

Looking good at Lancaster

High praise for custom-fabricated steelwork that solves problems for endoscopy and sterile services

Just a short drive down the M6 to Blackpool solved a challenge for University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust.

"We were centralising endoscopy at the trust's Lancaster Royal Infirmary, where space was critical," Richard Greenwood, decontamination lead and head of sterile services trust-wide, tells *Hospital Matters*. "When I saw the sink displayed by Neocare at IDSc's annual conference in Blackpool I knew I'd found the solution."

"The narrower width, impressive build quality and functionality, fitted the bill perfectly."

With over 20 years' experience in sterile services, Richard says: "The build quality of Neocare's equipment really impressed me. It's much better than other manufacturers' equipment I've seen over the years. It's absolutely tremendous, as is the functionality, with the travel distance of the height adjustment and anti-glare finish."

As Richard explains: "Staff in endoscope reprocessing and sterile services are working over the tables and sinks for extended periods and need to be as comfortable as possible. We had fixed sinks and tables before and staff often complained of backache. So height adjustment is very important. I have staff of all heights - from 4'10" to 6'6" - which make the extended travel range of the Neocare sinks and tables a real bonus."



Richard Greenwood, decontamination lead and head of sterile services, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust

"Also, staff in the departments are there all day working under artificial light and the high reflectivity of standard stainless steel causes issues. They'd complained of headaches caused by the glare from the packing tables. So the anti-glare finish that's standard on all Neocare equipment is a great feature."

Richard explains: "I asked Neocare's Steve Ladley to quote for the Lancaster scheme. He came for a site visit and we invited him to the pre-start meeting."

"Initially, I was looking for three double basin sinks - two for endoscopy and one for sterile services - a number of tables for both areas, and two pass-through hatches."

"With the footprint being critical, I wanted the narrower sink and tables. Neocare offers a whole range of sizes, but the narrower one suits our needs. It also means more room for staff to move around."

Richard says: "Steve supplied drawings for all the products, including the position of services. He ensured we could get the AER machine's basket into the sink station."

"However, as the work progressed we inadvertently fitted one of the endoscopy sinks into the sterile services area. Then we found that a DIN basket wouldn't fit. We'd installed the wrong sink into the area."

"Steve was there at the time and was on the phone to his workshop straight away. He said he'd swap it out, which he did, manufacturing a new sink for sterile services at no extra cost. Steve and a member of his team installed the replacement, ensuring everything worked perfectly. It's a double drainer and deeper, so that it will take a standard DIN basket."



Fill levels are electro-chemically 'tattooed' into Neocare's stainless steel bowls in the height adjustable sinks. So there's no need for stickers behind which bugs can hide

"The custom fabricated, height adjustable sinks are really high quality. For the two in endoscopy, Steve supplied a bracket that fits onto the back of the sink to take the Scopetech machine used for endoscope flushing and leak testing."

"The splashback on the sinks is quite a bit higher than that provided by other manufacturers. It stops the ingress of water going down the back and onto the walls. The sinks are movable too. There's an option to have them fitted with anti-microbial wheels. I chose anti-microbial feet but they are still movable for easy cleaning around the sides, back and underneath."

"We have flexible, anti-microbial hoses for both the hot and cold water supply. We're trialling those for Steve. We do water tests of the sinks and everything's been fine."

Richard says: "When Steve learned about the type of AER machines we'd be using in the new department, he said we'd need a

'hook-up organiser'. At the time I didn't know what he meant. It's a Neocare creation - a purpose-made rack which houses the AER system's manifolds and tube assemblies for the various types of scope we use. There's a drip tray at the bottom allowing the tube to hang vertically and drain."

"The 'hook-up organiser' is a fantastic bit of kit. It makes it easy for a member of staff to recognise the correct manifold assembly for the scope they're processing. We have at least 12 different types and it helps to prevent damage to the delicate instruments if you try to connect the wrong one. If there's any excess water in the manifold's tubes it drains off into the drip tray, preventing any ingress of water into the assembly."

"It's ideal and so successful we've just installed one at the trust's Furness General Hospital, where we'd centralised endoscopy



earlier. They were previously storing their manifolds on open mesh shelves. I gave Steve the measurements for the one we needed at Furness and he manufactured it."

"The 'hook-up organiser' at Lancaster has a 35-manifold capacity, while the one at Furness holds up to 20."

Richard explains: "We needed two pass-through hatches with interlocked doors for endoscope reprocessing at Lancaster. I'd seen the ones supplied by another manufacturer at Furness General and didn't like them."

"The two Steve's supplied for Lancaster are superb - very high quality. One is for passing trays back into the dirty area and the other for passing clean items into the despatch area."

In endoscope reprocessing, Colette Hrachowina, HSDU assistant, says: "The sinks are a hundred times better than the ones we had. Everybody's happy. They suit all sizes and heights. The higher splashback keeps the walls clean and makes the area easier to clean too."

Donna Taylor, HSDU assistant, adds: "You couldn't adjust the height of the previous sinks we had. These are so much better. It's easy to adjust the height to whatever's convenient for each of us to use. The bowls on the sinks are deeper too, which stops water splashing over."

Describing the 'hook-up organiser', Donna adds: "It houses the connections for all the different types of scopes we use. It makes it very well organised. It's easy to find the hook-up we need."

As well as the sinks and 'hook-up', there are three Neocare height adjustable tables in endoscopy and a further five in the relatively small main packing room at Lancaster.

Richard says: "Because of the footprint I couldn't have big tables in there. They've replaced some of the larger tables, as the staff were complaining about the glare. The narrower tables still suit the work they do but staff have more room to move around. They really appreciate the anti-glare finish."

"Three Neocare height adjustable tables have also been supplied for the packing room at Furness, creating more room there too."



Neocare's 'hook-up organiser' is a purpose-made rack housing the AER's manifolds and tube assemblies for the various types of scopes

decontamination

Summarising, Richard says: “The quality and finish of all Neocare work is outstanding. There’s no areas for the ingress of dirt. They’re easy to clean and maintain. There’s an extensive standard range of items which are bespoke to fit exactly the size required.

“I found the price was very competitive. In fact, for the price you pay, the quality and standard of the workmanship is absolutely fantastic.

“The timelines were agreed and Steve stuck to them, with delivery on time. Installation was perfect. Any drawings we needed were provided very quickly. Nothing is too much trouble.

“Infection control are very happy with the equipment. They like the ease of keeping it clean. And being able to easily move the sinks makes it simple to clean the surrounding area too.”

Neocare’s Steve Ladley explains: “We custom fabricate the bowls, so making them to any size the customer requires is never a problem.

“All the fill levels in the sinks are electro-chemically ‘tattooed’ into the stainless steel bowls. So there’s no need to use stick-on labels and therefore nowhere for bugs to hide. No sticky labels with Neocare.



“The connector to the taps is Neocare’s WRAS-approved, anti-microbial flexi-hose - PE lined, not EPDM. Ours won’t grow biofilm as others do.

“As it’s impregnated with silver ions, any microbes in the water are killed when they touch the walls of the hose, and the flexi-hose last for ten years.

“Also, with others, the sink’s waste is chrome on brass, screwed into the bowl on a rubber seal. This can be a problem waiting to happen. It stays damp and offers an ideal environment for Pseudomonas Aeruginosa to colonise.

“Ours are custom-made, by ourselves, in Marine Grade 316 stainless steel and welded into place, which prevents any issues with Pseudomonas. So our sinks are fully compliant with HTM 04-01.”



The sterile service department’s height adjustable twin-bowl sink

Steve adds: “The vertical height adjustment is 350mm. Others are usually only 150mm.

“The sinks have been designed with advice from healthcare ergonomics professionals on the position of the bowl, to reduce the risk of stress on the wrists, elbows, shoulders, neck and back. Operators can be stood for long periods, so it’s important that all aspects of the design are taken into account.

“It’s also about the depth and position of the bowl, the position of the bowl in the

sink and the height and travel of the vertical adjustment. The optimum mixture of these will provide the perfect Health & Safety sink for each operator.

“The anti-glare feature is a bespoke finish applied at the fabrication stage to reduce eye strain from reflected glare. It’s available on all our stainless steel products.”

For further information, call Steve Ladley of Neocare on **01594 832044** or **07717 001144**, e-mail steve@neocare.org.uk or visit www.neocare.org.uk



The endoscopy reprocessing and sterile service departments use Neocare’s narrower, height adjustable tables, allowing staff more room to move. All Neocare equipment has a bespoke, anti-glare finish applied at the fabrication stage



The endoscopy department has two ‘superb quality’, pass-through hatches with interlocked doors