Nurse-call systems

Photo: Jeron

Snapshot

Average price per resident per room: Varies from about $350 to about $3,000

Typical delivery time: 1 to 2 weeks

Typical delivery charges:
Vendors have varying policies — be sure to ask.

Average life span of product:
15+ years

Installation: Often company installed; in-house staff might be able to handle some.

Average maintenance costs per year: Software and hardware maintenance costs lead. Ask for individual vendor feedback.

Buyers Notes

• Be aware whether there are separate charges for any software maintenance agreement. Not everyone has them, and terms can vary widely. This could be a recurring, fixed cost.

• Don't be afraid to press on aesthetics. Some vendors offer customized colring of dome lights or wall sconces, for example.

• Some firms offer the ability to lease or rent. No matter which option you choose, experts emphasized that you should consult with current users.

• One of the most important discussions you can have is about how staff members want to be notified — pagers, smartphones or possibly some other means. Bosses might not know best.

"Make sure your nurse call light system includes your CNAs, so they can get personal notifications and don't have to be confined to one area. If somebody's coding, you know how to get in contact with them. Then there's no reason they can't come by and assist."

— Phillip Jacob, Associate Executive Director, The Buckingham, Houston

(Figures cited are averages of all respondents' answers. Actual pricing will vary due to volume, bundling and other factors of a purchase.)
Sources: *All-Call Industries, Jeron, Protect Alert, Sensara, STANLEY, Symtech, TekTone, Wireless NurseCall Systems Inc.*