

Coral  
Gables and  
COVID-19  
**Case Study**

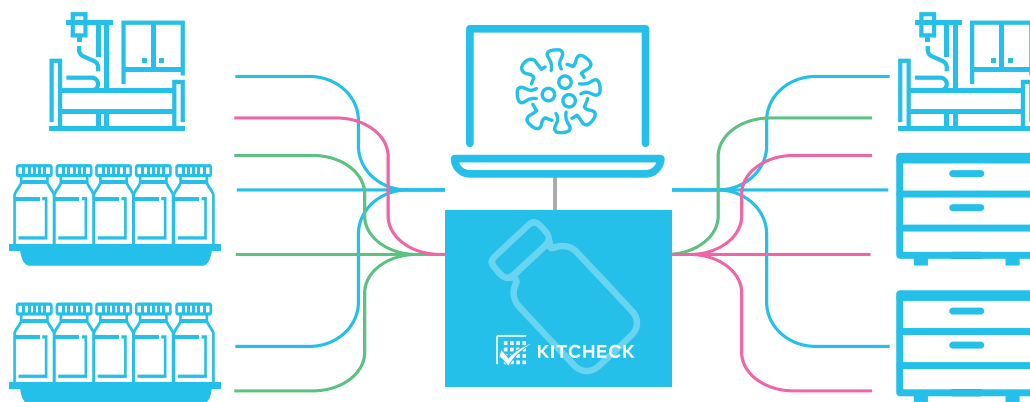
## BACKGROUND

Coral Gables Hospital is a 245-bed acute care hospital serving residents of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and surrounding areas. The hospital offers a wide range of treatments, from emergency care to diagnostic imaging, with a commitment to treating and supporting patients from the moment they enter the hospital through rehabilitation, bridging the gap between successful procedures and entry into normal day-to-day life.

# SITUATION

During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, much like the majority of the medical community, Coral Gables Hospital was preparing for a severe wave of infected patients. In preparation for what they felt would be an inevitable influx, the team strategized about how to effectively treat COVID-19 positive patients, avoid cross-contamination with other patients and protect their front-line healthcare workers in the process.

The Coral Gables team, led by a Clinical Informatics Coordinator and Pharmacist, quickly realized that common obstacles in the hospital setting such as drug shortages would be further compounded by the pandemic. In order to quickly keep track of the drugs they had on-hand, anticipate how much more they would need to adequately treat patients, and uncover safe alternative medications where appropriate, the Coral Gables team needed a tech solution that would help keep a finger on the pulse of their everchanging medication inventory. **Also, to protect staff and non-COVID positive patients, the team needed a way to keep track of which medication trays and carts were used in a room with an infected patient to ensure proper sanitization occurred before that medication tray or equipment was transported or used by another medical professional.**



**Automated Medication Intelligence**



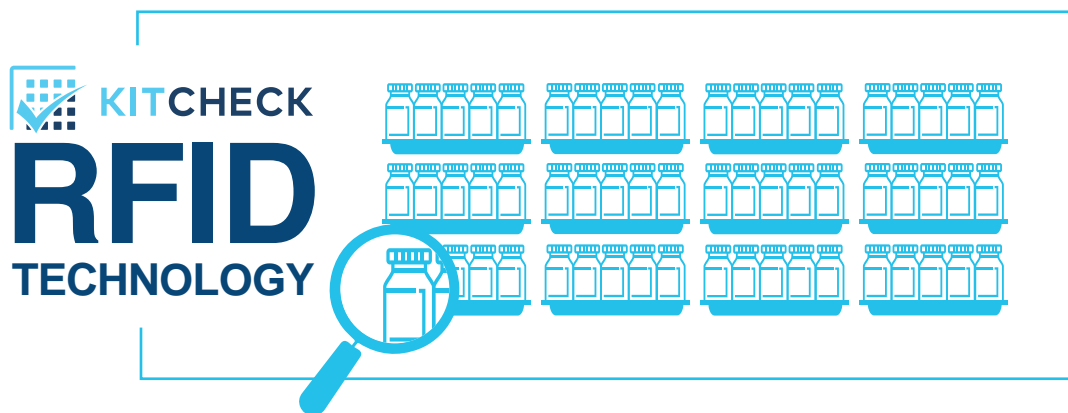
## SOLUTION

Coral Gables had already been using Kit Check's technology, an RFID product that provides unit-level visibility into medication inventory and chain of command in the hospital pharmacy, for three years and found value in reconfiguring the solution to meet the shifting needs of the organization. Considering themselves a "super user" of Kit Check, Coral Gables used the core Kit Check product to tag all high-priority medications, and the solution soon became an integral part of their response to the COVID-19 crisis.

**As the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic increased, the Coral Gables team focused on prioritizing the safety of non-COVID positive patients, as well as their nurses, doctors and other medical staff.** Keeping this in mind, they started to tag all drugs directly, especially those related to the management of COVID-19 like propofol and fentanyl. This allowed them to have unit-level visibility into the chain of custody of these drugs, ensuring they were properly restocked into kits and trays and inventory was carefully monitored. Furthermore, Coral Gables pharmacy staff prioritized that all of the Kit Check medication kits, especially kits used to treat COVID-19 positive patients such as their rapid intubation kits, were sterile and disposable, ensuring they couldn't be reused, or transferred to a non-COVID-19 positive patient room. Kit Check also introduced a Sanitization Check feature within the platform meant to help internal teams clearly indicate which carts and trays had been properly cleaned as part of the inventory management and dispatch process. The Kit Check team also supplied waterproof covers for the RFID scanning stations as an additional guard, keeping sterilization top of mind and further protecting patients and staff from an infection control standpoint.

As the pandemic continued, drug shortages became more severe. Medications needed for rapid intubation, as well as those believed to help treat COVID-19, became scarce. Kit Check's RFID technology allowed the Coral Gables team to keep track of high-demand medications, to evaluate how much they had on hand, anticipate how much they might need, and come up with safe alternatives to the drugs that were unavailable to effectively treat patients.

Additionally, Coral Gables is primarily a surgery facility. Therefore, a fair amount of procedures were halted or delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the organization started to reintroduce elective surgeries, they were once again able to adapt their Kit Check technology to better keep track of medications and ensure the safety of patients and workers. With the help of the Kit Check team, Coral Gables implemented independent operating room (OR) scanning stations. Because antibody and diagnostic testing was in such high demand, the hospital elected to treat all patients as if they were presumed COVID-19 positive to ensure the safety of their staff and other patients. The team implemented a designated workstation with a small scanning station nearby, and all of the tagged medications and prefilled syringes used within the OR remained in the OR, meaning none of the medications used returned to the pharmacy department. All Kit Check tagged medications and replacement trays were stocked in the OR with a label of special "restrict access" designation, which prohibits access among non-pharmacy personnel. Essentially, the technology allows the team to isolate all activity involved with medication management in operating rooms to avoid potential spread of the virus. As the spread of COVID-19 continues to fluctuate, the Coral Gables team is able to adapt and pivot the Kit Check technology to meet its varying needs related to elective surgeries, COVID-19 medical units, and infection control protocols.





## RESULTS

**Throughout the pandemic, healthcare professionals and medical institutions have been challenged like never before. The typical obstacles involved in a hospital pharmacy setting, such as general strain on frontline workers, drug shortages, and medication management, are only intensified.**

The need for reliable, adjustable technology was, and continues to be, at an all-time high. As a hospital navigating this crisis, Coral Gables needed technology that was nimble and reliable to protect patients and staff alike. The team successfully utilized Kit Check technology to address their changing needs amidst the pandemic. In relying on technology to ensure item level visibility, responsible medication and inventory management and to avoid cross-contamination, the team was able to safely treat patients, maximize their drug inventory and keep workers healthy.

*“While Coral Gables has used Kit Check for many years to ensure proper medication management throughout our hospital, we were able to reconfigure the technology to meet our needs during a very pivotal, unprecedented time, the value of which can’t be understated,” said Steve Tayon, B.S., Pharm. D., Clinical Informatics Coordinator, Department of Pharmacy at Coral Gables Hospital.*

*“Our main priorities were ensuring responsible medication management to navigate drug shortages, while also making sure that all medication trays and kits were sterile to protect our teams and COVID-negative patients,” said Dr. Tayon, “We were able to adapt our Kit Check technology in real-time as we learned more about the impact of COVID-19, helping us make the best possible decisions for frontline workers and patients every step of the way.”*