ICU
MANAGEMENT & PRACTICE

St. Anthony Hospital Unveils Xenex's New Germ-Eliminating "Robot" to Enhance Patient Safety

St. Anthony Hospital's (Oklahoma) newest approach to disinfecting a room looks a little like a science fiction character. The new Xenex room disinfection system uses ultraviolet (UV-C) light that is 25,000 times more powerful than the sun to quickly 'zap' nasty organisms that cause infections like the flu, norovirus, MRSA and *Clostridium difficile* (*C. diff*). In minutes, the device can disinfect a patient room, patient bathroom or operating room (OR) by pulsing the light, which washes over the surfaces where germs reside.

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St. Anthony is the only hospital in Oklahoma to have the Xenex room disinfection device. More than 100 hospitals nationwide are using the system with the purpose of reducing rates of infection and saving costs. And it's safe. Because the light is extremely intense, the machine operates on its own once it's set up in a room. For enhanced safety, a sign placed outside the door warns people not to enter, and a motion sensor automatically shuts off the machine if someone should enter.

"This technology is used in high risk areas in conjunction with the extensive cleaning services already provided by our environmental services team," said John Lupin, director, environmental services, St. Anthony Hospital. "The most critical step to ensure infection control begins with a clean environment. The system was implemented on May 1, 2013, and since that time we have used Xenex to disinfect 100 of our patient rooms."

After cleaning, housekeepers position the Xenex device on both sides of the bed and in the restroom to disinfect 99.99 percent of dangerous contaminants. Each treatment takes about five minutes, or 15 minutes per room.

"We already have a strong infection prevention program. The Xenex technology allows us to be even more proactive in protecting the health of our patients and staff," said Dr. James Kirk, infectious disease specialist.

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