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Chasing Zero: Mitigating Microbes at a Medical Center

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DHP significantly reduces the organisms in the air and on surfaces. The reduction promotes a cleaner environment which can reduce the risk of a hospital-acquired infection. DHP can help us continue chasing zero.

– Dr. Jennifer Sanguinet, DrPH,
Principal Investigator at Sunrise Hospital & Medical Center

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A LAS VEGAS HOSPITAL'S STORY

With over 20 years of experience and a first-class reputation, Jennifer Sanguinet, DrPH intimately understands that every inch of a hospital holds liability for environmental exposure. She's the Principal Investigator for a study that was conducted at Sunrise Hospital & Medical Center in Las Vegas, NV, and it's her job to lead the charge in reducing the risk of contamination and infection for the patients in the 762-bed facility.

"I've done pretty much every job there is to do in infection control," Sanguinet says. She's an expert on the challenge that's always existed—how do you keep your patient care spaces as clean as possible? Pristine. Free of bacteria, viruses, and other microbes than run rampant in any healthcare facility.

"You're always chasing zero," Sanguinet explains, aiming to empty her hospital of contaminants. She knows it's an impossible task, but it's her duty to do everything she can to get that number as low as possible. "Reducing that amount [of microbes] logically reduces the risk of the environmental contamination."

Hospitals everywhere face challenges around constantly re-contaminating environments. Manual cleaning does its best to address environmental risk, and helps keeps surfaces clean, but, as Sanguinet explains, "The minute somebody touches something, or sneezes or coughs near it, it's contaminated again." That goes for counter tops and cabinets, of course, but it's an especially taxing issue for the curtains between patient beds. "You've got to have curtains for privacy, it's a requirement, but no one has figured out how to cheaply, safely, and effectively keep those curtains clean." She needed something more, and when she first came across DHP technology, thought it may help solve some of her problems. "That's where this technology was so exciting to me," she says.

Sanguinet also explored some of the more typical solutions, like enhanced manual cleaning and UV Lights, but couldn't find a solution that was cost effective, safe for a room's occupants, and continuous like Synexis. "Everywhere I go, I try to be open to new processes or technology," Sanguinet says, which is what led her to a discussion with Jim Lee, the founder of Synexis. The pair got into a lengthy discussion detailing the science around Dry Hydrogen Peroxide (DHP™) Technology, and Sanguinet felt hopeful that she may have found her solution—a cost-effective device that continuously fights off microbes, no matter if there are patients or staff in the room.

She discussed implementing Synexis with various groups of her colleagues, including her Chief Medical Officer, their Infection Control Committee, and nursing and engineering staff. Being scientists themselves, the team members collectively decided to enter a trial period and put Synexis to the test.

Under Sanguinet's direction, the hospital installed Synexis devices in five different units: Oncology, Vascular Trauma, Pediatric ER, Pediatric ICU, and Trauma Surgical. They wanted to ensure Synexis could properly cover spaces in multiple departments with a variety of needs and issues. They conducted air and surface testing with samples from curtains, bed rails, counter tops, proximity cabinets, and nursing stations, along with standard air sampling for a broad spectrum of pathogens.

The hypothesis they set was for continued sustained microbial reduction, without changing other variables. They even kept the study quiet among certain staff to ensure manual cleaning didn't increase or create bias.

The results? Sanguinet proudly reports, "While more study is necessary, the system worked as promised and reduced the air and surface microbe counts significantly." That's heavy praise for a group of medical professionals with high expectations.

Sanguinet recently shared the official data, but also offered some powerful anecdotal evidence. “I serve the core of Las Vegas. What that means is that we have a very high population who use our address as their home address. They’re homeless. That’s the reality. Las Vegas is not just glitz and glam. We take care of everything that’s behind the lights. But with that, we have a lot of potential for contamination.”

She explains that the homeless population is disproportionately affected by a lack of healthcare where lice, maggots, and other insects and microbes thrive in contaminated environments. Bringing these parasites into a hospital setting can create a need for an extra layer of protection in commonly used spaces.

But it also creates a compelling visual. While the unseen microbes were retreating, the staff were able to see Synexis at work in their environment, as dead lice and retreating maggots were noted in hospital rooms where DHP Technology was deployed. “You can see it,” Sanguinet says. “If air can go there, Synexis can go there, DHP can go there.”

Having seen the powerful results herself, between the numbers and the visible evidence, Sanguinet feels passionate about sharing her experience with others. “DHP significantly reduces the organisms in the air and on surfaces,” Sanguinet says about her use of DHP technology. “The reduction promotes a cleaner environment which can reduce the risk of a hospital-acquired infection. DHP can help us continue chasing zero.” For Sanguinet, Synexis achieved the results they were hoping for.

From reducing bacteria and viruses, to attacking a plethora of pesky insects, mold, fungi, and more, Sanguinet is better equipped in her shared fight against environmental exposure. And Sanguinet has a powerful ally in Synexis as she continues her duty of chasing zero.

For more information, get in touch at Synexis.com.

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