

The VALUE of a Sustainable and Resilient Technical Service Network and Its Importance in Times of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The VALUE of a Sustainable and Resilient Technical Service Network and Its Importance in Times of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Carsten Hornig¹, Ellen Busink¹, Buchr Lababidi², Michael Luckau¹, Thomas Pohl², Christian Mutz³

¹ Fresenius Medical Care Deutschland GmbH, Bad Homburg, Germany; ² Fresenius Medical Care Middle East, Dubai HealthCare City, United Arab Emirates
³ Fresenius Medical Care Deutschland GmbH, Schweinfurt, Germany

Objectives

As a life-sustaining therapy haemodialysis must be delivered continuously three times per week, also during COVID-19. Technical services, although often not acknowledged, are an essential part to ensure access to and continuity of care delivery. This study assessed the value and robustness of a technical service network (TSN) during crisis times.

Methods

This assessment was performed according to the health technology assessment (HTA) framework (safety, efficacy, ethical, societal, organizational, economic value), analyzing the operating procedures established within a TSN and the specific measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Results

The following procedures implemented in the TSN were identified to be immediately prerequisites for a rapid adaptation to COVID-19:

- 1) constant updating of technical service standards (ISO 9001, ISO 13485 & MDR based);
- 2) regular evaluation of compliance to standards of local organizations (4D expert audits in 2018);
- 3) quarterly evaluation of KPI's (in 24 countries);
- 4) functional community exchanging best practices and cooperating as a learning organization (36 events in 2019).

Along the lines of HTA, specific measures enabled a rapid adaptation to COVID-19 and delivered safety, efficacy, societal, organizational, economic value:

- 1) provision of rapid-guidance for processes impacted by COVID-19 (e.g. technical safety checks, calibration of measuring intervals, training);
- 2) implementation of specific hygiene guidelines;
- 3) development of working models aligned with governmental and customer requirements.

Etically, by rapidly adapting to COVID-19, the TSN enabled all customers to maintain operational capabilities and continue care delivery. Further, access to care for COVID-19 patients was enabled by installing additional devices on ICU's (2.5-fold more installations Mar-Jan 2020 vs. 2018).

Technicians at Work

Conclusions

- 1) The TSN demonstrated to remain robust and ensure continuity during the COVID-19 crisis, as a crucial piece to care delivery.
- 2) The TSN contributed to relieve the burden of healthcare professionals, allowing them to focus on their core task, patient care.

CONTACT AUTHOR GET POSTER

Carsten Hornig¹, Ellen Busink¹, Buchr Lababidi², Michael Luckau¹, Thomas Pohl¹,
Christian Mutz³

¹ Fresenius Medical Care Deutschland GmbH, Bad Homburg, Germany; ² Fresenius Medical Care Middle East, Dubai HealthCare City, United Arab Emirates

³ Fresenius Medical Care Deutschland GmbH, Schweinfurt, Germany

PRESENTED AT:

Virtual ISPOR Europe 2020

16-19 November



OBJECTIVES

As a life-sustaining therapy, haemodialysis must be delivered continuously three times per week, also during COVID-19. Technical services, although often not acknowledged, are an essential part to ensure access to and continuity of care delivery. This study assessed the value and robustness of a technical service network (TSN) during crisis times.

METHODS

This assessment was performed according to the health technology assessment (HTA) framework (safety, efficacy, ethical, societal, organizational, economic value), analysing the operating procedures established within a TSN and the specific measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic.



RESULTS

The following procedures implemented in the TSN were identified to be mandatory prerequisites for a rapid adaptation to COVID-19:

- 1) constant updating of technical service standards (ISO 9001, ISO 13485 & MDR based);
- 2) regular evaluation of compliance to standards of local organisations (42 expert audits in 2019);
- 3) quarterly evaluation of KPI's (in 34 countries);
- 4) functional community exchanging best practices and cooperating as a learning organisation (36 events in 2019).

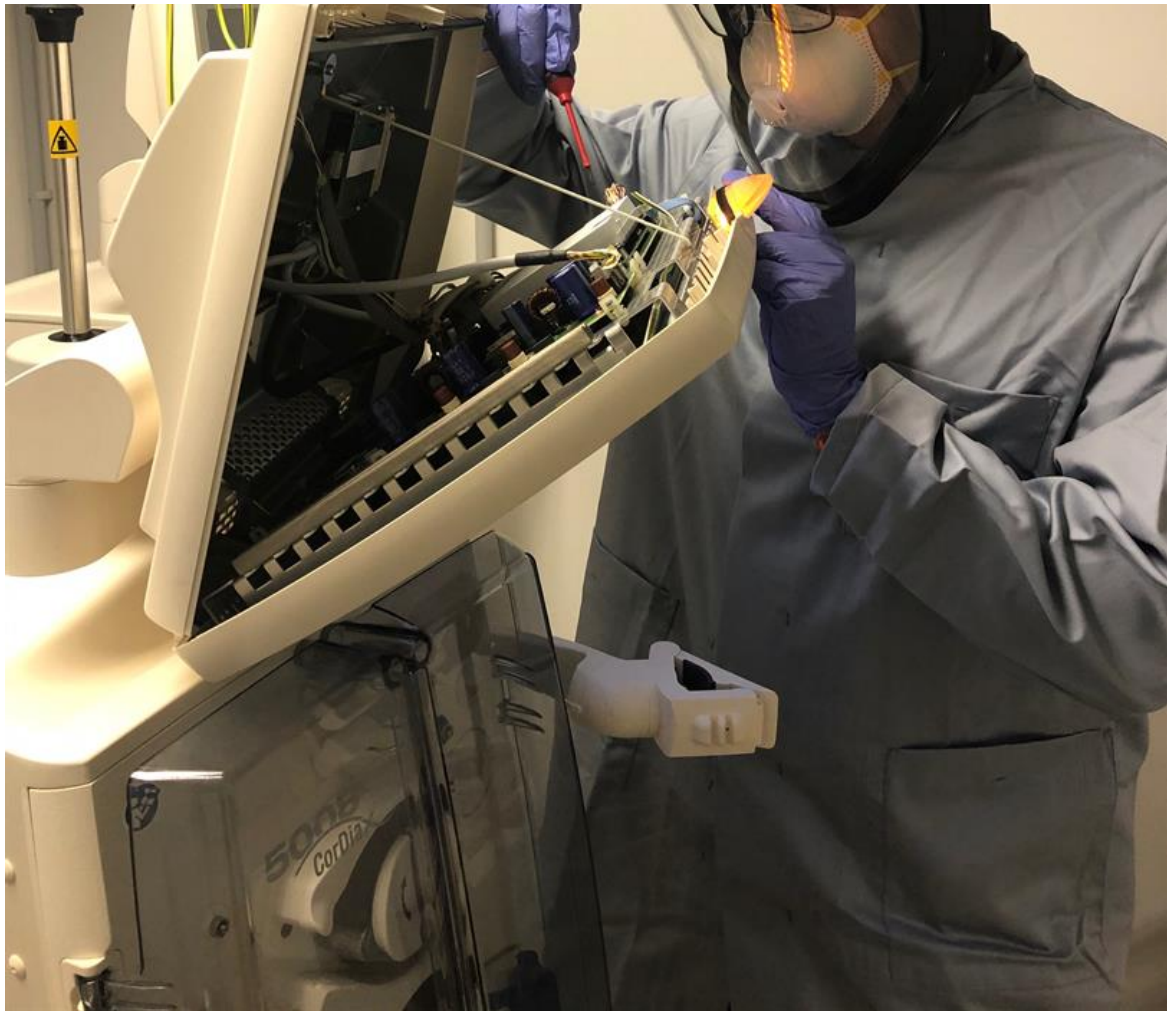
Along the lines of HTA, specific measures enabled a rapid adaptation to COVID-19 and delivered safety, efficacy, societal, organizational, economic value:

- 1) provision of expert-guidance for processes impacted by COVID-19 (e.g. technical safety checks, calibration of measuring intervals, training);
- 2) implementation of specific hygiene guidelines;
- 3) development of working models aligned with governmental and customer requirements.

Ethically, by rapidly adapting to COVID-19, the TSN enabled all customers to maintain operational capabilities and continue care delivery. Further, access to care for COVID-19 patients was enabled by installing additional devices on ICU's (2.5-fold more installations Mar-Jun 2020 vs. 2019).

TECHNICIANS AT WORK





CONCLUSIONS

1) The TSN demonstrated to remain robust and ensure continuity during the COVID-19 crisis, as a crucial piece to care delivery.

2) The TSN contributed to relieve the burden of healthcare professionals, allowing them to focus on their core task, patient care.