

AXREM Service Managers Specialist Focus Group

AXREM members supply vital diagnostic, imaging and therapy systems essential for the effective operation of a modern hospital. Ensuring that those systems deliver on their promise requires that the systems are installed and maintained to high standards. AXREM members invariably offer the installation and maintenance services as a fundamental part of the product offering.

A trade association exists to capture and collate those legislative and operational challenges that impact on the market sector and to undertake an educational, collaborative and lobbying voice for industry.

The AXREM Service Managers Specialist Focus Group provides a dynamic platform to communicate details of the issues impacting collectively on providers of installation and maintenance services to the medical imaging, diagnostics and therapy industries. All AXREM activities are constrained by a published code of conduct and independent minutes are produced for all meetings to ensure that discussions remain within the boundaries set-out in the code of conduct and competition law guidance provided at the meetings. Those issues that impact on all members, and can be justifiably defined as not being an area where competition law is challenged, are discussed and, where appropriate, a collective approach is agreed and actions taken.

For example, when service and maintenance is being carried out on equipment it is essential that only the original equipment manufacturers approved products are used when replacement parts are required to guard against the use of non-compliant or counterfeit products being used.

AXREM and its Service Managers SFG have worked closely with other Trade Associations in the MedTech industry via the UK MedTech Forum to highlight the dangers associated with the use of non compliant or counterfeit parts and through the UK MedTech Forum are now liaising closely with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, MHRA, in helping to identify areas of concern and to build processes to ensure these parts do not enter the supply chain.

Another collective impact situation was highlighted to AXREM by the Health & Safety Executive, HSE, and related to the inconsistent approach to the abidance by hospitals to their obligation to undertake a formal hand over and hand back of radiation controlled areas and equipment. HSE were concerned amongst other things that the communication exchanged particularly when handing back equipment was not sufficiently detailed to enable equipment to be returned to use in the knowledge that the system would perform as expected. The use of hand-over hand-back forms was in use in many locations but each form was different, causing field service engineers' to be reluctant to complete and sign the forms. Some of the forms lacked important details seen to be mandatory by the HSE. The solution identified was to act together as an industry body to create a form compliant with the HSE requirements and seek to gain acceptance for the "AXREM form" from hospitals. The benefits identified were:

- 1) The form was sure to meet the hospitals HSE obligations and satisfy the HSE.
- 2) Field service engineers would recognise the form and willingly complete it.
- 3) Any legislative changes would require only one form to be updated in the future.
- 4) A central, independent (WEB) location would enable customers to download a form and implement a hand-over hand-back system with minimal effort safe in the knowledge that the form had HSE sign off
- 5) In creating and promoting an industry agreed form the awareness of the hand-over and hand-back process would itself be promoted ensuring proper communication when hand over of equipment was undertaken

Whilst uptake by hospitals is not 100% the existence of an industry standard form is a big step forward and a testament to the tenacity and determination of the AXREM Service Managers SFG to work together for the for the benefit of the industry.

There are a number of other industry impacting issues on the Service Managers agenda, which are being discussed and they would welcome input from any other sectors of the industry on other matters of relevant concern.