Free Manuals Database for Biomedical Engineers

A website has created a free database of repair manuals for medical devices to help biomedical engineering technicians working on the front line during the COVID-19 pandemic to deal with equipment repairs.

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In about two-months' time, the website iFixit has put together thousands of manuals for numerous types of medical devices, from imaging equipment to anaesthesia systems to ventilators. As Wired reports, iFixit founder and CEO Kyle Wiens was inspired by the news of an Italian 3D printing company helping a hospital in Brescia to replicate and create lacking replacement valves for an intensive care device that provides respiratory support to COVID-19 patients.

The call for documentation submissions was made in mid-March, and the response from around the world has been massive. Over 200 volunteers have helped the website to sort and optimise the incoming files and create "a central, multi-manufacturer library of user manuals and repair documentation for thousands of devices." With an initial focus on ventilator documentation, anaesthesia systems and respiratory analysers, currently, more than 13,000 manuals from hundreds of manufacturers are available in iFixit Medical Device category.

In a blog post, Wiens noted that some medical manufacturers, like Mindray, allowed engineers to access their manuals freely, and others made select documents available after the outbreak of COVID-19. However, many are still protective of their proprietary equipment arguing that patient safety is at stake and 'unofficial' repairs should not be allowed. He stressed that the website did not earn money from this initiative and welcomed "manufacturers to join us and contribute toward an up-to-date central repository for the biomedical community."

Source: Wired

Image credit: mr.suphachai praserdumrongchai via iStock

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