

With its gleaming array of new washer-disinfectors, the sterile services department at The James Cook University Hospital is a scene of calm efficiency. A far cry from less than a year ago, when constant problems with the old machines, were making life very difficult.

"The washer-disinfectors we had - a mixture of two tunnel washers and two cabinets - were coming to the end of their working life," Gayle Saltmer, sterile services manager South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, told Inside Hospitals. "We were having constant breakdowns. The service engineers were here a lot, often two to three times a day, working on the old machines."

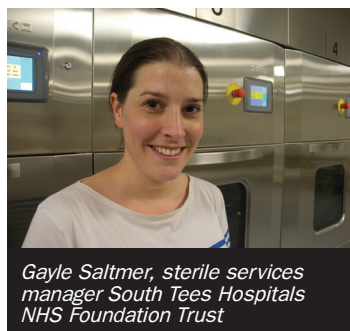
Having joined the NHS as part of the graduate scheme in 2006, Gayle studied project management. "When I joined the scheme it was human resources based," explained Gayle. "I came to the trust four years ago and have been in sterile services for two years."

Gayle manages the sterile service department at The James Cook University Hospital, an acute hospital and regional trauma centre, and at the smaller acute Friarage Hospital, which



South Tees standardises

In a major programme of work, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has specified Dekomed washer-disinfector-dryers for The James Cook University Hospital and Friarage Hospital



Gayle Saltmer, sterile services manager South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

also undertakes private work.

"I did the Eastwood Park course on decontamination management and not long after I joined sterile services CFPP came in," said Gayle. "So with that and doing the specification for the new washer-disinfectors I quickly got up to speed."

"I picked up the business case for replacing the washer-disinfectors, which had been prepared by the previous manager, and worked on it with our AE(D), Tracey Miller, to get the specification ready to go out to tender."

"The washer-disinfectors were part of a programme of work, which included new autoclaves at Friarage, in the first phase, the washer-disinfectors here at James Cook, then washer-disinfectors at Friarage, and finally autoclaves here."

"With it being a programme

of work and wanting the washer-disinfector manufacturer to also be responsible for the RO, the scheme went through OJEU. It was lengthy process, but it was worth it because of the quality we got out of it. Based on their previous experience, estates wanted to go down this route too."

As Gayle explained: "When the specification was originally drawn up we went out for like-for-like - tunnels and cabinets. We did it really thoroughly, myself, the decontamination lead, Alison Lonsdale, Ray Francis of Carillion our PFI partner, the project manager David Smith, and Julian Verity, from the trust's estates team, on behalf of

Friarage, which is not PFI.

"Through that process we went to quite a lot of departments - from Brighton to Falkirk - speaking to teams at various sites and looking at the equipment they had."

"I already had a doubt in my mind over tunnel washers, due to the issues we experienced when one broke down. So together with the AE(D), as a team, we agreed that washer-disinfector cabinets was the correct route to go."

"We had the assurance of having looked at both types of equipment and, as we had gone out for both, procurement were happy too."

Gayle said: "We shortlisted four manufacturers, who all presented. The criteria we were looking at were cost, quality, service and support, reliability was also very important."

"When we were on the visits we asked: What's the company like? What are they like to deal with? As the users we were looking at the whole operational side, while estates were looking at it as a piece of equipment to meet the specification. Interestingly we both came to the same conclusion - that Dekomed was the best."

"When we had the presentations we invited staff members who'd previously had no involvement to keep them impartial. Staff were

concerned about ease of use and the engineers' response times and they came to the same decision - Dekomed."

"Dekomed stacked-up financially too," said Gayle. "They also offered a great spare parts package and six months free detergent which have made a huge difference. The parts are stocked on-site in a cabinet which speeds up any work required. Dekomed replenish any used spares. It's really helpful."

Gayle explained: "Because we were in such dire straits with the old equipment, we pushed to get some of the new machines installed before Christmas 2013. Due to the layout of the department we were able to



install the first two without disturbing the department and without having to remove any of the other washer-disinfectors. So we had the first two up and running before Christmas.

"We hadn't made a decision on the racks we would use. Dekomed enabled us to use the existing one we had on one machine and the alternative type of rack on the second, allowing us to decide which we preferred. Based on the experience, we decided to change, and we've gone for the adaptable racking system. Now staff just have to pull out one shelf.

"If we'd played it safe and stayed with the racking system we knew it would have been the wrong decision. The one we now have is more efficient and we can adjust it.

"The machines are DEKO D32 Excels, we've six of those installed here now, and we have three here waiting to go in at Friarage. We're going to standardise on Dekomed at both sites. So, should ever the need



tool. The access for engineers to work on is good too, it's all from the washroom side."

Another plus point for Dekomed is that they were the only one with a standard door. "We liked the sturdiness of

a standard door, rather than another electronic aspect that might be an issue," said Gayle. "With Dekomed there are no fancy add-ons that really aren't needed.

"It's the simplicity of the Dekomed machine which enhances

the reliability. The machines are individually dosed as well, which was key for us as we'd had central dosing previously and had often experienced issues with the system.

"We use Dekomed's own chemicals and, as Friarage are the same, we're using the same chemicals for both sites."

The installation and commissioning of the four other DEKO machines went smoothly, with the the old cabinet machines running right to the end of the project. Dekomed was also responsible as main contractor for the installation of the associated RO system and ring main, from Lubron.

"We had a concern over the department working normally while the installation began but it was well organised and all went smoothly, theatres wouldn't have known it was happening, there was no impact to them," said Gayle. "The staff were brilliant throughout all this. Because they wanted the new washers they

worked through it."

Impressed with the management of the project, Gayle said: "Steve Townsend was Dekomed's operations manager at the presentation and all the way through. It was great having one point of contact. You have faith in the individual. We've developed a good relationship.

"Dekomed wanted to know what worked for us and worked around what we wanted throughout, not what was convenient for them, and ensured we were operational at all times. Dekomed's engineer Martyn Southall, who undertook the commissioning and does the quarterlies, was very helpful too. Martyn also delivered the training for our sterile services team and Carillion's engineers.

"Even when we had the RO engineers on site, we liaised with Dekomed. As with Dekomed, the Lubron engineers worked at anti-social times, working to what suited us, rather than them. The RO system has performed well too, with no issues."

Gayle said: "With the old machines we were used to wet sets - a problem we no longer have. We wanted our sets clean and dry, and we've achieved that. It shouldn't be a luxury, but it was for us.

"Previously we were having constant fails. It was difficult for staff.

"Now, since the installation of the new machines, other than the quarterlies, we don't see either Carillion staff or Dekomed engineers. We've had no issues. The Dekomed machines all work brilliantly, they've made a huge difference to the staff's day.

As Gayle explained: "The department at James Cook operates 24/7, 365. So all six machines are working all the time. It's sometimes slightly quieter at weekends but even

that's becoming more like a normal working day with the extra lists we're taking on.

"Given the fact we're 24/7 the reliability which the machines have brought has made it more efficient and so much easier for staff. Every bit of equipment can go into any machine, which it couldn't before.

"In terms of tracking and traceability it was a straightforward process linking the DEKOs' system into our own. The signing-off, when passing a cycle, is straightforward too, very user-friendly. The machines work at the touch of a button. In comparison to the previous equipment it's so simple.

"At each staff meeting we used to have lots of machine-related problems - not any more. The DEKOs are very easy to use."

Exceeding the standard performance and design requirements of ISO/DIS 15883-1 washer-disinfectors Parts 1 and 2 and ISO 13485:2003, the DEKO D32 Excels guarantee process results throughout with a Class C independent, full process verification recording system. Staff appreciate the ergonomic design, compact dimensions and touchscreen technology.

With a user's perspective, decontamination technician Richard Cunningham, said: "The new machines have been excellent. Absolutely no problem. They're a dream to work with. They make the job a lot easier. Everything comes out really dry, nice and clean."

While colleague Yvonne Smith said: "The manual handling has improved hugely."

Gayle added: "Dekomed have been great from day one. We've had trust and transparency through working with Steve throughout. It was about the longevity - the equipment and the service - rather than just the installation of the equipment, although the machines are brilliant. They've been really accommodating and easy to work with."

For further information, call Dekomed on 0161 483 7333 or visit www.dekomed.co.uk



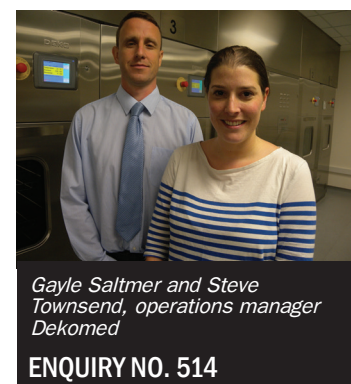
arise to move staff it will ensure there are no issues."

Emphasising the quality of the equipment, Gayle said: "After we made the decision to choose Dekomed, we went to the Franke factory, where they are manufactured - myself, Mark Brown, from Carillion, and David Smith, the project manager.

"We were able to run tests on our own machines. We did a lot of failing on the units, trying all sorts of things to test them. We had a copy of the CFPP with us and went through a full list of tests. The performance assured us that we'd made the right choice."

Gayle said: "Mark Brown, from our PFI contractor Carillion, had not been on the earlier site visits. He was very impressed with the Dekomed machines, seeing that they were straightforward for his guys to work on if required. In fact he was reading the manual on the plane on the way back.

"If the machine does fail it will tell you why. It's a very good



Gayle Saltmer and Steve Townsend, operations manager Dekomed

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