



T-DOC is the backbone of our sterilization service.

At Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, a member of Trinity Health Of New England, located in Hartford, CT, United States, T-DOC, Getinge's sterile supply management and traceability solution, has been managing sterile goods for almost 20 years now. T-DOC helps manage the sterile supply workflow all the way to the hospital's operating rooms, providing quality assurance and complete control. It also plays a vital role in building skills among CSSD staff and ensures a smooth collaboration with the surgical department.



John Jorge, SPD Director, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, a member of Trinity Health Of New England, Hartford, CT, USA

"T-DOC is an indispensable aid for us. It is to our sterilization and surgical process what the spine is to the human body."

As a level 1 Trauma Center, Saint Francis Hospital is tasked with providing the highest level of surgical care to trauma patients. Efficient processes for surgical instruments in sterilization and in the operating rooms are, quite literally, a matter of life and death. Here, T-DOC plays a crucial role in ensuring smooth collaboration between the Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) and the surgical department.

Saint Francis Hospital deploys T-DOC throughout its CSSD, where it is the foundation of instrument set assembly and tracking of sterile goods on their journey from assembly to use in the operating room and back to the CSSD for reprocessing.

Part of Trinity Health Of New England health system, Saint Francis Hospital began its T-DOC journey in 2001 when it merged four CSSDs into one and needed a technical solution that would bring the sites together. Back then, reprocessing operated in different silos, each of which acted more or less independently. Merging the departments was a daunting task, John Jorge recalls, because managers were nervous about handing over control to a central department.

"We needed to give the individual sites the assurance that we had the ways and means to keep control of their instruments. We wanted to offer something better than what we had known until then, so we started with T-DOC's basic scanning activities. Over the years, we have steadily added more functionalities," John says.

Saint Francis Hospital has recently added T-DOC's web functionality, a feature that allows clinical staff to log into T-DOC themselves to trace and order a needed instrument. This eliminates a phone call; instead the order prints in the CSSD, where staff can respond immediately. This rapid response has helped forge a close relationship between the CSSD and the surgical department.

John says: "We interact all the time, we have team-building sessions, there is instant communication, and we have morning huddles together. The clinical team have an appreciation for what the CSSD staff does that you don't see in many other hospitals. We have earned a great deal of respect and trust from our surgeons and clinical staff and T-DOC is part of that. By allowing us to give answers in less than two minutes, it really builds trust. The surgical staff know we can deliver."

The system's tracking ability plays a crucial role in the process of minimizing cross-infection risk, for example from the contagious brain disorder Creutzfeldt-Jakob-Disease (CJD). "In the US, any instruments used on patients found to be suffering from CJD are incinerated. But what if the patient's disease is only discovered months later, for example during an autopsy?" John asks.

"Using T-DOC, the CSSD can pinpoint instruments that were used on a patient – and the names of any other patients on whom those instruments might have been used during subsequent surgeries."

Saint Francis Hospital:

No. of beds:	617
No. of employees:	3,431
No. of inpatients/year:	30,910
No. of outpatients/year:	283,182
Average length of stay:	4.2 days
No. of ORs :	32
No. of surgical procedures/year:	21,134
No. of instruments/ trays sterilized/year:	364,898
No. of T-DOC users/super users:	47

At the time of writing, Trinity Health Of New England is expanding its T-DOC system across additional locations including; Lighthouse Surgery Center in Hartford, Connecticut and Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts and soon expects to add Saint Mary's Hospital in Waterbury, Connecticut.

T-DOC helps us deliver high quality instruments and supplies at the right time and place

"With T-DOC, we can keep the surgery going rather than having to delay or cancel, which would cause enormous anxiety to the patients and their relatives. That's a huge benefit."

According to John, T-DOC has greatly reduced errors when assembling instrument sets. "Even if you are an inexperienced assembly technician, T-DOC allows you to assemble. If you don't recognize the instrument, T-DOC will show you an image of it on the screen. That visualization is crucial as far as I'm concerned because it minimizes errors."

"T-DOC has streamlined our instrument management process and acts as our safety net. T-DOC reacts if we do something out of sequence and provides such a high level of assurance that it prevents mistakes."

From time to time, a surgeon may accidentally contaminate an instrument. When this happens the surgical department will reach out to the CSSD to ask for a replacement. In the CSSD, staff uses T-DOC to locate a replacement immediately with a couple of clicks. "With T-DOC, this process is so fast and ultimately saves us a lot of otherwise wasted time," John says.

"We monitor a variety of key metrics, using T-DOC to drive lean processes with minimal waste," John explains. The hospital measures sterilizer utilization, instrument turnaround time and also turnaround times between procedures, where the CSSD has specific targets.

Saint Francis Hospital tallies all its scanning activities at the end of the month. "We compare this to worked hours, which gives us the average worked hours for every scanned activity," John says. "I can also track the assembler and the records and the reason for any error. By being able to pinpoint a mistake, we can learn from it and correct it for the future". John also uses T-DOC to produce reports on staff performance and productivity. He uses the data it generates on the price of instrument sets and on sterilizer utilization.

"T-DOC tracks everything and helps us to improve our accuracy, efficiency and ability to deliver."

"I am an enthusiastic user of T-DOC's Messenger functionality," John explains. "It informs my assembly technicians if an instrument set is viable, even if it's missing an instrument. This may be the case if an instrument has been damaged and is awaiting repair or replacement." T-DOC's messaging functionality not only informs the technician; it also lets the operating room know if a tray is missing an instrument – if the tray can still be used for the intended surgery. T-DOC is interfaced to Epic to share the surgery schedule as well as PeopleSoft to manage supplies. "These interfaces increase communication across the departments, prevent double-efforts and ensure a high quality of data accuracy," John says.

"Would I recommend T-DOC to other hospitals? Definitely! We are a large hospital, and I cannot imagine running an operation of our size without T-DOC."

About DHS

T-DOC is part of Getinge's Digital Health Solutions, which support hospitals in ensuring more efficient surgical, patient and sterile supply workflows. Though each of the IT solutions covers unique areas of the hospital, they come together in and around the operating room. As a result, tasks are managed in due time and the hospital becomes safe, streamlined and efficient for both staff and patients.

Partnering up with Getinge you can experience benefits such as:

- Scalable, best-in-class solutions tailored to a hospital's specific needs
- Maximized organizational and operational efficiencies
- Increased quality of care through advanced hospital control
- Regulatory compliance through flexible solutions
- Improved working environment through process optimizations
- Data stability and seamless integration with existing IT infrastructure



Digital Health Solutions

Getinge offers a wide range of products, solutions and services that support you through the entire clinical pathway. Our goal is to help you provide excellent care without ever compromising on quality or safety.

With DHS, we offer you a safer, integrated and better utilized facility that supports greater consistency and efficiency, enabling healthcare professionals to focus on delivering the best possible care for patients.

T-DOC is part of our Digital Health Solutions (DHS) offering. It is the top-of-the-line sterile supply management and traceability solution that brings complete overview and integration to the instrument supply chain for the highest standards of safety and utilization, enabling the best possible care for patients.

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