

ECRI Evaluates Defibrillators and Offers Valuable Purchasing Insight

Defibrillators can be one of the most important medical devices used by clinicians and emergency medical services in saving lives.

ECRI (www.ecri.org), an independent, not for profit health services research organisation, offers valuable purchasing insight for this lifesaving technology in a recent issue of its monthly journal *Health Devices*. This recent issue features ECRI's comparative evaluation of defibrillators, including the latest product ratings for ten models.

Defibrillators are used primarily to treat patients in cardiac arrest. ECRI's *Health Devices* evaluation will help healthcare providers choose a model (or set of models) that performs well and best suits the facility's deployment strategies. In this study, ECRI presents test results and ratings for two new models—the Medtronic ERS Lifepak 20 and the Philips HeartStart MRx. ECRI also summarizes and updates its earlier findings for eight additional models still on the market, including products sold by GE Medical Systems, Medtronic ERS, Philips, Welch Allyn, and Zoll Medical Corporation. ECRI based its ratings on each model's desirability for in-hospital applications, such as general and transport use.

While the evaluated models performed well against most of ECRI's test criteria, some models were found preferable to others. For example, ECRI recommends models (or closely related sets of models) that can be configured to meet the various defibrillation needs of all care areas throughout a healthcare organisation. Several of the currently available models allow this type of standardization.

All issues of *Health Devices*, ECRI's flagship publication for healthcare technology decision makers, include a section derived from ECRI's International Problem Reporting System. Articles in this section describe medical device hazards investigated by ECRI and includes specific recommendations to help healthcare facilities minimize risks. This month's problem reporting section describe how improperly connected cords can lead to patient burns on cool/heat mattresses and include a separate report on fan motor malfunctions in mechanical washers/disinfectors.

For information on purchasing single or bulk copies of the June 2005 issue of *Health Devices*, or for more information about membership, contact ECRI by telephone at +44 (0) 1707 871511; by e-mail at info@ecri.org.uk; by fax at +44 (0) 1707 393138 or by mail at ECRI European Office, Weltech Centre, Ridgeway, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 2AA, UK; or by visiting www.ecri.org.uk

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