

THE TYPES OF MICRO-ORGANISMS IN DIFFERENT WARD ENVIRONMENTS

Survey by Ginny Moore and others (ICHE, 2013)

Summary:

There is no magic bullet for hospital disinfection. One product DOES NOT do everything. Different ward types should be treated as separate environments, and cleaning protocols should be adjusted accordingly.

This prospective 4 month microbiological survey was conducted around the bed space of 166 patients in a London hospital. 99 patients were in the ICU; 67 patients were in the gastrointestinal surgical ward.

In the ICU, bacteria are most common on the surfaces touched by healthcare workers e.g. bed rails, telephones, medical equipment and computer keyboards and screens.

In wards where patients are more mobile, bacteria are most common on the bed, bed rails, bed control and call button. The toilet and the shower, being wet areas, contained very high levels of bacteria.

Bed rails are a common fomite, irrespective of the ward type.

This study confirmed that hand hygiene is a core infection control measure for preventing HAIs.

The results suggest that different ward should be cleaned with different products and tools as required.

Disinfectant wipes are a cost-effective, user-friendly way to lower bacterial numbers near the patient. Wipes are a good adjunct to standard cleaning protocols.