



House committee looks for new technology in Veterans Affairs hospitals

The problems for the embattled Veterans Affairs Department seem never ending lately. Thursday's House Committee on Science, Space and Technology hearing shone light on even more problems.

"What's additionally astounding is that the infection rates at some VA hospitals exceed the rates of private sector hospitals by ten times or more," said Rep. Paul Broun, R-Ga.

Hospital-associated infections, or HAI, are the result of pathogens and "super bugs" found on everyday items at hospitals. And it's not just a problem for the VA -- it's a problem at other hospitals around the U.S. as well.

"Every year HAI's cost \$20 billion and kill 100,000 Americans," said Morris Miller, CEO of Xenex Disinfection Services. "More than breast cancer, auto accidents and HIV combined."

The hearing Thursday looked for new technology for how to prevent such problems. Witnesses offered up suggestions from futuristic technology to a very simple solution.

"The hospitals that use our germ zapping robot kill pathogens and drug resistant super bugs and their infection rates have dropped more than 50 percent," Miller said.