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Hospital privacy curtains are frequently and rapidly contaminated with potentially pathogenic bacteria.

Ohl M1, Schweizer M, Graham M, Heilmann K, Boyken L, Diekema D. Author information

Am J Infect Control. 2012 Dec;40(10):904-6. doi: 10.1016/j.ajic.2011.12.017. Epub 2012 Mar 30.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:

Privacy curtains are a potentially important site of bacterial contamination in hospitals. We performed a longitudinal study to determine the prevalence and time course of bacterial contamination on privacy curtains.

METHODS:

Over a 3-week period, swab cultures (n = 180) were obtained twice weekly from the leading edge of 43 curtains in 30 rooms in 2 intensive care units and a medical ward. Curtains were marked to determine when they were changed. Contamination with *Staphylococcus aureus*, methicillin-resistant *S aureus* (MRSA), *Enterococcus* spp, vancomycin-resistant enterococcus (VRE), or aerobic gram-negative rods was determined by standard microbiologic methods. To distinguish persistence of pathogens on curtains from recontamination, all VRE and MRSA were typed using pulsed-field gel electrophoresis.

RESULTS:

Twelve of 13 curtains (92%) placed during the study showed contamination within 1 week. Forty-one of 43 curtains (95%) demonstrated contamination on at least 1 occasion, including 21% with MRSA and 42% with VRE. Eight curtains yielded VRE at multiple time points: 3 with persistence of a single isolate type and 5 with different types, suggesting frequent recontamination.

CONCLUSION:

Privacy curtains are rapidly contaminated with potentially pathogenic bacteria. Further studies should investigate the role of privacy curtains in pathogen transmission and provide interventions to reduce curtain contamination.

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Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22464039>

Study Finds 92% of Hospital Privacy Curtains Contaminated with Pathogenic Bacteria Within One Week

April 9, 2012

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – APRIL 09, 2012 – For one person in 20, spending the night in a hospital will lead to an infection, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Now, research recently published by the American Journal for Infection Control reveals 92% of hospital privacy curtains were contaminated with potentially dangerous bacteria such as MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) and VRE (vancomycin-resistant enterococcus) within one week of being laundered. This research, conducted at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, advances a growing body of knowledge pointing to contaminated surfaces within the patient environment as a potentially strong contributor to healthcare-associated infections (HAIs). The same research group recently submitted for publication a follow-on, randomized, controlled study, examining the effectiveness of PurThread privacy curtains in a clinical setting.

The study, titled, "Hospital Privacy Curtains are Frequently and Rapidly Contaminated with Potentially Pathogenic Bacteria," monitored 43 privacy curtains over a three-week period in a medical ward, surgical intensive care unit (ICU) and a medical ICU. Privacy curtains were chosen for the study as they are frequently touched by healthcare workers before coming in contact with patients, and because the curtains are difficult to clean and disinfect. As such, in most hospitals, privacy curtains are infrequently changed, often only after dirt is visible.

"It's estimated that U.S. hospitals see over 1.7 million HAIs each year at a cost of \$16,000 to \$19,000 per patient, or up to \$45 billion a year," said Bill O'Neill, VP of Infection Control Applications at PurThread Technologies, an antimicrobial technology company focused on textile products for use in infection prevention. "While many of these HAIs are a result of catheters and ventilators, this study from the University of Iowa contributes to mounting evidence showing that surfaces in hospitals may be a source of contamination for healthcare worker hands after hand hygiene."

Studies show 20%-40% of HAIs can be traced to the contamination of healthcare worker's hands. The immediate action healthcare workers can take today is to wash their hands after touching privacy curtains and before touching the patient. In addition, a developing market for antimicrobial products, for both soft and hard surfaces, holds the potential to help hospitals continuously reduce the bioburden on frequently touched surfaces. The PurThread technology integrates a proprietary alloy of established antimicrobial elements, such as silver and copper, into the polyester fibers themselves. PurThread's method provides an even distribution of antimicrobial elements that cannot wear off or wash out.

"This is an exciting time for hospital infection prevention," added O'Neill. "Research data and technology improvements are giving hospitals many new options. We look forward to helping hospitals in their fight to reduce HAIs and pioneering a new standard for soft surface cleanliness."

Publication of the follow on study is expected later in 2012. Both studies are funded through non-restrictive research grants from PurThread Technologies.

Source: <http://www.purthread.com/study-finds-92-of-hospital-privacy-curtains-contaminated-with-pathogenic-bacteria-within-one-week/>

The cost-effective solution for greater patient satisfaction

With ImageFIRST™, You Get Reduced Chance of Injury

Changing a cubicle curtain may seem like a simple task, but your current method may actually be quite dangerous! The used curtain that is being removed may be infected with pathogenic material, which means your staff could get sick from them if they are not handled correctly. Moreover, curtain changes usually involve a ladder, and according to the CDC, 43% of falls in the last decade have involved a ladder. In fact, in 2011, work-related ladder fall injuries accounted for 113 fatalities, an estimated 15,460 nonfatal injuries that involved at least one day away from work, and an estimated 34,000 nonfatal injuries that required emergency room treatment.

Our innovative system gets your staff off the ladder and out of harm's way so that our Customer Advocates can put their extensive infection prevention training to work for you - while keeping their feet firmly on the ground!



The cost-effective solution for greater patient satisfaction

Fewer Workman's Comp Claims

With ImageFIRST™, You Get Triple Bioshield ProtectionSM

The improvement of your patients' health is at the forefront of your healthcare system or facility. However, healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) have been linked to readmissions after a patient's hospital stay. HAIs have a significant negative impact on overall patient impression, as well as adverse financial and health implications.

That's why ImageFIRST developed our **Triple Bioshield Protection Process**, a comprehensive infection prevention system comprised of three steps that go beyond regulatory standards to help ensure your patients' safety through high-quality products that will increase their satisfaction.

Dead on Contact

Our advanced wash process sanitizes your cubical curtains, killing 99.999% of common pathogens.

BacStat Bioshield

We apply a softener and protective coating to every panel during the laundering process. This coating creates a zone of inhibition on your curtains, which means that any bacteria that may land on them during their use won't be able to spread.

Plastic Barrier

All of our products are encased in a plastic barrier for delivery to ensure that your items are as clean and sanitized when they get to you as they were when they left our plant.

When you know that all three of these steps are being used together, you can be assured that the curtain panels protecting your patients' privacy is also protecting their health.



The cost-effective solution for greater patient satisfaction

Highest Sanitizing Standards: Triple Bioshield ProtectionSM

With ImageFIRST, You Get

Proof of Compliance

For Infection Prevention and Inspection
Agencies



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With ImageFIRST™, You Get Service Reports

We provide reports that show the last time the curtain panels were changed in any given room or area. This is a quick way to make sure that you are staying up-to-date on your mandated changes.

Curtain Rental - Customer Report **DELCA030 - DELCAMP MERCY WEST**

<u>Delivery Number</u>	<u>Room Number</u>	<u>Area Number</u>	<u>Last Scan</u>
DELCAMP MERCY WEST			
81A000	101	1	2015-02-11
81A000	101	2	2015-02-11
81A000	101	3	2015-02-11
81A000	102	1	2015-02-04
81A000	102	2	2015-02-04
81A000	102	3	2015-02-04
81A000	103	1	2015-02-11
81A000	103	2	2015-02-11
81A000	103	3	2015-02-11
81A000	104	1	2015-02-04
81A000	104	2	2015-02-04
81A000	104	3	2015-02-04
81A000	105	1	2015-02-11
81A000	105	2	2015-02-11
81A000	105	3	2015-02-11
81A000	106	1	2015-02-04
81A000	106	2	2015-02-04
81A000	106	3	2015-02-04
81A000	107	1	2015-02-11
81A000	107	2	2015-02-11
81A000	107	3	2015-02-11
81A000	108	1	2015-02-04
81A000	108	2	2015-02-04
81A000	108	3	2015-02-04
81A000	109	1	2015-02-11
81A000	109	2	2015-02-11
81A000	109	3	2015-02-11
81A000	110	1	2015-02-04
81A000	110	2	2015-02-04
81A000	110	3	2015-02-04
81A000	111	1	2015-02-11
81A000	111	2	2015-02-11
81A000	111	3	2015-02-11
81A000	112	1	2015-02-04
81A000	112	2	2015-02-04

With ImageFIRST™, You Get Exception Reports

It's important to make sure that all the curtains in a given area are changed. That's why we developed the *Exception Report*, which will highlight instances when the number of scanned panels does not match the number of panels assigned to that area.

Curtain Rental - Exception Report for 2015-02-11

<u>Delivery #</u>	<u>Room #</u>	<u>Area #</u>	<u>Number of Panels</u>	<u>Hang Type</u>	<u>Number of Scans</u>
81A000	104	1	6	Take Down	1
81A000	104	1	6	Hang Up	4
81A000	203	3	3	Take Down	2
81A000	203	3	3	Hang Up	4
81A000	315	2	2	Take Down	1
81A000	317	1	6	Take Down	3
81A000	401	3	4	Hang Up	2
81A000	407	3	6	Hang Up	5

With ImageFIRST™, You Get A Missed Change Report

Accidents happen. Even with the best of intentions, some cubical curtains may get overlooked during the changing process. With our scanning technology, we can run a report of any curtains that haven't been changed within a designated timeframe so that we can rectify the error and get your program back on track.

Missed Change Report from 2015-02-11 - 2015-02-18

<u>Delivery #</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Room #</u>	<u>Area #</u>	<u>Service Date</u>	<u>Panels</u>	<u>Scans</u>	<u>Missed</u>
81A000	DELCAMP MERCY WEST	104	1	2015-02-11	6	4	2
81A000	DELCAMP MERCY WEST	203	1	2015-02-11	3	1	2
81A000	DELCAMP MERCY WEST	315	1	2015-02-11	2	1	1
81A000	DELCAMP MERCY WEST	317	1	2015-02-11	6	3	3
81A000	DELCAMP MERCY WEST	407	1	2015-02-11	4	2	2
81A000	DELCAMP MERCY WEST	407	1	2015-02-11	6	5	1

With ImageFIRST, You Get
Efficiency
That Will Streamline Your
Operations



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With ImageFIRST™, You Can Save Time

Under your current system, changing your cubicle curtains probably involves calling EVS, waiting for their arrival, trying to locate clean cubicle curtains, and then climbing up and down with the the panels to do each change. It's a time-consuming process that we have streamlined to make more efficient. As an ImageFIRST customer,

- Individual panels can be removed and rehung in **90 seconds or less**.
- With ImageFIRST's time-saving system, you will have a stock of extra panels on hand with your linen storage that can be changed without the use of a ladder. In fact, your **housekeeping staff will be able to change them without calling EVS for assistance!**



The cost-effective solution for greater patient satisfaction

Time Savings

With ImageFIRST™, You Can **Eliminate Ladder Use**

Using ladders to change your cubicle curtains doesn't just take up extra time; it also creates several safety hazards. For example, the ladder's placement may disrupt the flow of traffic in the area, increasing the likelihood that there will be collisions, trips or falls. Climbing the ladder with panels in hand increases the chances that your staff will get injured. Plus, the noise of using the ladder will interrupt your patients' much-needed peace. That's why we developed our innovative system to allow our Customer Advocates to change the cubicle curtain panels from the floor. That means no more ladders in patient areas, blocking paths and creating safety hazards!



The cost-effective solution for greater patient satisfaction

Eliminate Ladder Use

With ImageFIRST, You Get An
Investment Summary
That Clearly Outlines
Your Next Steps



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With ImageFIRST™, You Get Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Noise is big issue when opening and closing curtains. How does your cubicle curtain program compare to other curtains?

The panels in our cubicle curtain program allow for staff to move between them without having to open or close the top mesh portion of the entire curtain. This feature makes the ImageFIRST cubicle curtain program the quietest available option. Zero swooshing beats quiet swooshing every time.

Q: Are all polyester cubicle curtain fabrics fire-retardant?

No, not all hospital curtain polyester fabrics comply with the required NFPA 701 fire code. However, all fabrics in the ImageFIRST cubicle curtain program do meet all local, state, and federal fire codes and are intrinsically fire-retardant, meaning the flame resistant properties cannot be washed out, worn out or removed from the curtain.

Q: How long will it take for me to receive my cubicle curtain program order?

When ordering curtains, lead time depends on the fabric you choose. We have a wide selection of in-stock curtain fabrics. These in-stock curtain patterns normally ship within 2-3 weeks with receipt of order. Non-stock fabric pattern typically ship within 4-6 weeks. When we size your facility for curtains and know the fabric you've selected, we will notify you of the approximate lead time for delivery of your order.

Q: Do you provide installation for your cubicle curtain program?

We provide installation for your cubicle curtain program. We also remove existing curtains. All of our curtains meet all required hospital codes.

Q: When the curtains are laundered, will they lose their fire-retardant protection?

All of the fabrics we use are machine washable and will never lose their intrinsic (not topical) fire-retardant protection.

Q: How often are we required to wash the curtains in our program?

How often hospital curtains are laundered is under the jurisdiction of infection prevention protocol at your facility. AORN and other industry leaders recommend a minimum of bi-annual laundering. ImageFIRST meets all very stringent cubicle curtain Fire-Codes and hospital infection codes set by Joint Commission.



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With ImageFIRST™, You Get Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Are we required to wash the top mesh every time we wash each panel in our cubicle curtain program?

No, the combination of the mesh not being handled and Bac-Shield produce a mesh product that does not require the same maintenance as the fabric panels. Bac-Shield is a non-hazardous product derived from the antimicrobial properties of the carbohydrates found naturally in crab shells. The mesh contains the Bac-Shield as an intrinsic property. Bac-Shield gives antibacterial and antifungal protection to treated materials, prohibiting the growth of bacteria, mold, mildew, and fungus that cause odor, stains, discoloration, decay, and deterioration.

Q: Does the track come with my cubicle curtain program?

Track is not included in the price of your curtain program, however track is available to purchase, and comes with everything you need to install them.

Q: Is there a standard clearance from the floor to the bottom of the cubicle curtain?

We use the industry standard of 10 - 12" clearance unless otherwise specified. If the clearance of the curtain is too high, patient privacy is compromised; too low and it is considered a health hazard (mopping, spills, etc.).

Q: How will I determine the number of curtains that are needed to be ordered for my hospital?

We will measure all the areas within your hospital that require curtains. There is no time required of your staff.

Q: I have several different ceiling heights in my hospital how will I be able to use the same size curtain throughout my facility?

This is not unusual. We adjust the length of the mesh based on the ceiling height. This will ensure that the standard curtain panel of 66" will always work throughout the facility no matter what the ceiling height is.



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