



TOP LTACH SYSTEM SWITCHES TO THE MEDELA INVIA® NPWT SYSTEM AFTER EVALUATION YIELDS POSITIVE RESULTS

AMG is a top-five, post-acute hospital system with 11 hospitals, some of which are embedded in larger, full-service hospitals. With a reputation for providing expert wound care, they often take on difficult cases that other hospitals turn away.

AMG staff had relied on a particular Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) system for years. The product was adequate, and the vendor was reasonably reliable. So when Keri Mullins, RN, BSN and Chief Clinical Officer for North Alabama Specialty Hospital, was approached by corporate management to evaluate switching to the Medela Invia NPWT System, her initial reaction was “No way.”

A Reluctant Evaluator

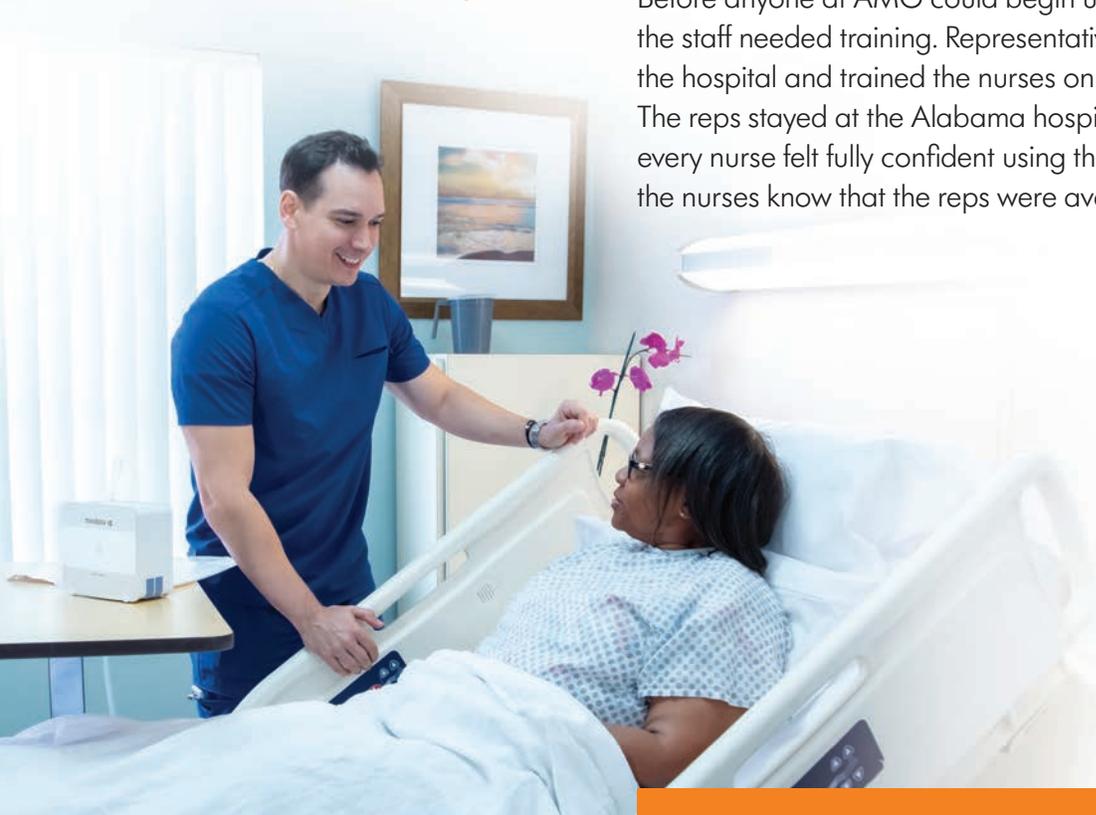
Keri had good reason to be hesitant. A few years prior, she’d had an opportunity to use a different NPWT device, and “it was a disaster for patients,” she said. “I was worried that when I switched this time, I’d have the same negative outcomes.”

Keri didn’t want to risk trying a new device. And she wondered why she was being pushed to “fix something” that wasn’t broken. Management listened to Keri’s concerns but finally persuaded her to try the device, since brief experiments at their hospitals in Albuquerque, NM and Lafayette, LA had seemed promising. She agreed to a three-month evaluation.

“Medela didn’t just come in and do the training,” explained Keri. “If we needed them for anything at any time, they were there. The amount of support Medela offered was amazing!”

Training the Staff

Before anyone at AMG could begin using the Medela system, the staff needed training. Representatives from Medela came to the hospital and trained the nurses on both the day and night shifts. The reps stayed at the Alabama hospital, providing guidance until every nurse felt fully confident using the new devices. They also let the nurses know that the reps were available for support 24/7.



Evaluation Produced Surprising Benefits

As AMG began using the Medela Invia pumps, they soon noticed multiple advantages over their current negative pressure devices from another vendor. Many of them were completely unexpected:

 **The pumps were quieter.**

 **They were easier to place on the patient.**

 **They stayed in place longer without need for adjustment.**

 **They maintained pressure without tube clogging for better exudate removal.**

 **Dressings stayed in place longer as well.**

 **Nurses didn't need to log device use, allowing them to spend more time helping patients.**

One of the unforeseen benefits that Keri noticed was the attitude of the nurses. *"They felt empowered using the Medela pumps,"* she said. *"They had confidence they could develop care plans for patients, handle any issues that arose and troubleshoot any problems on their own. They didn't have to keep asking their nurse supervisors for help."*

Accessing additional pumps when needed also proved to be an improvement. *"When we needed more pumps from our previous vendor, there was usually a 48-to-72-hour delay,"* Keri said. *"With Medela, they'd get us more pumps usually same day!"*

It soon became clear that staff preferred the Medela Invia devices as well as Medela's superior customer service and support. How the staff felt was important to Keri, but it wasn't her chief priority. For her, what mattered most were patient outcomes.

Best of all, the devices proved to be extremely effective. *"Wounds healed faster. Our patients had phenomenal outcomes,"* said Keri. *"They could be released sooner, letting them heal at home, which they prefer. Faster releases also save money and allow beds to open up for other patients who need our services."*

The Patients Chose Medela Too

The enthusiasm of the AMG staff regarding the Medela system was soon topped by favorable reviews from their patients. Because the pumps were easier to apply and adhered better, patients experienced less pain. With the exudate removal improved, dressings stayed on longer, and patients didn't have to endure dressing changes as frequently.

Patients also liked that the Medela pumps were quieter. The noise from the previous devices were a constant annoyance. Patients complained of difficulty sleeping and the difficulty of having conversations over the noisy devices. The quiet from the Medela pumps was a welcome change.

Because of its success rate, AMG has become the preferred hospital in Alabama and surrounding states for patients with serious wounds. It currently has 20 beds and consistently operates at capacity. "We'll soon be expanding to 30 beds," Keri said, "because we have so much confidence in the Medela device."



Transitioning Patients from Hospital to Home

One of the concerns AMG had initially about switching to Medela was how patients released from the hospital would continue their wound care at home.

"Medela connected us with a home health company that also uses the Invia pumps, so our patients could have continuity of care," Keri said. "Representatives from the home health company meet with patients at our hospital prior to release. They've been wonderful, helping us to ensure our patients have a smooth transition."

We Treat the Most Complex Patients

AMG is known for taking on the most challenging cases.

"We specialize in wound care," explained Keri. "We take on really sick patients with very complex wounds, the cases that any skilled nursing facility would likely turn away. Most patients stay with us for 18 to 25 days."

One patient from a hospital in Tennessee was referred to AMG.

"Nobody had been able to get a vac to adhere to this patient's wound, and she'd been dealing with it for two years," Keri said.

"With the Medela pump, we got the dressing to adhere. After four weeks the wound could be closed by a plastic surgeon and the patient was able to go home!"

HCAHPS Scores Improved

Like most hospitals, AMG has its patients complete surveys around patient satisfaction. One of the questions refers specifically to wound care.

"We are always looking for ways to increase patient satisfaction," Keri said. "Once AMG began using Medela devices, the scores shot up. That's important for our employees, who take great pride in their work, and HCAHPS scores also affect how our hospital gets paid."

“In one year’s time,” Keri said, “my hospital alone, which is relatively small, had significant cost savings, a trend that was seen across all 11 hospitals.”

Significant Cost Savings

Although cost savings was not AMG’s priority, it certainly was a factor in the decision to switch to Medela. The hospital was pleasantly surprised when the year’s costs were tallied.

Keri admitted to having come full-circle from reluctant Medela evaluator to enthusiastic Medela fan. *“Our patient results are beautiful. There’s not a single negative thing I can say. We made zero compromises on clinical outcomes, and the support we receive from Medela is outstanding. Our team spends less time problem solving, which has led to higher staff and patient satisfaction.”*

“From a cost perspective, the savings over the past two years have been exponential. But I would do this again even without the cost savings to improve our patient outcomes and staff satisfaction.”



“I do not plan to ever go back to our previous negative pressure system because what I’ve sincerely appreciated about Medela is that they are patient care driven. They’re not trying to sell me a product, they’re trying to sell me a patient experience and make patients’ lives and outcomes better. So that for me, as a patient care driven clinician is very, very important.”

We make NPWT easier.

Learn more at

www.medelahealthcare.com/en-US/solutions/negative-pressure-wound-therapy

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