PURCHASING REPORT

Nurse-call systems

Photo: Stanley Healthcare Solutions

Snapshot

Average price per resident room:
Varies, from $450 to about $1,000.

Pricing Trends

2007-2008: +2 %to +3%
2008-2009: +3% to +5%
2009-2010: Flat to +3%

Typical delivery time: Overnight to about four weeks

Typical delivery charges: Often included in the price so ask before committing

Average life span of product: 7 to 10 years

Installation: Many are 100% wireless but some require hardwiring, and therefore special assistance

Average maintenance cost per year: About 10% of the overall system cost. Push buttons/cords are the most frequent expense; software updates are the most costly.

(Figures cited are averages of all respondents' answers. Actual pricing will vary due to volume, bundling and other factors of a purchase.)

Sources: Status Solutions, Stanley Healthcare Solutions, RF Technologies, HomeFree, Engineered Electronics, Direct Supply, Digital Care Systems, Cord-Mate

FROM THE FRONT LINES:
"Make sure your vendors can deliver what they say they can. Sometimes it's not been apples-to-apples. A lot of people do a great sales pitch, but when they come in to do a demonstration, they aren't able to do what they said. Sometimes you need somebody who specializes in one aspect because that's their niche."
John W. George, Nursing Home and Assisted Living Administrator, St. John's On The Lake, Milwaukee

Buyer Notes

• Make no mistake: This is a major investment. Research carefully and look for a trusted company that can maintain and repair a system for a long time–and has a good history of supporting its customers.

• Look for a system that will satisfy administrative and clinical needs. Essential data capture should include alarm response times, performance across various work shifts, changes in resident behavior and more.

• Your nurse-call system should be easily integrated with other resident-safety systems, including wander management and fall prevention.