

Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, New London, CT



Lawrence & Memorial selects the Dinex Smart•Therm System for Room Service Improves Press Ganey Scores to 97%

Increasing patient satisfaction is the mission and challenge in healthcare foodservice. At Lawrence & Memorial Hospital in New London Connecticut, Steven Stern (Director of Food, Nutrition and Support Services) and his team recently met the challenge by implementing a room service program using the Dinex Smart•Therm Induction System.



Steven Stern, Director of Food, Nutrition & Support.

The primary facility of Lawrence & Memorial is a 288 bed acute care hospital serving an average of 660 patient meals per day. It is the first community-based hospital in the region to offer hotel-style, in-room meal service. Nationally, this fast-growing innovation has also been implemented by 20% of the hospitals surveyed by the National Society for Healthcare Food Service Management (HFM). HFM is a professional society dedicated to food service professionals, their suppliers and healthcare executives nationwide and in Canada.



Room Service Call Center.



The Dinex Smart•Therm Station at Lawrence & Memorial Hospital.

Conversion & Implementation

Mr. Stern utilized the services of Room Service Technologies™ (a Romano Gatland Company) to facilitate the transition from a cook-chill conduction system to the room service system using the Dinex Smart•Therm Induction heating equipment. Lawrence & Memorial implemented an “upscale” menu but still realized a 5% decrease in food cost attributable, primarily, to the reduction of late trays. However, the primary goal was to increase patient satisfaction by allowing patients a choice of when and what they want to eat. Recipes are designed to be prepared within 6 minutes. Patients may call for room service meals between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

The Food and Nutrition staff delivers the meals within a 45 minute window, from the time they are called in by the patient. Servers, trained in customer service, and attired in waiter-style uniforms deliver the meals.

As part of the conversion to the room service system Lawrence & Memorial implemented a sophisticated Call Center to handle the room service requests and monitor diet compliance. Patient calls are taken by a staff of operators, trained to handle ***continued on reverse...***



A robot is used to deliver trays to the Emergency Room and Outpatient Services area.



Conversion & Implementation continued...

and expedite calls quickly and efficiently, while preserving a friendly and positive rapport with the patient.

According to Mr. Stern, the transition to room service has led to improved economy in staffing and production, but most importantly a significant increase in patient satisfaction. The Hospital's Press Ganey rating improved to an impressive 97%. The Food & Nutrition Department now receives numerous cards and letters thanking them for the fine food & service. Department morale is high as the employees take great pride in the quality of their product and high level of service.



Why Dinex?

Lawrence & Memorial reviewed several options and a variety of equipment systems during the research phase of the project.

The expertise and local support of the Dinex team was a major factor in the system selection. Dinex was able to provide a complete meal delivery system, including the innovative Smart•Therm induction charger and bases, customized patient menus, and traytop components including non-skid traycovers and elegant pocket-fold napkins. The Dinex team was also on hand to assist in equipment training and implementation.

People, Products & Service – The Dinex Difference!



**DINEX SMART•THERM®
ROOM SERVICE SOLUTIONS**



The Smart•Therm System by Dinex!

The state-of-the-art induction heating system from Dinex allows maximum flexibility and efficiency for any healthcare meal delivery system. It's ideal for room service operations, late trays and conventional trayline operation. The Smart•Therm System offers dependability and convenience for staff and improved patient satisfaction at mealtime.

The Smart•Therm features patented induction technology, with rapid cycle times and a revolutionary "Smart-Base" that communicates with the charger to provide consistent and even heat to each base. The Dinex Smart•Therm Induction System is the first choice for modern, innovative room service operations.

System Benefits

- Increased patient satisfaction
- Food cost reduction
- Improved food quality and serving temperatures
- Space saving equipment design
- Staff and patient safety
- Increased employee morale in food and nutrition department

Note: Some elements of this article were sourced from "Making Hospital Stays Palatable," appearing in the *New London Day* newspaper on July 8, 2004.