

Editor's Corner

I am not sure to whom the credit is due for the saying - *Take pride in how far you have come and have faith in how far you can go!* But it is reflective of the feelings of most clinical engineers (CEs) including me – the pride of being a practicing CE.

I am routinely in continuous communication with professional colleagues all over the world. A couple of evenings ago, I was chatting with one such colleague who works in a mid-west hospital in the United States. He is known as a caring manager with vast experience. He is hardworking and expects no less from his CEs and biomedical equipment technicians. During our chats, he was never at a loss for words and always centered his talks on the latest sports scores (especially if his favorite team won) and about finding ways to collaborate with clinical, administration, and IT departments to improve his program's impact on patient care outcomes while at the same time saving on hospital expenses. After years of these conversations, I could predict the flow. The topics did not change much but the order did and there was a greater emphasis on his first passion – CE. He is a caring manager of the first kind.

However, a couple of nights ago, our chat was completely different. His conversation was short, there was no Monday morning quarterbacking or any sports chat at all. After a short while, I quickly realized that he was not himself. I asked him what was going on as I found him to be so different. His spirits were up but his response shocked me.

Myself, I practice CE in the largest medical center in the world (the Texas Medical Center) where we've been through hurricanes, floods, and evacuations. As far as I can remember, I had never witnessed a colleague's behavior turn as his did that evening. He shared the demands of his work that were similar to those that I

had been hearing from many other colleagues over the previous 14 weeks. During these abnormal times, he had been working an average of 10 hours a day almost seven days a week. He was lost in an environment created by the ever-changing knowledge around COVID-19, about its spread, diagnosis, care protocols, and the reality of shortages of equipment and supplies – and was constantly challenged to quickly come up with workarounds and safe solutions. But it was the second part that shocked me. There are many challenges around the reuse of single-use protective gear, to the support of multiple patients from a single ventilator, to devising isolation care spaces. At this point, he felt that maybe he was not doing enough for his patients. The burden was heavy. Successful solutions needed to be trialed and were expected in rapid succession, yet the resources of both qualified labor and appropriate technology were in short supply.

I know him and his program, it runs like a Swiss clock. Yet he was frustrated by not being able to do more. By any measure, he is one of the silent heroes, one of the CE professionals who use their competencies, experience, and open their hearts every day in the committed pursuit to provide safe and efficient patient-ready technology that supports the mission of their organization. CEs perform their many tasks all over the world 24×7×365 but their critical contribution mostly goes unrecognized. The CE profession has certainly evolved and has begun to enjoy more input into the needed and effective programs they provide and manage, especially during this present huge demand for CE knowledge and leadership. However, we still have a long way to go to increase the awareness of the public and medical decision-makers. They need to know that by including the unique expertise of competent CE practitioners within the healthcare system's decisions, improved safety and quality will follow. This will result in healthcare delivery that is more accessible to a larger volume of patients - that would not be possible otherwise.

It is no mistake that the *Journal* made the decision to dedicate our front-page cover to recognizing all CE professionals. These are the people that are working deliberately to maximize the availability of proper technology and ensure that care providers have what they depend on to manage and help their patients. In other words: to always have the needed safe technology in “patient-ready state,” always appropriately selected, and in optimal operational performance administered under frugal use of resources.

As you all know, this part we are already delivering. So, what else could a hospital administrator wish for? If they think of anything, we are listening!

BIG thanks to my colleagues and all the CE heroes all over the world!

Today, tomorrow, together!

Dr. Yadin David

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yadin David", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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