

PRESS RELEASE

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BIOCOTE REDUCES BACTERIA LEVELS BY OVER 95% IN WARD AT HEARTLANDS HOSPITAL

The first ever study to investigate the effectiveness of silver at reducing levels of bacteria in an environment has published its initial findings. The environmental trial compares two out-patient wards in the Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust, one at Heartlands Hospital, containing furniture and equipment with BioCote[®] antimicrobial protection and one containing standard, untreated items.

BioCote[®] protected products contain silver, a natural antimicrobial, with a high efficacy against bacteria, mould and fungi. When micro-organisms come into contact with the silver, their ability to reproduce is inhibited and they die.

Results from the trials show that **the facility at Heartlands, which contained BioCote[®] protected products had 95.8% less bacteria present in the environment, than the standard ward with no BioCote[®] present.** The products tested in the trials included waste bins, blinds, tiles, door handles and light switches.

Initial indications show that using silver-based products in a hospital environment can lead to a reduction in bacterial colonisation, resulting in a more hygienic environment for patients. With fewer bacteria in the environment, it is logical that the risks of cross contamination are reduced and consequently the risks of patients being infected with “superbugs” such as MRSA are reduced.

In addition, the results showed that **within the facility at Heartlands, furniture and equipment with BioCote® protection harboured 92.6% less bacteria than those without protection.** These results prove that silver can complement cleaning and hygiene practices, working in-between cleans to reduce levels of bacteria on BioCote® protected equipment.

The study also showed that BioCote® protected products can help reduce bacteria counts on unprotected products within their vicinity, thus reducing the overall levels of bacteria in the complete environment. **Standard equipment and furniture which were in the ward alongside BioCote® protected products saw a 43.5% reduction in bacteria on their surfaces, than standard products in the ward without BioCote®.**

The collaboration between the Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust and BioCote Ltd began in May 2006, when Heartlands Hospital was the first in the UK to equip an out-patient facility with furniture and equipment that had BioCote antimicrobial protection. As soon as the facility had been in use for 12 months, tests began to compare the products with and without BioCote® protection and also to compare the facility to a similar ward which only contains standard hospital equipment.

To make the study as consistent as possible, both environments were out-patient wards with a similar through-flow of patients. All testing was carried out at an independent laboratory. The study has concentrated on bacteria counts on the surface of objects, in the form of TVCs and does not identify actual organisms at this stage.

Matthew Harte, Managing Director at BioCote Ltd comments, “We believe that this initial study in conjunction with the NHS helps to justify the use of BioCote® protected products. These initial findings indicate that the NHS should be

increasing their use of BioCote® protected products to help support hygiene practices within healthcare environments, leading to reduced HCAI rates”.

With NHS Trusts facing increased pressure from The Healthcare Commission to improve hygiene standards, BioCote® protected products can complement cleaning and hand hygiene practices by lowering bacteria counts in ward environments.

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Notes to Editors

1. This is a joint announcement by Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust and BioCote Ltd
2. Photos of the unit containing BioCote® protected products are attached. Down-the-line interviews or further photographs can also be arranged.
3. For further information on BioCote, contact BioCote Ltd on 01902 824450.