

Patient Safety Advisory

Veterans Health Administration Warning System
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- Item:** Cardinal Health's Alaris System Infusion Pumps
- Specific Incident:** The National Center for Patient Safety (NCPS) has confirmed that a report issued by ECRI Institute correctly describes a vulnerability with the Cardinal Health's Alaris System infusion pumps. This problem could lead to over infusions or under infusions when the pump is used.
- NCPS found that when the numerical values are edited by a user on the programming screen with the cursor blinking under the far right digit that a new numerical entry will overwrite the entire value (Attachment). The blinking cursor can falsely lead some users to believe that they are just changing the digit above the cursor.
- Also, when the user enters a value outside the device's preset Guardrails soft-limits, the resultant soft-limit warning message says only that the soft-limit has been exceeded; it does not display the rate that triggered the warning.
- Recommendations:** Cardinal Health's Alaris System Infusion Pump users should complete the following recommendations or implement other measures to achieve an equivalent or increased level of safety.
1. Disseminate this Patient Safety Advisory to all clinicians/users of Cardinal Health's Alaris System infusion pumps making them aware of the vulnerabilities when editing the numerical value on the programming screen.
 2. Inform clinicians/users that:
 - a. When entering or editing numerical values on the programming screen, (e.g., dose rate, flow rate, volume to be infused) the numbers should be entered in their entirety, even if the previous numerical value exists on the screen or if a single digit was entered in error.
 - b. All data entries should be verified before starting any infusions.
 - c. If provided, Guardrails software soft-limit warnings should not be overridden without first verifying the rate they entered is what was ordered.
- Source:** ECRI Institute and Evaluation of the Cardinal Health's Alaris System Infusion Pump
- Attachment:** Photo of Cardinal Health's Alaris System Infusion Pump - Infusion Setup screen
- Contact:** Bryanne Patail at the VHA NCPS at (734) 930-5852

ATTACHMENT: Photo of Alaris Systems Infusion Pump - Infusion Setup screen

