Appendix 1: Appended Methods

The study was formally exempted from full ethical review by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics Board; it was approved operationally by the Saskatoon Health Region.

The phenolphthalein test kit used to detect blood in this study has been used in a series of published studies related to infection control in healthcare settings.<8> The phenolphthalein test was conducted as per the manufacturer’s instructions. A test was positive if the swab turned a bright magenta pink colour within 10 seconds after the addition of the reagents. If there was no color change after 30 seconds, the test was negative. This reagent is sensitive enough to detect occult blood diluted down to 1: 10x10E7<8> and was validated prior to the data collection period.