

The Morel Company and Sizewise Introduce a Breakthrough in Bariatric Safe Patient Handling

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Kansas City, Mo., and Batesville, Ind. – April 14, 2015 – Sizewise Worldwide and The Morel Company have formed an exclusive distribution agreement for the first bariatric system of its kind that can move a patient up in bed weighing up to 750 pounds with the touch of a button. Until now, traditional repositioning methods have been manual, requiring multiple staff members, therefore increasing the risk potential for patient and caregiver injuries.

“This agreement will only accelerate the pace at which Hercules will become the new standard of care for patient repositioning in healthcare,” said Bill Hillenbrand, president and CEO, of The Morel Company. “We are proud of how The Hercules Patient Repositioner has already provided value to patients, caregivers and hospitals, and we look forward to the larger national footprint that Sizewise can bring for this technology by offering it to customers that struggle with safe patient handling.”

“For the first time, the bed sheet becomes a transport device – it effortlessly glides across the mattress, carrying the patient on top. The caregiver simply pushes a button,” said Brad Frickey, executive vice president and chief manufacturing officer for Sizewise. Traditionally, protocols for moving patients safely up in bed include a more than 13 step process according to the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration. Now, with Hercules, that process has been collapsed into one step – push a button.

Stats & Facts

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends that no caregiver should manually lift more than 35 lbs. of a person’s body weight for a vertical lifting task. Musculoskeletal injury rates for clinical occupations have skyrocketed alongside rising CDC obesity rates. With more than 35,000 back and other injuries each year from lifting and moving patients, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that nursing assistants experience a 208 percent incidence of injury-related lost work days compared to only 72 percent for a construction laborer.

A recent investigative series on NPR examined the major issues that Hercules helps solve. “Something as simple as a sheet and roller mechanism had Sizewise customers in awe during trials that a concept so simple had never been thought of before,” Frickey said. The Hercules Patient Repositioning System™ was honored as a winner in the 2014 Medical Design Excellence Awards last summer, and in 2015 is expected to “change the way hospitals move patients up in bed forever,” he said.

How it Works

Hercules, a mattress replacement system, is easy to use and is comprised of three components:

- 1) The head-end automated drive unit and control panel;
- 2) The mattress or pressure redistribution support surface;
- 3) The repositioning sheet, an elongated fabric that rolls up into the drive unit each time the patient is moved up in the bed.

Since the patient moves with the sheet, the risk of friction that can cause skin shear and tears is virtually eliminated and interface pressures can be relieved in a matter of seconds. The sheet is composed of a soft and comfortable fabric with a length that allows for 8 to 10 repositionings per sheet.

Sizewise will offer this groundbreaking product to all major GPOs, IDNs and VA systems nationwide, as well as individual hospitals that are challenged with safe patient handling, particularly with bariatric populations. The Morel Company manufactures and sells the standard-sized Hercules system primarily to med-surg, critical care and labor and delivery departments in hospitals.