

# ROME MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

## NEWS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 23, 2011

**For more information, contact: Scott A. Gwilt**  
**Public Relations Specialist at 337-5309**

### Foundation helps Rome Hospital protect patients from infection

Through the generosity of community donors, Rome Memorial Hospital has added a new tool in its arsenal to protect patients from life-threatening infections.

Rome is the first hospital in the area to invest in the state-of-the-art BIOQUELL system, which uses hydrogen peroxide vapor to reach surfaces and equipment in hard-to-reach places. It can kill drug-resistant bacteria such as MRSA and *Clostridium difficile* (C-diff), as well as viruses and fungi that can hide in cracks and crevices that would be otherwise difficult to disinfect.



From left: Rome Memorial Hospital President/Chief Executive Officer Basil Ariglio, Rome Memorial Hospital Director of Infection Prevention, LeAnna Grace and Rome Hospital Foundation Board President, Gregory Mattacola with the Bioquell Q10 machine. The state-of-the-art room decontamination machine was recently acquired by the hospital thanks to funding from community donors through the Rome Hospital Foundation.

“We are happy to be able to fund this equipment which will help protect our patients,” said Gregory Mattacola, president of the Rome Hospital Foundation Board of Directors. “This investment into the latest technology available puts Rome Memorial Hospital ahead of the curve in the battle to prevent healthcare associated infections (HAIs).”

“Preventing infections requires a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach in any hospital. So, along with our already vigorous cleaning and disinfecting routines and the effective infection control measures utilized by our health care professionals, we

now have another tool to protect our patients,” said Director of Infection Prevention LeAnna Grace, who first heard of the new technology at a national conference last year.

Grace collaborated with Frederick White, assistant director for building services, to implement the system, which was put into use in November.

“It is used primarily in rooms where we cared for patients that had harmful germs that can be spread by touch,” Grace explained. “The intensive care unit is another high-priority area because these patients often have compromised immune systems. We need to take that extra precaution to protect them from infections.”

BIOQUELL is used to decontaminate these rooms prior to the next patient’s arrival. First, the room is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by building services staff. After this process, which takes approximately a half hour, the machine is placed in the room and the room is sealed by a trained member of the building services department.

The device is then activated and monitored from outside the room. The hydrogen peroxide vapor produced kills the germs and then the hydrogen peroxide sterilant converts into oxygen and water.

According to Grace, the room does not need to be aired out like it does after being scrubbed with bleach or other chemicals. “After the 90-minute decontamination cycle is finished, the room is ready for immediate use,” she explained.

Grace adds that when a room is decontaminated, it is often filled with equipment from the unit in an effort to disinfect as much patient-care equipment as possible. “Because the vapor leaves no residue, it is even safe to use on our most sensitive electronic equipment,” she said. “This technology allows us to eliminate germs in so many areas which would normally be nearly impossible to reach.”

Grace adds that cooperation from the patient registration, building services, materials management, nursing supervision and plant operations teams has been key to the successful rollout of the system. “The BIOQUELL process takes up to two hours per room, so we’ve had to work together to adjust room scheduling; but everyone recognizes the benefit to patient safety and has been very accommodating,” says Grace.

According to its manufacturer, BIOQUELL has been used by some New York State hospitals on an “as-needed” basis in reaction to an isolated outbreak; Rome Memorial Hospital joins such institutions as Albany Medical Center, Johns Hopkins University Medical Center and Yale University Medical Center as one of the first hospitals to acquire the technology on an ongoing preventive basis. Studies conducted at other hospitals show a steep decline in hospital-acquired infections in rooms where the system is used.

According to Grace, the purchase of this equipment is yet another example of how the hospital has become a leader in infection prevention. “At Rome Memorial Hospital, we

have an excellent record of protecting our patients from getting an infection during their hospital stay because we follow the infection control guidelines developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),” Grace said. “While healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) drive up the cost of healthcare by an estimated \$30 billion each year, the cost to patients and their families cannot be measured.”

“We were the smallest of only eight hospitals in the in the nation to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human services for being an outstanding leader in eliminating life-threatening bloodstream infections in our ICU,” she said. “We haven’t had a single central line infection in our ICU in over five years. We haven’t had a post-operative pneumonia in more than four years and were one of the first hospitals in the country to use GermPro’s surface disinfectant and hand sanitizing lotion which has greatly reduced our HAIs and is estimated to have saved the hospital over a million dollars in healthcare costs.”

“We’re grateful to the Foundation and our community donors for helping us continue our efforts to be a leader in delivering exceptional care for our patients,” Grace added.

The Rome Hospital Foundation’s mission is to promote, solicit, accept and invest voluntary dollars given in support of the mission of Rome Memorial Hospital. Additional information on the Foundation can be found at [www.romehospital.org](http://www.romehospital.org). If interested in donating to the Foundation, please call 315-338-7181 or send your contribution to the Foundation at 155 West Dominick Street, Rome, New York 13440.

## PHOTO CAPTION: