

New cleaner 'to the Rescue'

By Sharon Partridge

The environmental services team at Kingston General Hospital has introduced a new initiative to combat the spore-forming bacteria *clostridium difficile*, a virulent hospital-acquired diarrhea that is sometimes associated with a high rate of illness and death.

KGH is one of three hospitals trialing a new accelerated hydrogen peroxide product from Virox to help eliminate *c. difficile*. Rescue is intended for cleaning washrooms in rooms of patients on contact precautions.

"We are trialing Rescue as a preventative measure," says Jim Jeroy, director of environmental services and co-chair of the joint occupational health and safety committee. "We are pleased to be able to continue our partnership with this leading Canadian company while we address this challenge."

The use of Rescue will further existing protocols for cleaning rooms of patients on contact precautions, including wearing protective gowns and gloves and administering two cleanings per day.

Rescue presents minimal occupational health and safety risk as the product is non-toxic and

is only slightly irritating to skin. The liquid cleanser has essentially the same chemical composition as Percept, a Virox product currently used for everyday disinfecting, but in stronger amounts, explains Nicole Kenny, director of professional and technical services for Virox.

With a stronger chemical composition, however, comes increased user precautions, and environmental services staff have received training regarding the proper use of Rescue.

Staff are targeting the washrooms for this more vigorous disinfecting, where the spore count is the highest. "We need to target areas where this level of disinfection will be most effective," says Nicole. "We do not want to use it for all-purpose cleaning but rather as a targeted *c. difficile* spore disinfectant."

According to Nicole, Rescue is the only surface disinfectant registered in Canada with claims to be effective against *c. difficile* spores.

There is no current outbreak, but the hospital is taking a proactive approach to the situation notes Lee Nesbitt, technical services associate for Virox. "It puts KGH on the leading edge of patient safety." ■

