Kimberly-Clark PROFESSIONAL*

C A S E E X A M P L E

The KIMTECH* WETTASK* System

See how this innovative approach using the KIMTECH* WETTASK* System helped St. Joseph's Hospital reduce surface ATP rates by 84.7%.

The Challenge

Maurice Croteau, environmental services supervisor and infection control liaison for St. Joseph's Hospital, was concerned that efficacy was being sacrificed in the attempt to disinfect patient rooms in the time allotted by the hospital. "St. Joseph's requires us to have the room disinfected and ready for the next patient in under 55 minutes," said Croteau. The hospital's disinfecting system at the time, which featured an open bucket filled with a quaternary amine disinfectant solution and cotton rags, required more than 10 minutes of dwell time in order to be effective. According to Croteau, "the 10 minute dwell time was making it difficult to turn over the room on time. Patient rooms were not being cleaned to satisfactory levels because surfaces were being wiped dry before the required dwell time had been reached." As a result of these challenges Croteau decided to search for a different disinfection system.

The Investigation

As part of his investigation to find new and improved methods, which would solve for St. Joseph's turn-time criteria and ensure efficacy for disinfecting patient rooms, Croteau was introduced to the KIMTECH* WETTASK* System. Croteau learned that St. Joseph's use of a bucket with a cotton rag was ineffective, as this delivery method allows the quaternary amine disinfectant to bind to the fibers of the cotton rag rather than being released onto the intended surface area. The reduction in the disinfectant applied to the surface raised concerns about the ability of the current system to optimize disinfection within the hospital.

R E S U L T S

No observed equipment damage

WETTASK* System reduced surface ATP rates by 84.7%

The KIMTECH WETTASK* System – a one-time use wiper saturated with the disinfecting solution of the user's choice.*

KIMTECH* BRAND

About St. Joseph's & Maurice Croteau

Located in the heart of Phoenix, Arizona, St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center is a 673-bed, not-for-profit hospital that provides a wide range of health, social and support services, with special advocacy for the poor and underserved. Founded in 1895 by the Sisters of Mercy, St. Joseph's was the first hospital in the Phoenix area. The hospital is part of Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), one of the largest healthcare systems in the West with 40 hospitals in Arizona, California and Nevada.

Maurice Croteau has been an environmental services supervisor and infection control liaison at St. Joseph's Hospital for the past six years. Prior to coming to St. Joseph's, he held various jobs in facilities management.

The Solution

Croteau appreciated that the closed-bucket design of the KIMTECH* WETTASK* System and the use of disposable wipers would ensure that the appropriate concentration of disinfectant would be applied consistently. He knew he needed to switch to the KIMTECH* WETTASK* System in order to be assured that the proper solution was being delivered to hospital surfaces. In addition, he chose to switch from a quaternary amine to a sodium hypochlorite (bleach) solution, as the EPA had declared at the time that bleach was the only disinfectant effective at killing Clostridium difficile spores and dangerous Noroviruses.

However, he faced a significant issue with the switch to sodium hypochlorite. He knew that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended chlorine solubility levels of 5500 parts per million (ppm), but that concentration of bleach had been proven to be extremely corrosive to stainless steel surfaces in the hospital setting. This concern led him to experiment with lower bleach concentrations, leveraging the solution stability offered by the WETTASK* System to ensure that the targeted disinfectant concentration was being applied to surfaces throughout the hospital. Croteau began by diluting the sodium hypochlorite solution to a solubility level of 2700 ppm, which he determined would kill microbes with a six minute dwell time without corroding surfaces using Adenosine triphosphate (ATP) monitoring. The dilute solution adequately eliminated microbes, the odor associated with bleach was minimal and tolerable and the incidence of corrosion was minimized. However, to ensure efficacy against Clostridium *difficile* spores, Croteau increased the solution's solubility to 5500 ppm for use in isolation areas where Clostridium *difficile* had been identified.

The Results

After using the WETTASK* System for one year, St. Joseph's Environmental Services team has seen significant results. St Joseph's has seen no incidence of surface corrosion or equipment damage. The Environmental Services Department is meeting St. Joseph's standards for turning over rooms in a timely fashion, as dwell time has been reduced by 40%, while properly disinfecting each room. Croteau's innovative use of the WETTASK* System, in addition to sodium hypochlorite, reduced surface ATP rates by 84.7% against his original baseline measurement taken when using the open bucket and quaternary amine disinfectant. Croteau also believes the hospital has reaped soft-cost savings as a result of the reduction of Hospital-Associated Infections (HAIs), as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid may impose penalties on those that consistently have high HAI rates. Clearly, this change is a win for the hospital, its staff and most importantly, its patients and guests.

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