

Essity and Sodexo co-sponsor second successful Infection Prevention Society [IPS] Environment, Cleaning and Decontamination Conference

2 years ago



Informative, superb and brilliant – these were just a few of the adjectives used to describe the second IPS Environment, Cleaning and Decontamination conference co-sponsored by Essity's global leading professional hygiene brand Tork and Sodexo Health & Care.

This face-to-face educational conference was aimed at healthcare practitioners and fronted by IPS President and ECD Lead Lisa Butcher and focused on fresh topics introduced by experts.

Key speakers included IPC & sustainability specialist Heidi Barnard who examined the industry's path to net zero, highlighting the growing number of successful reusable products on the market such as sharps containers.

She also highlighted the ongoing quest to develop high quality, reusable PPE equipment claiming that tomorrow's purchasing model would be value-based rather than focusing on value over cost.

The pros and cons of building new hospitals with single patient rooms were then weighed up by Dr David Jenkins, Consultant Medical Microbiologist at the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust.

He evidenced that these provided protection against healthcare-associated infections while acknowledging the potential as a psychological barrier for patients. But he added that single- room hospitals were difficult to staff, expensive to build and required more water outlets but he concluded that hospital design needed to be flexible to mirror the unpredictable nature of healthcare.

Consultant Practitioner in Infection Prevention at Hywel Dda University Health Board Tracey Gauci took to the floor to share her healthcare hygiene tips. She explained the difference between cleaning and disinfection and discussed the role of bleach in healthcare cleaning, ending with an 'S-shape hack' that involved cleaning from top to bottom; moving from clean to dirty, remembering the importance of contact time and using one wipe on one surface and in one direction.

Infection Consultant at the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust Dr Nicole Stoesser then explained how biofilms can readily spread along sink pipework and considered whether heating devices, waterless facilities or chemical or biological treatments could be solutions to the problem.

Professor Cath Noakes, Deputy Director Leeds Institute for Fluid Dynamics School of Civil Engineering University of Leeds, covered the topic of air quality. She talked through solutions such as UV technology, ionisers, plasma devices and photocatalytic oxidation, adding that further research into such systems was required because most data currently originates from lab studies.

Finally, Consultant Clinical Scientist Mark Garvey from University Hospital Birmingham closed the event by summing up the speakers' contributions and discussing whether or not infection control practices can hinder productivity.

IPS President and ECD Lead Lisa Butcher said: "It was really informative and the entire event was absolutely brilliant. It was a super day with superb speakers and I look forward to continuing this important dialogue next year."

The aim of the event – hosted by the Infection Prevention Society- was to help healthcare practitioners develop their expertise, reduce preventable infections and create safer environments.

Simon Lilley, Director of Strategy, Sodexo Health & Care added: "This supports our aim to create better patient and staff experiences, improve clinical outcomes and ultimately improve patient flow by reducing delayed discharges."

Essity's Marketing Director – Healthcare Thomas Bergin says the annual event is proving to be very productive and much needed.

"Working together with the IPS and Sodexo helps to provide both networking and collaborative dialogue with academic subject matter experts and healthcare practitioners."

This successful event is being followed up the first IPS ECD webinar 'Waste: It really does matter' on 1 March 2023, with speaker Dr Anne Woolridge covering a wealth of research and practical experience of healthcare waste management and waste treatment processes. [Click to register.](#)