|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sampling method | Applied inoculum | Recovered inoculum | Difference  |
|  |   |  |
| Single cotton swab |  mean log10 cfu | Δ log10 cfu |
|  | 8.01 | 4.95 | 3.06 |
|  | 6.32 | 3.00 | 3.32 |
|  | 4.00 | 0.48 | 3.52 |
| Two sequential flocked nylon swabs |  |  |
|  | 5.76 | 3.90 | 1.86 |
|  | 4.76 | 3.18 | 1.58 |
|  | 3.76 | 1.78 | 1.98 |

**Supplementary Table S1.** Comparative recovery of viable colonies using a single cotton swab versus two sequentially applied flocked nylon swabs.19 Values represent the mean of 3 experiments.

cfu; colony-forming units

**Supplementary Table S2**. Microbial burden on surfaces surrounding the patients in the ICU before the intervention (phase I).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item (no of samples) | Viable colonies (cfu/100cm2) |
|  | Mean ± SD | Range |
| Electronic remote controls (6) | 44,400 ± 59,247 | 0-120,000 |
| ECG apparatus and defibrillators (8) | 43,485 ± 104,088 | 1,200-300,000 |
| Manual antiseptic dispenser (7) | 39,386 ± 63,665 | 0-144,000 |
| Side tables (4) | 37,200 ± 55,304 | 4,800-120,000 |
| iv Poles (7) | 36,943 ± 56,800 | 120-120,000 |
| Bed rails (29) | 19,461 ± 31,834 | 240-120,000 |
| Blood glucose meter (4) | 13,830 ± 19,534 | 0-42,000 |
| Infusion pumps (18) | 11,696 ± 28,039 | 0-120,000 |
| Electronic thermometer (1) | 8,400 | NA |
| Nurses’ countertops (7) | 7,834 ± 8,939 | 240-24,000 |
| Telephone receivers (7) | 7,779 ± 12,866 | 450-36,000 |
| Computer mouse and keyboards (8) | 5,123 ± 6,578 | 0-15,000 |
| Patients’ charts (9) | 4,753 ± 5,194 | 300-12,000 |
| Ventilator (7) | 3,823 ± 5,201 | 120-15,000 |
| Privacy bed screen (1) | 3,000 | NA |
| Light switch (1) | 2,700 | NA |
| Water faucets (3) | 300 ± 300 | 0-600 |
| Door handle (1) | 0 | NA |
| Side carts (2) | 0 | NA |

cfu; colony-forming units, SD; standard deviation