

# Infection Prevention: The New Standard of Clean

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Professional cleaning isn't just about cleaning restrooms and mopping floors anymore; today's Environmental Services teams must focus on preventing the spread of illness and infection. In our ever-shrinking world, we've seen infectious pathogens travel even more quickly from person to person. Organisms like MRSA and VRE have been created by overuse and incorrect use of antibiotics, and outbreaks like Ebola and Zika spread quickly due to increased global travel. Many of these pathogens can live on surfaces like tables, counters, door handles, computers and tools, where they can pass from person to person.

Combating the spread of these pathogens requires a paradigm shift to an environmental infection control mindset. "Visibly clean," which has long been the acceptable performance standard, is no longer good enough. These new, threatening germs and pathogens that can exist on an apparently clean surface for weeks or even months, surfaces must not only look clean, but be clean. Ineffective manual cleaning can simply spread harmful pathogens around. Today, cleaning a site must involve sophisticated and aggressive infection control systems that eradicate germs on high-touch surfaces. Because pathogens don't discriminate, everyone is at risk. It's critical that the right people, processes and technologies are employed to provide a comprehensive interconnected solution.

**People** Approximately 85 percent of cleaning cost is labor. Many times, the only way to achieve a client's desired cost reduction and secure the business is to eliminate staff, creating a "race to the bottom" situation. Sodexo doesn't subscribe to that philosophy. We believe there is a different way to reach your goals with fair prices and better outcomes. By implementing standardized processes leveraging best-in-class technologies, clients can recapture time and reach the desired quicker room turns, but not at the expense of health and safety.

## **Processes**

In response to this ever-increasing threat and the severe consequences on your business and patients' health, environmental infection control strategies must change just as swiftly to keep pace. People must be highly trained both in how behaviors speed the spread of pathogens and which processes attack the problem head on.

## **Technologies**

While the healthcare industry has made incredible advances in medicine and medical equipment over the years, Environmental Services technologies selected and implemented by hospitals haven't kept pace. The technology necessary to keep pathogens at bay changes so rapidly that last week's industry leading approach is indeed yesterday's news. No quick fix or single solution to combat pathogens exists; rather, environmental services organizations must be constantly on alert for new technologies and the best ways to implement them.

These cleaning techniques are crucial in hospitals and other health facilities, where patients bring pathogens daily. However, high-traffic sites such as hotels and cruise ships have also proven vulnerable to the spread of infection.

*Source: [sodexoinsights.com/infection-prevention-new-standard-clean/](https://sodexoinsights.com/infection-prevention-new-standard-clean/)*