

UW Health: Environmental services workers are unsung frontline heroes

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MADISON, Wis. – Providing a clean and safe environment for all staff and patients is always a top priority at UW Health, and the environmental services (EVS) staff has been a vital part of the frontline healthcare team during the COVID-19 crisis.

All isolation rooms at UW Hospital are cleaned and disinfected by hospital environmental services staff (EVS), who use a machine called TruD to disinfect the rooms. The machine, which uses UV light to inactivate microorganisms, such as bacteria and viruses, runs for a 40-minute cycle in an empty room and is remotely activated.

During COVID-19, EVS staff has been trained on using personal protective equipment (PPE) including face shields that are worn while cleaning rooms. EVS staff also clean and disinfect elevator buttons, nurse's stations, handrails, floors, lobby surfaces, restrooms and stairwells multiple times a day to ensure the hospital is clean for all patients, staff and visitors.

EVS supervisors are also present on the hospital floors to make sure the staff has the support and resources they need during this time.

Interviews with infection control and environmental services experts and video of the TruD disinfection UV light machine cleaning a room are available upon request.