

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust took decisive action when its endoscopy department was unable to keep up with increasing demands and waiting lists began to lengthen.

A £1.5 million investment has produced an impressive new department that's won plaudits, and earned high GRS scores and JAG accreditation, while helping to cut some waiting lists to zero.

Two medical wards were redeveloped and refurbished to produce the purpose-designed facility, where sister June Bayley told *Inside Hospitals*: "Although we were operating to BSG guidelines in the previous unit, opened back in 1982, it outgrew itself and wouldn't have been able to pass JAG accreditation.

"Working with Tracy Burrell, the trust's decontamination lead, local architect Jonathan Campbell and Sterilox endoscopy's installation manager, Nick Meinertzhagen-Wilson, we've produced a fantastic new facility that's significantly improved the environment for staff and patients and enabled us to develop several new services. The JAG team was very impressed with our standards."

What a transformation. "Now we're going for BS:EN ISO 13485, the international standard for decontamination," added staff nurse Jo Rolland. "We're doing a few minor building modifications that will further protect the cleanliness of the scopes, such as adding more pass through hatches, and air conditioning to enhance the working conditions for staff. Work starts early March and will be completed by the end of

Purpose-designed endoscope decontamination at Blackpool Victoria Hospital

As the impressive gastroenterology unit at Blackpool Victoria Hospital moves towards full international accreditation, sister June Bayley and her team describe the key role played by the purpose-designed endoscope decontamination facility



the month, when we'll be ready to be assessed."

At the heart of the decontamination facility is an impressive array of Sterilox endoscopy equipment - generators, automatic endoscope reprocessors (AERs) and drying cabinets.

The trust moved to Sterilox some years ago, as June explained: "There were increasing Health & Safety concerns for staff over the use of certain chemicals in the decontamination process, we were having to monitor staff for lung function, and we were having problems with the old washers-disinfectors."

Junior sister Sarah

Gledhill added: "Breakdowns with the old machines meant that we were starting to cancel lists."

June said: "Around that time some hospitals had problems with scopes not being cleaned properly - we needed something new and looked at the options. We talked with other hospitals and Sterilox seemed the best solution."

There's certainly no shortage of Sterilox users in the region with installations at Wythenshawe, North Manchester, Aintree and Ormskirk amongst others.

"We started with two Sterilox machines in the old department and as the workload increased added a third

to enable us to process scopes in time," said June. "Service is good with any problems often solved online by remote diagnostics."

Sterilox endoscopy's regional account manager, Debbie McKinney, said: "The machines had done five-years hard work and when the time came to look at equipment for the new facility the decision was taken to replace with new."

"The new style E200 generators have dual components to provide a more robust service. If there's a problem you still have 50 per cent capacity so you still keep a washer going - although you might extend a list you can still get through it. The upgraded AERs have a lot of improvements over the previous model which have enhanced the

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Drivers for change: (left to right) June Bayley sister endoscopy, Jo Rolland staff nurse and Sarah Gledhill junior sister

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performance of the machine.”

June agreed, adding: “The latest machines are more reliable and with the drying cabinets we can keep scopes for up to 72-hours, rather than three as before. It means we don’t have to clean the scopes again each morning before we start the lists - you can plan what you

require for the next morning based on the list. And scopes are always ready for an emergency.”

Debbie said: “In terms of labour saving, the drying cabinets pay for themselves very quickly. There are three cabinets here -

each can take up to eight scopes at a time. HEPA filtered air is blown through the lumens and an air curtain protects the scopes when the door is open.”

While some gastroenterology units, even in the latest new-build hospitals, look busy and potentially stressful for patients, the specially designed facility at Blackpool Victoria Hospital is a haven of calm. The spacious reception area with its automatic



Safe storage: the cabinets maintain the validated microbiological quality of the scopes for up to 72-hours

Endozime AW Plus dispensed through a dosing pump and flushed down each channel and washed externally. Accessories are also cleaned with Endozime AW Plus.

The scopes pass through a second hatch into the main decontamination room. Here there are two Sterilox E200 generators and four SAFER automatic, flexible endoscope reprocessors.

The Sterilox solution, used in the decontamination process, is so safe that it’s widely used in the US to spray onto fresh fruit and vegetables to keep bacteria at bay.

Underlining its medicinal benefits, trials have just been completed in which Sterilox has been used to aid the healing process of venous leg ulcers.

The HOCl solution produced by the E200 generator is a



doors exudes a calming air, enhanced by the careful colour coordination, subdued lighting and attentive staff. Yet even though the department is busy there seem to be few people around and staff are not rushing hither and thither.

As June explained: “We’ve lots of room in reception, four scope rooms instead of two, and four patient admission rooms, trolley recovery areas and a sitting area - so thanks to the design, even though we’re busy it looks virtually empty, which makes it more relaxing and stress-free for patients.”

The unit has 39 endoscopes. After the procedures, scopes are placed in sealed trays and introduced into the decontamination facility through a pass-through hatch. The 15-minute manual cleaning of each endoscope includes Ruhof’s



fungicidal, virucidal, bactericidal, mycobactericidal and sporicidal solution produced at a specific concentration at almost neutral pH. This is non-toxic, non-hazardous, environmentally-friendly and yet effective at killing a wide range of pathogens.

The E200 SWIFT system alleviates water pressure problems eliminating any need for an industrial break tank to be installed. The Sterilox bacteria-

free rinse water is directly connected to the SAFER and pre-doses process water with Sterilox. Healthcare assistants simply and safely load the machine with salt crystals and Polymax, a corrosion inhibitor, as required and indicated by the touch screen panel.

The channels of the endoscope are attached to the SAFER AER and the scope’s reference details keyed into the machine. The combination of the automated cleaning action using ultrasonics, spray ball, individual monitored channel flowing, and the fast-acting, effective liquid sterilant gives every patient a safe endoscope and a safe working environment for clinicians and staff.

The single shot disinfectant is not diluted in the AER and is not a fixative. This eliminates problems of minimum effective concentration and minimises the risk of prion carry over.

SAFER uses Sterilox rinse water, a dilution of Sterilox, that has been shown in independent studies to produce bacteria free water reliably. The SAFER also enables a no-touch means of achieving HTM2030 rinse water sampling.

Additionally, SAFER is a locked system, ensuring the operator is protected from the endoscope and the fluids once the process is started. Sterilox has been shown to have no health and safety implications - even for eye and skin contact.

Once the 23 to 30 minutes cycle time (dependent on water pressure) is completed the scopes are transferred to the drying cabinets, where they can

be stored for up to 72-hours.

The dual HEPA air filtered storage cabinets are a safe solution for the vertical storage of all major endoscopes. They are designed to maintain the validated microbiological quality of reprocessed endoscopes, reducing costs, saving valuable staff time and ensuring that scopes are immediately available for use within a safe environment.

Jo Rowland said: “The Sterilox equipment is very easy to use. It’s a closed system, so you don’t come into contact with it.”

Acknowledging the friendly teamwork ethic that’s apparent in the department, June Bayley concludes: “Jo was involved with the JAG accreditation and is the lead for decontamination for gastroenterology. The team have all contributed to our success and been drivers for change - recognised by the trust when we were runners-up in the Team of the Year Awards.”

Daniel Bee, managing director, Sterilox endoscopy: said: “Endoscopy unit staff have to worry about cross-contamination, scope availability and the ability to treat patients within the target time. Hospitals using Sterilox systems are more likely to treat more patients with cleaner scopes because of the ‘whole system’ approach to decontamination and modern installations such as here in Blackpool.”

For further information, call Sterilox endoscopy on 01785 782 420, e-mail sales@puricore.com or visit www.puricore.com



Teamwork: (left) Debbie McKinney of Sterilox endoscopy and June Bayley

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