



Health Industry Business Communications Council

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Recent RFID Safety Concerns Reflect HIBCC's Position

Study finds that UHF from RFID technologies interfere with medical devices

PHOENIX, ARIZONA (June 26, 2008) *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) has published the results of a study of electromagnetic interference (EMI) from radio frequency identification (RFID) technologies with medical equipment and devices in critical care environments. The study, which was conducted in a controlled environment, tested the impact of ultra high frequency (UHF) from RFID and concluded that UHF interfered with medical devices in 63% of the tests conducted.

The JAMA published results are consistent with recommendations made by the Health Industry Business Communications Council (HIBCC), which in 2006 published "*Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in Healthcare: Benefits, Limitations, and Recommendations.*" In its report HIBCC recommended that 13.56 Mhz High Frequency (HF) be adopted for healthcare item level tagging specifically because its smaller read range is less likely to result in EMI with medical devices.

HIBCC's position is in contrast to other organizations and product vendors that proposed UHF for implementation on medical device labeling. "Here we have additional evidence of how commercially-based standards can create serious consequences if used in critical care healthcare environments," said Robert Hankin, Ph.D., President of HIBCC. He further stated that, "HIBCC was founded twenty-five years ago precisely because product identification standards that had been implemented in grocery stores and other retail environments were not adequate to meet the more stringent requirements for patient safety in hospitals and other health care environments. We applaud the recent emphasis on patient safety and other risk factors in the health care supply chain and we are sure the industry will take heed of studies such as this one."

For more information on "Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in Healthcare: Benefits, Limitations, Recommendations," please visit the RFID Resource Center at www.hibcc.org.

HIBCC is an industry-sponsored, ANSI-accredited standards development organization (SDO), established in 1984 by major national healthcare associations to develop and maintain technology standards for healthcare applications. HIBCC provides standards for uniform product identification as well as services for standardized customer identification. HIBCC extends its mission globally via IHIBCC, an international network of HIBCC offices. HIBCC plays a major advocacy and education role for the healthcare industry by providing a forum for the development of consensus-based standards.

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