

# Editorial

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The December issue of *Healthcare Infection* is the fourth and final issue for 2009 and includes a range of articles from management of reprocessing reuseable medical equipment in healthcare facilities, to the burden of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) colonisation, central venous line dressings and hand hygiene.

The first of the studies related to the management of reprocessing reuseable medical equipment in healthcare facilities is written by Heathcote *et al.* This study pertains to the measurement of adenosine tri-phosphate bioluminescence on reuseable medical equipment as a valid means of monitoring surgical instruments for contamination during reprocessing.<sup>1</sup> The paper provides evidence to support an objective method of monitoring decontamination. A similar system has been in place in the food and pharmaceutical industries for about a decade.

The second article related to processing of reuseable medical equipment is a review of the literature with respect to event-related sterility and the storage of sterile stock in the healthcare environment.<sup>2</sup> A comparison is made between the ability of commercially manufactured sterile medical devices and those produced by sterile services departments in healthcare facilities to withstand adverse temperature and humidity conditions.

Further studies presented in this issue look at the burden of MRSA in rural hospitals in Tasmania by Mitchell *et al.*<sup>3</sup> there is a review of central venous catheter dressings<sup>4</sup> and the final original paper pertains to hand profiling in an intensive care unit.<sup>5</sup>

There is also a chapter from the publication *Reducing Harm to Patients from Health Care Associated Infection: The Role of Surveillance*: chapter 2 Bloodstream infection.<sup>6</sup> This chapter has been abridged and highlights the significance of this common infection, its accompanying morbidity and mortality and the economic cost to healthcare. Bloodstream infections cause harm to patients and have significant impact on healthcare systems. Approaches to successful surveillance are discussed.

The full publication of this book is available on the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care website<sup>7</sup> and can be downloaded, displayed, printed and reproduced for your personal non-commercial use or within your organisation.

This reference is available to any infection control professional with access to the internet. It is easy to read and provides an evidence base to assist with infection prevention work activities. The work of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care of integrating infection control into an institutional safety culture, supported by management and with a solid infrastructure, might be regarded as having commenced with the publication of this reference.

## References

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