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NEWS RELEASE

VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System
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Tennessee Valley Healthcare System employs germ-killing robots

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – In a continued effort to improve care and services to Veterans, Tennessee Valley Healthcare System (TVHS) has acquired four new high-tech weapons to battle deadly pathogens and kill multi-drug resistant organisms.

Two germ-killing robots are now working at each of the TVHS medical center campuses. The robots employ pulsed xenon ultraviolet (UV) light to quickly destroy bacteria, viruses, fungi and bacterial spores. The mobile disinfection systems are designed to be effective against even the most dangerous pathogens, including *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff), norovirus, influenza, Ebola and methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, better known as MRSA.

“Our Veterans deserve the very best services, and that includes a safe healing environment,” said Gary S. McCarthy, Jr., Chief of TVHS Environmental Services. “Although TVHS has low infection rates, we haven’t let that dissuade us from pursuing technology to make our healing environment even safer,” he said.

McCarthy said his team is using this technology as an added layer of protection, one that will reduce infections and decrease costs associated with hospital acquired infections (HAI).

“Money saved from prevention of HAI’s can be better used to serve our Veterans by investing in new equipment, technology, and processes,” he said.

UV has been used for disinfection for decades. However, the new robots use pulsed xenon, rather than mercury bulbs, to create germicidal UV light. Pulsed xenon emits high intensity UVC light which penetrates the cell walls of microorganisms, including bacteria, viruses, mold, fungus and spores. Their DNA is fused, rendering them unable to reproduce or mutate, effectively killing them on surfaces.

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McCarthy said the robots disinfect an average of 27 locations per day in addition to addressing emergent issues.

The acquisition of the robots makes TVHS only the second health care provider in the greater Nashville area to use this technology.

TVHS is an integrated tertiary health care system comprised of two hospitals, the Alvin C. York Campus in Murfreesboro and the Nashville Campus, as well as more than a dozen community-based outpatient clinics located in Tennessee and Kentucky. TVHS provides ambulatory care, primary care, and secondary care in acute medicine and surgery, specialized tertiary care, transplant services, spinal cord injury outpatient care, and a full range of extended care and mental health services.

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