. In an age in which capital is limited, it is hard to keep medical devices up to date from an operating system and security patch perspective. Systems such as centralized patient monitors may not support active antivirus scanning or allow for automatic updates. Automatic updates or antivirus scanning could result in system instability and medical device software shutdown. Patient safety concerns can escalate quickly if there is a lack of communication between clinical engineering and IT. These groups have to work together to understand the picture as a whole and not just medical devices and IT infrastructure. We have to be able to communicate with each other and understand each other's technical languages. We also have to work together on solutions, such as determining the best method to protect medical devices from virus attacks when they don't support antivirus software. It is truly going to take working as a team."

*David Simpson, CBET
President
Kentucky Association for Medical Instrumentation*