



Germ-zapping Dalek-like robots trialed at King's Lynn's Queen Elizabeth Hospital to reduce the spread of infection

The state-of-the-art technology is being trialled in a bid to further reduce the spread of highly infectious diseases such as norovirus and Clostridium difficile.

Already successful in the United States, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn is only one of two hospitals in the country that will trial the equipment, which uses ultra violet rays to disinfect contaminated areas.

Doctor Ian Hosein, the hospital's Interim Associate Medical Director for Infection Prevention and Control, explained the robots are an addition to measures that are already in place.

"Infection control has already improved in comparison to last year," he said, "This is additional technology will build on that. It will help us drop the infection rates further, and prevent the spread of any new infections that could be emerging.

"We need to stress this approach isn't replacing cleaners, the hospital is simply introducing technology to support their work. In my view, it's about getting in good cleaners and bringing in technology - both are needed in infection control,"

Dr Hosein added that improved infection control measures mean that only one case of Clostridium difficile was recorded in January this year, and zero in February. During the same period last year, there were 13 cases recorded.

The technology is said to take 'cleaning and decontamination to the next level' by using powerful ultra-violet rays to kill infectious germs that may be lingering in rooms after being vacated by patients.

Two robots will start being used at the hospital in the next couple of weeks. Each costs US \$100,000, but the hospital has an agreement with Xenex, the company behind the technology, to a free six month trial.

Staff have been trained on how to use the technology, and the trial is set to begin in the next couple of weeks.

The QEH will initially target the hospital's isolation rooms, which always need to be deep cleaned before the next patient arrives. It could then be extended to vacant bays on wards if safety protocols can be put in place.

Dr Mark Stibich, the Chief Scientific Officer at Xenex Disinfection Services, said: "Xenex germ-zapping robots are already in use in more than 250 hospitals in the United States, with infection rate reductions of greater than 50% reported in medical journals."

Robots are also being trialed in Queens Hospital in Romford, Essex.

Source:

http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/health/video_germ_zapping_dalek_like_robots_trialed_at_king_s_lynn_s_queen_elizabeth_hospital_to_reduce_the_spread_of_infections_1_3979276

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