

Focus on Education: The value of in-practice training

As a core CPD subject, decontamination & Infection Control is an area that is always at the forefront of the minds of Decontamination Leads. Every practice has a duty of care to ensure that those responsible remain up-to-date with regulations and to make sure their practice is compliant.

Our decontamination education and training programme has been developed to try and better meet the needs of every customer. One of the areas where we have expanded our offering is in the provision of in-practice training, which has many benefits, not least of which is the ability for all members of the team to be involved.

Our primary focus has been around creating three versions of the in-practice programme which offers practices a choice of either a one, two or three-hour course. Each alternative qualifies for verifiable core CPD and all take place at the practice, or over MS Teams, meaning the whole team, including dentists, are able to attend. With current UK restrictions our 3 offerings can also be organised and carried out over Microsoft Teams. We appreciate it's sometimes difficult for a practice to find time for training, but decontamination is such an important aspect of a practice it really does deserve this extra attention. Often practices organise an extended lunch or close the practice for an afternoon to accommodate the training. In some cases the training can even take place during the evening which means that you can buddy up with more than one practice or have several surgeries together to split the cost and reach more team members.

All presentations are highly interactive and we try to involve the whole team as much as possible. Using videos and plenty of questions we encourage engagement and comment from the team, making the whole exercise much more worthwhile in comparison to a straightforward lecture. We make sure that everyone gets plenty of attention, we can answer questions and, in an ideal scenario, spark some debate about procedures and protocols.

The course also includes a section dedicated to COVID19 and the impact that this has had on our working environment and processes. This will also discuss the requirements for ACH and offer some advice and guidance on how to help reduce fallow times.

The course also includes a section on the differences between non-vacuum, S class and B class autoclaves, including a clear guide as to which instruments each is designed for. This is an area where there is huge potential for misunderstanding as vacuum autoclaves are a relatively new entrant into the market and are the only type of autoclave suitable for sterilising hollow pouched instruments and especially implant kits. We always explain that manufacturers' recommendations must be followed and point those responsible towards a range of resources that can help them in improving their processes if required.

The three-hour course includes a two-hour presentation and a one-hour practice inspection. This version of the course gives us the opportunity to review the practice's infection control processes and the products they are using and then provide feedback and advice. The inspection includes a review of PPE with suggestions on how to improve personal protection and looks at the clinical

environment, suggesting ways in which they can minimise risk against blood-borne and air-borne viruses and bacteria

Our aim is to encourage good infection control behaviour throughout UK practices. In the ultimate scenario, should a patient become infected, the onus would be on the practice to prove they were not liable. This would involve a rigorous review of which instruments were used on a patient, and which processes that instrument had been through prior to use. A practice would need to be able to provide evidence as to the cleaning cycle used and the sterilisation processes that were followed. If a practice has ignored manufacturers' recommendations this could make them responsible for a patient infection.

Our specialist team is qualified to undertake this type of training thanks to our in-depth knowledge of the regulations and the products and equipment used in daily decontamination procedures. Our training and education programme is only one aspect of the way in which we work alongside practices to improve their decontamination procedures. We are also able to offer advice and support for those wanting to set up a LDU (local decontamination unit), or those looking for the most suitable equipment to meet their needs.

For further information or to book your first course please visit www.deconpete.co.uk or email info@deconpete.co.uk to receive a quotation. Due to current restrictions these courses are being carried over Microsoft Teams.