Kent and Memorial Hospitals Using Germ-Zapping Robots to Fight Infection

PROVIDENCE – As hospitals across the nation look for new and innovative ways to battle deadly pathogens and kill multi-drug resistant organisms that put patients at risk, Care New England has begun using germ-zapping robots that eliminate hard-to-kill microorganisms in hard-to-clean places. Two robots are in place at Kent Hospital in Warwick, and one is in place at Memorial Hospital in Pawtucket.

Xenex Disinfection Services’ UV disinfection system is the fastest, safest and most effective method for the advanced cleaning of hospital rooms, and is scientifically proven to destroy all major classes of microorganisms that can cause hospital-acquired infections (HAIs).

Hospital-acquired infections, which are caused by such deadly pathogens as methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff), pneumonia and Acinetobacter, are the fourth-leading cause of death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Xenex disinfection device uses pulsed xenon ultraviolet (UV-C) light that is 25,000 times more powerful than sunlight to destroy harmful bacteria, viruses, fungi and even bacterial spores. The system is effective against even the most dangerous pathogens, including C. diff, norovirus, and influenza and staph bacteria like MRSA. In minutes the device can disinfect a patient room, patient bathroom or operating room with a pulsing light that washes over the surfaces where germs reside.

The Xenex system has been credited for helping other health care facilities in the U.S. decrease their MRSA and C. diff infection rates. The Xenex UV disinfection system can disinfect a room in minutes and is easily portable, allowing it to be used in virtually any location within the hospital. 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 the machine off if someone should enter.

Staff at Kent and Memorial Hospitals helped to name their Xenex robots in a contest sponsored by the Environmental Services Departments at both operating units. Kent’s robots are now referred to as, “Adam and Eve,” and Memorial’s robot is named “Violet.”

“One hospital-acquired infection is one too many, so we are excited to be using the Xenex system to help us achieve our goals of infection prevention, while improving quality and patient outcomes,” said Edward Schotland, acting president, Memorial Hospital. “Our environmental services team is very enthusiastic to be using this kind of advanced technology in their daily work.”

David Raymond, Patty Cameron, Clyde Vittum, and Maria Furtado, Environmental Services, Kent Hospital, are shown with new robotic disinfection system.