Our team feels we have a responsibility to hold ourselves to extremely high standards, and constantly assess how well we are doing—validating that surfaces don’t just look clean, but actually are clean on a microbial level,”—Dan Thompson, Director of Environmental Services

The Situation: Ongoing Threats Lead to Ongoing Evaluation of Infection Prevention Protocols

As hospitals across the United States see dramatic increases in the number of infections with antibiotic-resistant bacteria1, growing concerns about emerging threats (such as Ebola) as well as familiar seasonal challenges posed by the start of flu season have placed extra pressure on hospitals and its staff. Hospitals must frequently reevaluate surveillance practices and existing infection control protocols to make sure they are equipped to combat infections and other threats that exist in today’s hospital environment. Patient care starts and ends with proper infection control management and environmental cleaning and as such, it is important for staff to look at additional prevention practices to offer even more protection for patients.

In Georgia, Houston Medical Center (HMC) looked to adopt new weapons and tactics by way of ultraviolet (UV) light — technology that is tested and proven effective to inactivate potentially harmful pathogens on hospital surfaces.

The Solution: A Comprehensive Approach to Infection Prevention

In June 2014, following a two-month trial in which three UV devices were tested, HMC selected the Clorox Healthcare™ Optimum-UV™ System as the “secret weapon” to supplement existing infection control practices.

According to hospital administrator Stephen Machen, FACHE, in the end, the selection process was easy. “Durability, ease of use, and simple maintenance made the Optimum-UV™ System a great fit for HMC,” said Machen, adding that because the device is easy to operate and maneuver, and training is very straightforward, employees feel confident using it. However, the biggest differentiator, and what made the Optimum-UV™ System the best choice, is how it fits into the bigger picture of HMC’s approach to infection prevention.
UV disinfection is designed to supplement, not replace, standard surface cleaning and disinfection, so during that same two-month trial period, HMC also tested a second weapon to reduce healthcare-associated pathogens — a new protocol designed to optimize the thoroughness and efficacy of cleaning and disinfection.

As part of this new protocol, environmental services staff began using Clorox Healthcare® Bleach Germicidal Wipes for daily targeted disinfection of high-touch surfaces in all patient care areas as well as for terminal cleaning of patient rooms upon transfer or discharge and routine terminal cleaning of operating rooms.

In the past, the use of bleach was limited to the terminal cleaning of *C. difficile* isolation rooms, and while the Optimum-UV™ System and enhanced bleach cleaning protocol are new, HMC’s meticulous attention to environmental cleaning and quality improvement is part of a longstanding commitment to patient safety.

“Our team feels we have a responsibility to hold ourselves to extremely high standards, and constantly assess how well we are doing — validating that surfaces don’t just look clean, but actually are clean on a microbial level,” says Dan Thompson, Director of Environmental Services.

To do this, the environmental services team regularly uses an adenosine triphosphate (ATP) monitoring system to measure the amount of organic matter left behind on environmental surfaces after cleaning and disinfection to measure the thoroughness and effectiveness of their efforts. The new enhanced bleach cleaning protocol “has exceeded all expectations,” and ATP testing consistently shows excellent results throughout the facility.

Hospitals face new challenges every day, but the HMC team feels that by combining enhanced surface disinfection and UV-C technology, the Optimum-UV™ System allows them to be proactive in the fight against infections, and reduce the risk to patients, staff and visitors.

For more information about the Clorox Healthcare™ Optimum–UV™ System, visit www.CloroxHealthcare.com/UVDI.