

Shining a Light on Infections

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New robot disinfects Southeast Georgia Health System rooms to prevent spread of bacteria

Patients come to the hospital expecting to feel better, not to get sick with a new infection. Southeast Georgia Health System intends to meet their expectations. It recently added Tru-D SmartUVC, a 5-foot, 5-inch germ-killing robot, to its already strict checklist of disinfection routines aimed at protecting patients from serious health care associated infections (HAIs).

About one in 25 patients will develop an HAI during a hospital visit, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Infections in general have been a national focus for the past few years,” says Sherry Sweek, RHIA, CPHQ, CPMSM, director, Quality Improvement for the Health System. “Preventing infections has been a priority of ours for a while now.”

The Health System’s focus on infection prevention has paid off in terms of national ratings. Acute-care hospitals are rated in six HAI categories by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and Southeast Georgia Health System meets or exceeds national benchmarks in every category.



Tru-D is just one more way the Health System is keeping infection rates low.

The robot uses high-efficiency germicidal lamps to generate UV light energy to kill deadly germs such as Ebola, methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), Clostridium difficile (C. diff), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), Norovirus and Enterovirus D68. Tru-D delivers a lethal dose of light from a single location, effectively eliminating lingering pathogens in the room, even shadowed areas.

After a Health System team member cleans a room using traditional methods, Tru-D is rolled in to finish

the disinfection. The robot is operated remotely and features an application that tracks infection control data and simultaneously uploads the information to the Health System’s Web portal.

“We haven’t been using Tru-D long enough to see a change in our infection prevention numbers, but I can tell you from what we’ve observed, it’s working,” Ms. Sweek says. “We’ve swabbed for bacteria in rooms that Tru-D has disinfected after

infectious patients were present and there hasn’t been any sign of lingering bacteria. This is just another layer of protection we use for our patients.” •



Sherry Sweek, RHIA, CPHQ, CPMSM