



Professor Mark Wilcox presented latest research study at ECCMID 2018

Multisite study across three countries finds hospital washrooms using paper towels for hand drying have lowest contamination levels and recovery of anti-microbial resistant microorganisms

Brussels, Belgium – April 27, 2018 – Professor Mark Wilcox presented his latest research study at [ECCMID](#) in Madrid this month.

Professor Mark Wilcox, MD, Consultant and Professor in Medical Microbiology, Leeds Teaching Hospitals & University of Leeds, UK, who designed and led the research, delivered a presentation entitled '*Multisite study to examine the extent of environmental contamination by potential bacterial pathogens, including antibiotic resistant bacteria, in hospital washrooms according to hand drying methods*' during a two-hour oral session entitled '*A journey in infection control: 2018*'.

The multicentre study (sponsored by ETS) was carried out in three hospitals in France, Italy and UK using two washrooms per hospital. It sought to measure the prevalence of environmental contamination in hospital washrooms associated with hand drying methods – either paper towels or jet air dryers. Only one hand drying method was available at any time in each washroom and a crossover design compared the bacterial contamination levels. Target bacteria included methicillin susceptible (MSSA) and resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), enterococci including vancomycin resistant enterococci (VRE), enterobacteria including *Escherichia coli* and *Klebsiella* spp., *ESBL producing bacteria*, and *Clostridium difficile*.

Results revealed significant differences in bacterial contamination between the two types of washrooms. Higher numbers of bacteria were recovered from the floors and driers in the jet air dryer washrooms than in those using paper towels. In the UK, MRSA was recovered three times more often from surfaces in washrooms with jet air dryers than in those using paper towels.

The European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) is recognised as one of the most important congresses in infectious diseases, infection control and clinical microbiology. Now in its 28th year, it gathers some 15,000 leading experts from around the world to present and discuss latest results. The comprehensive scientific programme over three days from 21-24 April comprised keynote lectures, symposia, oral and poster sessions and educational formats.

"It is a great honour to have Professor Wilcox present the results of his study at such a prestigious Congress as ECCMID," said ETS chairman, Fanis Papakostas. *"Hand hygiene is one of the most important components of infection prevention. The study findings demonstrate that hospitals offering paper towels for hand drying in washrooms, as per the recommendation of the World Health Organisation (WHO), are making the smart choice in minimising the spread of bacteria including MRSA enterobacteria and enterococci."*



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About ETS

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