



# Adopting Reusable Surgical Gowns

Surgical gowns are a type of personal protective equipment that protect **both** the patient and the provider from microbial contamination and exposure to bodily fluids



Adopting the use of **reusable gowns** has been shown to **reduce energy consumption**, GHG **emissions**, solid **waste**, long term **costs**, and may even have improved performance over disposable types of gowns

## Considerations for type of gown usage for hospitals include:

SUSTAINABILITY, BARRIER EFFECTIVENESS, COST, and CLINICAL USABILITY

### 1 SUSTAINABILITY

#### LIFE CYCLE ANALYSES FOR REUSABLE GOWNS

**LCA 1\*** - Reductions of  
**28%** in energy consumption  
**30%** in GHG emissions  
**41%** in blue water consumption  
**93%** in solid waste

**LCA 2§** - Reductions of  
**64%** in energy consumption,  
**66%** in GHG emissions,  
**83%** in blue water consumption  
**84%** in solid waste

### 2 BARRIER EFFECTIVENESS

#### PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Association of Advancement Instrumentation (AAMI) created performance standards for impact penetration and hydrostatic pressure resistance and rates medical gowns according to level of protection (Levels 1-4)¶

#### REUSABLE GOWNS HAVE SUPERIOR DURABILITY AND PROTECTION

### 3 COST

#### DECREASES REGULATED MEDICAL WASTE (RMW)

RMW processing costs are high (\$0.28 per pound)

ORs can divert **tens to hundreds of pounds** of RMW by switching to reusable products RMW

This translates in **significant cost savings** for hospitals ¥

### 4 CLINICAL USABILITY

#### COMFORT

Need to assess more high-quality sustainable medical textiles to match quality and performance with **COMFORT** for the staff who wear them

#### ACCESSIBILITY

Reusable gowns should be accessible to staff



LCA's suggest reusable scrub caps have lower environmental impact than disposable as well #

## BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

- Upfront cost differential
- Ensuring appropriate sterilization
- Personal perceptions of users



## ADDRESSING THE COST PROBLEM

DISPOSABLE GOWNS make up **80%** of the market share so we need to work to identify companies that provide reusable textiles

Reusable gowns and linens require appropriate LINEN STERILIZATION to prevent infections

## ADDRESSING THE PERCEPTION PROBLEM

**EDUCATION** that reusable gowns are potentially more protective as well as **MORE RESEARCH** on performance and cost-effectiveness is needed

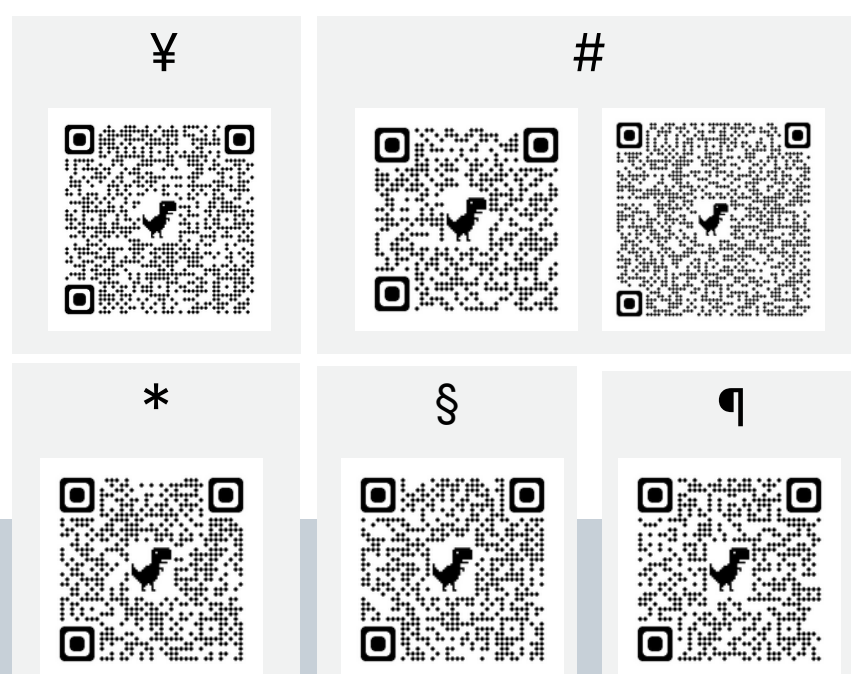
**Ensure STAFF SATISFACTION** - create opportunity for buy in by getting staff input on comfort, quality, and safety

## BENEFITS

- Potentially better protection from bodily fluids and microorganisms
- Decreased solid waste (particularly RMW) and less impact on the environment

## COST SAVINGS

- Down-the-line savings outweigh the higher upfront costs of reusable gowns



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

