

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A patient handling apparatus comprising:

a plurality of castors and one or more brakes selectively braking the plurality of casters;
one or more sensors detecting a configuration of the patient handling apparatus; and
an indicator device operatively associated with the one or more sensors, the indicator device comprising:

a user interface allowing input of patient type information; and

an indicator that issues a status notice based on the entered patient type information and the detected configuration of the patient handling apparatus sensed by the one or more sensors;

wherein the indicator device is configured as a portable, hand-held device detachably coupled to one or more portions of the patient handling apparatus,

wherein the indicator is a system status indicator that provides a status notice of the patient handling apparatus,

wherein the patient handling apparatus is a bed,

wherein the one or more sensors include a brake sensor that detects whether the plurality of casters are locked by the one or more brakes, a bed height positioning sensor, and a bed exit sensor,

wherein the indicator includes a patient-exit indicator for indicating suitability for a patient to leave the bed based on a frame of the bed being in a lowest position.

2. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the indicator device further comprises an adjustable hook that is detachably mounted to multiple portions of the patient handling apparatus.

3. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the indicator device is wirelessly coupled or connected by a cable to the one or more portions of the patient handling apparatus.

4. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the patient type information is a stable patient type or an unstable patient type.

5. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the patient type information relates to a degree of patient mobility.
6. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the status notice is a suitable-for-patient status notice or an unsuitable-for-patient status notice.
7. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the system status indicator is configured as a light element and/or an audio device.
8. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the system status indicator is configured as one or more light elements disposed at a distal end of the indicator device and are oriented and configured to direct emitted light towards a ground surface for reflection.
9. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the indicator is a brake indicator that issues a brake status notice.
10. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the indicator is a power source status indicator indicating a status of a power source of the patient handling apparatus.
11. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the one or more sensors further includes at least one of: a power source sensor, a side rail positioning sensor, a backrest positioning sensor, a mattress pressure sensor, a patient support air flow sensor, an inflatable mattress therapy sensor, a bed adjustment sensor, and any combination thereof.
12. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the patient handling apparatus further comprises a patient lift and the one or more sensors further include at least one of: a power source sensor, a sling attachment sensor, a load sensor, a brake sensor, a sling positioning sensor and any combination thereof.
13. The patient handling apparatus of claim 1, wherein the indicator device further comprises one or more component indicators corresponding to the one or more sensors.

14. The patient handling apparatus of claim 13, wherein the one or more indicators are configured as light elements that emit light when a detected feature of the patient handling apparatus is in an undesired state for the entered patient type information.

15. The patient handling apparatus of claim 14, wherein the light elements are disposed at a distal end of the indicator device and are oriented and configured to direct emitted light towards a ground surface for reflection.

16. A bed system, comprising:

- a bed;

- a plurality of casters and one or more brakes selectively braking the plurality of casters;

- a sensor disposed at the bed; and

- an indicator device mountable to the bed, the indicator device comprising:

 - an input device that inputs a patient type to the indicator device; and

 - an indicator that outputs a status to a user;

wherein the indicator outputs the status to the user based on:

- the patient type; and

- a configuration of the bed that is detected by the sensor; and

wherein the indicator device is configured as a portable, hand-held device detachably coupled to one or more portions of the bed,

wherein the indicator is a system status indicator that provides a status notice of the bed system,

wherein the sensor includes a brake sensor that detects whether the plurality of casters are locked by the one or more brakes, a bed height positioning sensor, and a bed exit sensor, and

wherein the indicator includes a patient-exit indicator for indicating suitability for a patient to leave the bed based on input from the brake sensor and the bed height positioning sensor, and based on a frame of the bed being in a lowest position.

17. The bed system of claim 16, further comprising: an actuator disposed at the bed, wherein the actuator adjusts an angle of an upper portion of the bed from a horizontal plane, the sensor senses the angle of the upper portion of the bed from the horizontal plane, and the indicator is a bed inclination indicator.

18. The bed system of claim 16, further comprising: an actuator disposed at the bed, wherein the actuator adjusts a height of the bed from a floor, the sensor senses the height of the bed from the floor, and the indicator is a bed height indicator.

19. The bed system of claim 16, wherein the patient type is an all-patient type, a stable patient type, or an unstable patient type.

20. The bed system of claim 16, further comprising a side rail disposed on the bed, wherein the sensor senses whether or not the side rail is raised in an upright position, and the indicator is a side-panel position indicator.

21. The bed system of claim 16, wherein the sensor detects if a patient has exited the bed, and the indicator is a patient-exit indicator.

22. The bed system of claim 16, further comprising a first light unit disposed on the indicator device and a second light unit included in the indicator, wherein the first light unit and the indicator illuminate in a first color indicating a suitable-for-patient status or in a second color indicating an unsuitable-for-patient status.