



MEDICAL

CEDARS-SINAI SAVES \$70,000 ON \$100,000 SPEND IN POST-OPERATIVE BRA CONVERSION

MANUFACTURER OVERVIEW

World-renowned Cedars-Sinai Medical Center is a Magnet®-designated, nonprofit academic medical center with 886 licensed beds. Cedars-Sinai was named to the Honor Roll in the 2013-14 issue of America’s Best Hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*, with 12 of the medical center’s specialties rated among the finest in the nation. For the 18th year in a row, the hospital won National Research Corp.’s Consumer Choice Award for providing the highest quality medical care in the Los Angeles region, based on a survey of area households.

“I encourage any facility that hasn’t considered this category to do so because, while it’s not a category that typically comes to mind, there could definitely be money left on the table.”

— Kathy Azarbarzin, Value Analysis Coordinator
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

CHALLENGE

They say that great minds think alike. That’s certainly true for two Cedars-Sinai Medical Center staff members, Kathy Azarbarzin, value analysis coordinator, and Maurice Parrish, purchasing surgical contract administrator. In mid-2013, unbeknownst to each other, both were searching for a more cost-effective agreement for post-operative bras — Parrish on behalf of the operating room and Azarbarzin for both the cancer center and inpatient side of the hospital.

When Cedars-Sinai began ordering post-operative bras from the hospital pharmacy more than two decades ago, the order quantity was fairly low, as were the prices. But the pharmacy’s prices continued to increase over time. So Parrish opted to put the product line out for bid.

SOLUTION

Around the same time, Novation contracted supplier Tytex Inc. approached Azarbarzin, offering Cedars-Sinai a significant savings on its CareFix™ product line of post-surgical bras, available under NOVAPLUS®, Novation’s private-label brand. Based on the key values of comfort, functionality and ease-of-use, CareFix post-surgical seamless bras are designed for the weeks immediately following breast surgery, when the skin is still tender and sensitive. All products are latex-free and OEKO-TEX® Standard 100 certified.

PROFILE

SERVICE PROVIDER

Tytex

OVERVIEW

Tytex provides niche medical textile products that help improve quality of life for people worldwide. A long-standing tradition of innovation and quality excellence makes Tytex a world market leader within its specialist field. Its business philosophy of “making health care more human” marks its commitment to helping improve users’ quality of life. Tytex sets industry standards of quality and usability, using creativity, innovation and years of experience to push performance to new levels for the benefit of users and company stakeholders.

NOVAPLUS, Novation’s private-label brand exclusively for members of VHA, UHC, Provista and Children’s Hospital Association, delivers the best financial value and quality on the products and services that hospitals use most frequently. With more than 1,800 individual line items, the NOVAPLUS brand encompasses a broad range of products and services, including anesthesia, diagnostic imaging, food, laboratory, medical, orthopedics, pharmaceutical, respiratory and surgical.



"I was focused on other areas at the time, but then I ran the usage numbers and saw that there was a substantial cost savings with Tytex," Azarbarzin said. Through the NOVAPLUS contract for Tytex post-operative bras, members can save up to 27 percent and receive significant member returns.

Though she and Parrish combined standardization efforts, each went about testing the products differently. Parrish's team hosted an open house for surgeons that featured Tytex and two other vendors. The event allowed surgeons to see and compare all the post-operative bras being considered. At the event's conclusion, all were asked to fill out a form indicating which bras were acceptable. Tytex received a positive response from all surgeons.

Pinning down cancer center and inpatient physicians proved more challenging for Azarbarzin. "It took longer than I thought it would because there were a lot of players who had to sign off on it, including physicians from the cancer center, plastics, our off-site patient surgery center and elsewhere in the health system — and everyone's buy-in was necessary before we could make the change," she said. "It's not a situation where you can get all of these physicians in a room together, so we had to catch them individually between cases and ask them to evaluate the new bras." The value analysis team chose approximately 20 "superuser" physicians who used a high volume of post-operative bras, with the idea that the remaining physicians would follow suit.

RESULTS

Cedars-Sinai standardized to Tytex's CareFix post-surgical bras in late 2013, saving approximately \$70,000 on \$100,000 in annual spend. The health system also standardized from 23 bras to 10.

Though the conversion is relatively new, things are progressing well. "The conversion took longer than we expected, just because of the difficulty of securing everyone's buy-in," Azarbarzin said. "But Tytex was extremely patient with us, which we really appreciate. I encourage any facility that hasn't considered this category to do so because, while it's not a category that typically comes to mind, there could definitely be money left on the table."

"It was a great conversion, things are running smoothly and we're happy with the products and service we're receiving from Tytex," Parrish said. "Tytex has a vast array of sizes and styles, so I see us staying with them for a long time."

