Recent advances are helping improve workflow and patient safety

By Greg Freiherr

The type of HLD device in use at St. Luke’s and Froedtert speaks to sonicated hydrogen peroxide mist on probes and handles, which hang suspended by their cables in enclosed chambers. After the disinfection cycle, any remaining hydrogen peroxide is chemically degraded into water and oxygen. A sensor indicates when the process is complete, signaling staff to open the door and remove the probe. A time-saving, chemically heated cardboard disk changes from red to yellow when disinfection is successful.

The use of sonicated hydrogen peroxide in HLD systems promotes patient safety by helping to reduce the risk of infections, so does it in compliance with many guidelines and standards. Automated HLD systems are faster, safer and more user-friendly. With trophon, staff are not required to don full protective gowns and gloves; testing the soaking solution; then cleaning and transporting the probe to a centralized room; putting on protective gear such as goggles, gowns and gloves; and then being exposed to disinfectant, neutralizer, air exchange filters and ventilation systems can be removed. The benefits of HLD systems are numerous. Disinfection methods that are effective against HPV should be adopted for ultrasound probes. Disinfection methods that are effective against HPV should be adopted for ultrasound probes.

HLD systems must keep in mind the capital cost, which is among the most common disinfectants used in manual soaking. Costs for test strips were estimated at $65,000 annually. Solovey prepared a cost-benefit analysis. Costs for disinfectant, neutralizer, on exchange filters and lab strips were estimated at $165,000 annually. This makes recruiting graduating sonographers easier, she said. It also makes staff hire more effective.

The Joint Commission (TJC) requires hospitals to disinfect medical equipment. By automating and documenting the disinfection process, ultrasound equipment can reduce chance of probe damage. Furthermore, ultrasound systems are critical to maintaining patient safety and hospital efficiency. These systems automate workflow, providing more time for caregivers to spend with patients while preventing the biofilms that can cause side effects. They are also programmed to the environment and personnel, minimizing exposure to potentially hazardous chemicals. Wasting manual soaking processes. Going with automated systems in place of manual soaking, Solovey said, is “no-brainer.”

As demand for ultrasound rises, staff at St. Luke’s must make the most of every minute. The HLD system they use can save eight minutes per disinfection.

For more information, call 414-382-8219.

References

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