

Features

- [Today's News](#)
- [Features](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Interviews](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
- [Data Points](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [CHCF Highlights](#)

Past Issues

 Select Date

Services

- [My Profile](#)
- [Advanced Search](#)
- [Help](#)
- [Glossary](#)

Care Delivery

 forward  print

Hospitals Use Tracking Systems to Locate People, Equipment

October 30, 2003

[Massachusetts General Hospital](#) in Boston has implemented a wireless indoor positioning system in its "Operating Room of the Future" to track surgeons, nurses, patients and equipment, the [New York Times](#) reports. By knowing the exact location of surgeons, staff members and equipment, doctors should be able to respond more quickly to emergencies and plan more efficiently.

The indoor positioning system, or IPS, tracks battery-powered badges worn by staff or patients and devices that emit infrared and radio frequency signals to receivers, which are typically located in the ceilings or on walls. The receivers then send data to servers on a local network that calculate location and make this information available, the *Times* reports. Hospital staff can use Web browsers to search for items with tags or people with badges, or even to look at floor diagrams with real-time locations of doctors, patients and equipment. Patient badges also feature a panic button that can quickly alert doctors and nurses to emergencies.

The system, developed by [Radianse](#), stores the information in a database, which researchers use to analyze whether the devices and processes being tested in the Operating Room of the Future are more efficient than those used in traditional operating rooms, the *Times* reports. Massachusetts General Officials have already decided to implement the system throughout the hospital's 50 conventional operating rooms in four buildings, the *Times* reports. The emergency department at [Albert Einstein Medical Center](#) in Philadelphia has since July been using an IPS by [Versus Technology](#) to manage patient traffic and adjust resources.

However, implementing an IPS can be expensive because it requires many receivers, the *Times* reports. Developers of Wi-Fi-based tracking systems say this could help them because Wi-Fi "hot spots" are inexpensive, often already in place and have a wider range than indoor positioning systems (Fitzgerald, *New York Times*, 10/30).

 forward  print

Related

- [Oregon hosp patients with technology](#)
09/26/2003
- [Michigan hos ER tracking :](#)
07/31/2003
- [Hospital trac helps protect](#)
05/22/2003
- [Military uses scanners to soldiers](#)
05/20/2003
- [Citing privac nurses at Ca ditch tracking](#)
09/06/2002
- [California ho launch nurse despite priva](#)
05/30/2002