

Nurse-call systems



Photo: Stanley Healthcare Solutions

Snapshot

Average price per resident room:
Varies from about \$500 to \$1,100

Pricing Trends

2010-2011: +Flat to +3%

2011-2012: Flat to +1%

2012-2013: +2% to +3%

Typical delivery time: One to two weeks

Typical delivery charges: These can vary widely. Ask upon purchase.

Average life span of product: 10 to 15 years

Installation: Most need a certified installer, though complexity of system will dictate

Average maintenance cost per year:
Occasional software upgrades can be costly. Off-handled parts may need frequent replacing. Ask about both before buying.

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

Sources: Crest Healthcare Supply, RF Technologies, Stanley Healthcare Solutions, Status Solutions, Vigil Health Solutions

FROM THE FRONT LINES:

"Make sure your system is going to call you and not just their [vendor's] call center. We want it to call us, especially if we have people on duty waiting for it. If you have staff there, you don't want to pay extra. Be clear about what you're going to buy — just the equipment or a service too?"

Tim Pendergast, Director of Facilities, Meth-Wick Community, Cedar Rapids, IA

Buyer Notes

- Learn a company's history when shopping. As one veteran wryly noted, a lot of them have come and gone through the years. You want to make sure you have someone who will be able to answer your questions and supply spare parts for a long time to come.
- Inquire as to who supports the system's software. It must be proven and reliable. Some sellers merely rely on the dealer they sell it for. Find out.
- Look for "hidden" fees such as for "software maintenance" and the like. Not doing so could result in the "leaky bucket" syndrome and you could wind up spending a lot more for a product with a lower initial price tag.
- Assure that the system is compliant with local building and permitting codes.

**For a list of vendors go to the:
SAFETY & SECURITY section, pages 175-183**