

A solid green horizontal bar.

**IS YOUR WASHER  
DISINFECTOR INFECTIOUS?**



A sluice/dirty utility/pan room is designed to do one thing – protect you and your fellow clinicians from contracting an infectious disease. It does it in a number of ways but that is its overarching purpose.

It achieves this – initially – through its design.

Correctly designed sluice/dirty utility/pan rooms have a natural flow to them that takes you and your colleagues around the room to allow you to effectively make stops at the various stations you need in order to safely dispose of infectious material.

At the end of the process you wash and sanitise your hands and then leave the sluice/dirty utility/pan room confident in the knowledge that you are as infectious free as it's possible to be.

Or are you?

### **How Microbes Behave**

Microbes are everywhere.

They are found on surfaces, clothes, food and they are loaded in the air we breathe – around 1800 different types to be exact.

Many, if not most, are perfectly harmless to humans – either because our immune system can deal with them or any infections are minor and non-life threatening.

However, others are not and it is those that we all strive to eliminate as much as possible.

Microbes, when they find a surface on which they can survive, flourish, especially if the conditions are optimal.

In the right conditions ecologies of microbes can behave a lot like garden weeds – they take root, spread rapidly and then become hard to remove fully.

And like garden weeds, unless you eliminate all of the microbes, they will be back given enough time.

### **The Risk**

Your infection control solution – be it a bedpan washer disinfectant or a pulp macerator – stands a higher chance than normal of getting a coating of microbes in its day to day usage.

No matter how hard a clinician tries, it's all but impossible to prevent harmful microbes from getting into the air and settling into both the machinery and surfaces on any nearby counters, clothes and skin.

This is why gloves and aprons are required when handling infectious material throughout the process. Minimising the spread of microbes from a bedpan to clothes is critical. Should the clinician wear their uniform home then the potential spread of infection is vast.

The bedpan washer disinfectant itself *can* be a source of infection as the outer housing can become coated in microbes but physical contact with the machine – especially when disposing of infectious material – should be minimal.

The more likely outcome is that an infection is spread through contact with a bedpan that wasn't properly cleaned. In this case this can be a symptom of a wider problem.



## **Prevention**

Your bedpan washer disinfecter should have passive safety features – like hands free technology and antimicrobial coating – in order to minimise the need to make contact with the housing and prevent microbes from taking root and spreading.

If physical contact can be limited or eliminated then it makes it significantly harder for microbes migrating from the machine to the clinician.

If, on the other hand, the bedpan itself hasn't been properly cleaned or the machine hasn't completed the cleaning cycle there could be a problem with the machine itself.

To properly disinfect a bedpan, a bedpan washer disinfecter uses steam to heat the chamber to 80 degrees Celsius for 60 seconds. This temperature for this length of time kills 99.9% of known bacteria. If, through misuse and poor maintenance the washer disinfecter fails to reach that all important 80 degrees, the bedpan – although visibly clean – will not be disinfected.

Planned Preventative Maintenance minimises this critical part of the process from failing and therefore significantly reduces the risk of infection.

Equally, regular disinfection of your sluice/dirty utility/pan room – including the housing of you bedpan washer disinfecter – will also contribute to minimising the risk.

DDC Dolphin offer Planned Preventative Maintenance packages to suit your facility and your budgets. We are dedicated to providing and sustaining infection control solutions that minimise risk and protect patients and staff.

To discuss which maintenance provision would work best for you, contact us today to speak to one of our experts.

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