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America's top hospitals use reprocessed medical devices Find devices to be safe and effective

Seventeen of the eighteen hospitals named by *U.S. News & World Report* to its 2007 Honor Roll reprocess with Association of Medical Device Reprocessors (AMDR) member companies, announced Daniel J. Vukelich, executive director of AMDR today.

"The fact that the top hospitals in the country use reprocessed devices is a testament to their safety and efficiency and this needs to be recognized by Massachusetts legislators," Vukelich said. "Massachusetts is in the midst of a public policy debate, which pits the medical device reprocessing industry against the much larger original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) lobby. At stake is the right of hospitals to save desperately needed healthcare dollars and keep unnecessary waste out of landfills—without risking patient safety."

The reprocessing of "single use" devices (SUDs) is fully regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Reprocessed devices marketed in the U.S. are as safe and as effective as original equipment. AMDR's members now serve all ten of the top ten heart hospitals and all ten of the top ten orthopedic hospitals in the nation, as ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* magazine.

In the last decade, medical device reprocessing has taken a serious financial bite out of the manufacturer's profits. AMDR companies have safely reprocessed over 50 million medical devices, in some cases arbitrarily labeled by the manufacturer for "single use." It has also had a substantial impact on the price of original equipment. For example, biopsy forceps used to cost a hospital about \$49; after hospitals started reprocessing them, the manufacturers dropped the price of the original devices to about \$15.

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"Original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) are misleading legislators with tactics aimed at scaring them into passing legislation that will adversely affect the ability of Massachusetts hospitals to use safe and cost effective reprocessed medical devices," said Vukelich. Several OEMs are headquartered in Massachusetts including Smith & Nephew Endoscopy and Boston Scientific.

Having the choice of purchasing reprocessed devices has been one important strategy for waste minimization and cost containment for hospitals. Vukelich also noted that the decision by 63 Commonwealth hospitals to use reprocessed medical devices has diverted 26 tons of medical waste from landfills, including landfills located in Massachusetts.

Vukelich and other supporters of medical device reprocessing recently testified before the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Public Health in opposition to HB2233 and SB1338. Those submitting testimony included representatives from Health Care Without Harm; the Massachusetts Hospital Association; The Lahey Clinic; the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys; the Massachusetts Organization of Nurse Executives (MONE), the Massachusetts Orthopaedic Association and the Massachusetts Medical Society.

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