

## KIRTON DBO COMMUNE AIDS INFECTION CONTROL AT SCARBOROUGH

Donna Winter, Infection Prevention and Control Clinical Nurse Specialist for Scarborough and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust has been an infection control nurse for twelve years, working at Scarborough Hospital for the past eight. She is part of a team of five nurses covering around 350 beds and is jointly responsible for managing infection throughout the Trust.

**'Recently infection control has been very high on the government's agenda,' said Donna. 'When I first came into infection control twelve years ago I thought I knew everything about the subject but you soon learn it's not just MRSA, it's not just *C.difficile*. It's a very diverse job. You have to understand equipment, decontamination, chemicals; you need to be able to read architectural drawings'**

**'The incidence of MRSA in 2004 was very high but since then the NHS has worked very hard to reduce it by a significant level. The NHS now has MRSA screening for everybody prior to admission'**

## DESIGNING BUGS OUT

Last year a selection of the UK's top designers and manufacturers were chosen to re-design furniture and equipment for NHS hospitals in the fight against MRSA and other healthcare associated infections (HCAI's). The Department of Health commissioned the Design Council to launch a nationwide search for teams of designers and manufacturers to re-design furniture and equipment making them easier to keep clean and reduce exposure to HCAI's.

As part of the Design Bugs Out process Kirton Healthcare, in conjunction with design consultancy PearsonLloyd, were challenged to re-design the hospital commode. Donna had experience of the problems that previously existed: 'years ago nearly all hospitals used the same type of commode,' she explained, and we used a bleach type product to clean them as bleach was the only thing that would kill most of the bugs. 'But then we found out that we couldn't use bleach to clean them because there was a risk of degrading the commode. So we tried a new commode which the manufacturer claimed that bleach could be used on - but they just didn't live up to our needs. They kept splitting, bits falling off and the staff on the wards, were very unhappy. But we didn't have an available alternative.'

At that time existing commodes were difficult and time-consuming to clean as they tended to be made up of multiple parts with complex joins between different materials. The simplified design of the Kirton DBO commode made cleaning quicker and easier, reducing the risk of healthcare associated infections with improvements to aesthetics and functionality aiming to improve patient dignity and comfort.

## EVERY RESERVOIR OF INFECTION DESIGNED OUT

Donna and her team were aware of the Design Bugs Out project from the outset, as she explained: 'We'd been at some of the showcase presentations and seen the design of the commodes and then at IPS conference we saw the commode prototype. We saw them and just said 'we want them, where do we get them from?' We gave Kirton a call and sometime later we were able to take a prototype commode round the wards. Our procurement staff couldn't believe we were so excited over a commode. The reaction was very different to anything we'd had before, within a couple of weeks we'd ordered 120 units and I think we were the first hospital in the country to introduce them, and the response from staff on the wards was fantastic. We had some teething problems but Kirton were fantastic, they organised to repair or replace them and get them back out quickly. We haven't asked very much of Kirton, because to be honest we haven't needed to, but anything we have asked hasn't been any problem really.'

**'There are obviously other commodes out there and some claim to have bugs designed out, but in my opinion they simply aren't as good as the Kirton. I always say they're the Rolls Royce of commodes. We do random swabbing to test cleaning and so far results have been really good. The main benefit to the staff is the ability to clean the commode properly by turning it over easily and doing the underneath rather than dismantling it. Every reservoir of infection has been designed out.'**

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## PATIENT DIGNITY

The innovative Kirton top-loading commode pan eliminates gaps and openings, preventing waste contaminating any hard-to-reach parts of the commode. The depth of the pan is greater than current commode pans to accommodate more waste, reduce splash back and provide a better patient experience.

**'There's a big patient dignity issue,' explained Donna. 'A patient obviously has to feel comfortable on a commode and one of the benefits we've seen of this product is that our pulp usage has decreased. I'm not sure of exact numbers but I know some months we've actually cancelled our pulp delivery and that's mainly because people are liking the commode so much they're taking people to the toilet rather than leaving it by the bedside. From a patient dignity perspective it's fantastic and it has saved the trust a significant amount.'**

## EASY TO CLEAN

The solid construction of the commode has also made a difference at Scarborough. 'It doesn't sound like a commode, rattling about in the middle of the night disturbing everybody,' said Donna. 'It's very silent when you're pushing it. The manoeuvrability of it is fantastic; the brakes don't stick on and you don't have to use loads of pressure to get them on or off. Everybody loves it. But overall for us the main thing is being able to clean every single part of the commode properly and easily.'

What difference has the Kirton DBO commode made to meeting the Trust's infection control targets? 'It's hard to single out one thing in our efforts to control infection but the Kirton commode has definitely made a very big contribution,' said Donna. 'We've currently made a 30 per cent reduction on last year's infection figures which is fantastic and the commode is definitely part of that. The CQC (Care Quality Commission) who regulate us and assess us against the hygiene code have been in and carried out a thorough audit and they're very happy with the commodes.'

## DEEP CLEANING

The next stage for the organisation is to provide a proactive HPV commode fogging service, 'The plan is to go on to each ward, take away every single commode for deep cleaning and replace them with decontaminated commodes which we've undergone additional cleaning by a process of hydrogen peroxide fogging', said Donna.

**'We've installed Kirton commodes throughout our hospitals and we suggest to anyone who will listen to think about the "Kirton design bugs out commode."**

**'If we're not having to order new commodes in two years - which it doesn't look like we're going to - that's fantastic. Our previous commodes required a frequent replacement due to split seats and rubber components and all the material sections. The Kirton commode just does not have those problems.'**

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