

The Weight of Seconds

Lakeview Medical Center enriches patient comfort and streamlines emergency patient intake with Rice Lake's medical scales.

IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS, RESPONSE TIME IS VITAL. OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY, with over 1,000 patients every month, the Emergency Department at Lakeview Medical Center understands speed and efficiency make all the difference. To take advantage of every second, Lakeview Medical Center installed an in-floor Rice Lake medical floor scale to weigh inbound patients on an ambulance stretcher. Weighing patients upon arrival at an exceptional speed, the scale provides crucial patient weight information. The department can then treat emergency patients with confidence. The medical scale delivers reliable performance with a heavy-duty industrial design and a rigid, steel-channel frame, providing the durability and accuracy the department needs.

Lakeview Medical Center has been a staple in the Rice Lake, Wis. community since its inception in 1919. The hospital prides itself with modern facilities, innovative state-of-the-art technology and a caring staff. All of these qualities come together at Lakeview Medical Center for the same common purpose: providing excellent patient care for the growing region. Lakeview Medical Center is truly a patient-centric facility, and when it comes to providing care, the staff does everything possible to make sure patients receive superior and compassionate treatment. To provide unmatched patient care, modernization at Lakeview Medical Center has been embraced. From keycard badges that open corridors, ensuring patient and visitor privacy and safety, to state-of-the-art technology and in-floor patient weighing platforms, Lakeview Medical Center exemplifies next-level healthcare.

Installed flush with the hospital floor, the Rice Lake medical floor scale allows ambulance stretchers to transition from floor to scale with smooth and natural movements, permitting paramedics to



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easily roll the stretchers on and off in swift motions. With a Rice Lake digital weight indicator wall-mounted near the scale, the patient and stretcher gross weight is easily read and charted by the paramedic.

“It’s very convenient. It is right by the doors as you walk in. We have a digital display board that tells us which room the patient should be brought to,” explains Lakeview Medical Center Emergency Services Supervisor, Matthew Ryba. After transferring the patient to their room, paramedics bring the stretcher back to the floor scale to calculate the patient’s net weight by subtracting the weight of the stretcher and any equipment on or attached to the stretcher upon arrival. Without wasting any movements or removing the patient from the stretcher, Emergency Department staff can record and use an accurate patient weight, delivering

better care at a quicker pace—a valuable quality in the department. Life-saving drugs administered in emergency situations may need to be accurately dosed by the patient’s weight; making reliable weight a necessity.

The medical floor scale wasn’t always a Lakeview Medical Center staple. When the hospital was built in its new location in February 2011, the floor scale was added to the department. Its benefits—from streamlining paramedic movement to accessing patient information faster—are definitely noticed. “It’s quick; I wheel the patient on, get my weight, wheel them off and I don’t have to worry about it; they can keep moving,” Ryba explains, “it doesn’t delay patient care; and that’s an important thing—not having to wait. You roll it on, roll it off and come back. It’s right by the doors as you walk in to go to the patient’s room.”

Knowing that standing is difficult for some patients, staff at Lakeview Medical Center take advantage of the floor scale by weighing patients in their wheelchairs. “We can wheel them right onto the scale and take the gross weight, bring the patient to their bed and go back and weigh the wheelchair to determine the patient’s weight,” explains Ryba. Taking the extra step to improve patient comfort is not uncommon at Lakeview Medical Center. Patients in the Emergency Department can even be weighed without leaving their bed. “All of the beds in the Emergency Department are weighed with a full set of linen, and the weight is written on the bed. All you have to do is wheel the bed with the patient to the scale, subtract the bed weight and you have the patient’s net weight,” Ryba notes.

In addition to weighing patients in wheelchairs and pre-weighed beds, patients also receive the highest standard of comfort with private rooms within a facility designed with a healing and soothing environment. Providing the best possible care with a personal and compassionate experience is a goal Lakeview Medical Center takes to heart.

When not in use by patients, the Rice Lake medical floor scale has other duties. Emergency Services often use it to weigh their ambulance and emergency response equipment while loading the

ambulance. “It’s very versatile to have a scale like this,” says Ryba. “For me to stand on the scale with my vehicle equipment, we can take the weights of our equipment to determine the gross vehicle weight of the ambulance [as we load it].” Some ambulance equipment weighs over 20 pounds, and the vehicle weight can add up quickly with Emergency Services personnel and in-transit patients. Weighing the equipment adds an extra level of safety when loading the ambulance.

The Emergency Department’s medical floor scale is not the only Rice Lake scale on site. Lakeview Medical Center also uses a scale in their Kidney Dialysis Unit. With 16 dialysis stations in the unit, each patient receives the best possible care with individualized comforts. To help determine the optimal course of treatment and follow-up care, patients are weighed on the medical scale before and after dialysis. Because patients on dialysis often gain excess fluid and weight between

treatments, keeping accurate weight records is essential for proper care, making the Rice Lake scale an invaluable asset to the unit. With a pit-style installation similar to the Emergency Department floor scale, the Kidney Dialysis Unit medical scale is ideal for patients being transferred in wheelchairs.

Providing care to a growing region, Lakeview Medical Center embraces their promise to provide the highest standard of care to their community with modern facilities, caring staff, state-of-the-art technology and innovation. The Emergency Department’s Rice Lake medical floor scale is one small facet to the hospital’s overall mission, but when accurate and dependable patient weight is needed in an emergency situation, stat—it can make all the difference. ■



Allowing emergency patients to be weighed upon arrival at an exceptional speed, the Rice Lake medical floor scale and indicator in Lakeview Medical Center’s Emergency Department (right) provides crucial information the department needs to treat emergency patients with confidence.

The hospital’s Kidney Dialysis Unit also employs a Rice Lake medical scale, indicator and printer (above) to ensure the best possible treatment with impeccable weight records.