

Irish firm leads drive to combat virus threat through door handle hygiene

An Irish company is spearheading the fight against the spread of Coronavirus with a new device which automatically sanitises door handles.

The device, which was created by Clever Hygiene Solutions, is manufactured in Ireland and has a worldwide patent.

It automatically dispenses a pre-determined amount of hand sanitiser onto the door handle each time the door is used, leaving the handle safer for users to touch.

While totally safe for human contact, the disinfectant used has been tested and proven to destroy the Covid-19 virus along with a whole host of other germs known to accumulate on door handles. See attached.

Experts accept that environmental surfaces are one of the leading sources in cross contamination - 20% of germs are spread through the air and the remaining 80% are sourced from hard surfaces. Door handles are a major source of infection because of their frequent and common use.

A recent study by Prof Charles Gerba of the American Society for Microbiology demonstrated just how quickly one single contaminated door handle could infect up to 60% of the occupants of a building within just four hours. See attached

Trials with the system, conducted by Dr Ronnie Russell of Moyne institute of Preventive Medicine at TCD, showed clearly how the risks associated with contaminated door handles were reduced to a negligible level once the system was installed. See attached

The system has since been trialed at a major HSE Hospital in Ireland, where in excess of 1,100 samples were taken over a sixteen-week period. The results, from an independent laboratory, were conclusive regarding its efficacy at destroying germs and preventing cross-contamination. **See below.**

Brian Cunningham of Handle Hygiene, which is based in Dublin, said: "We are all faced with an unprecedented threat from this virus and anything that helps save lives by slowing down the spread of this virus needs to be deployed. This product could play a major role in helping to flatten the curve."

"We believe this simple but very effective system, that automatically disinfects door handles each time they are used, has a significant role to play in reducing the impact that contaminated door handles play in the spread of disease and viruses such as covid-19.

"The great advantage of our system is that it is automatic. It is activated as the door is used. The impact of washing your hands can be undone if immediately afterwards you touch a contaminated door handle. Clean door handles are essential, as they keep clean hands clean. This device is designed to support well-established international hand hygiene practices of washing and gelling your hands correctly."

The TCD study contrasted contaminants on door handles when the system was in use and not operational. Dr Ronnie Russell said: "Our study into a sample of toilet door handles clearly show that the handle hygiene system is effective in delivering sanitiser to door handles, resulting in negligible levels of contamination."

UK Chief Medical Officer, Prof Chris Whitty, has stated that the Coronavirus can survive on door handles for up to three days.

Dr John Lambert, Consultant in Infectious Diseases and Genitourinary Medicine at the Mater Hospital, Dublin, has highlighted how door handles were one of the main sources of transmission for viruses within a hospital environment.

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Editor's Note

Throughout the 16-week clinical trial on the efficacy of the door handles sanitiser, conducted in a hospital renowned for its hygiene standards, in excess of 1,100 swab samples were taken by the hospital's infection control team and sent to an internationally accredited Laboratory for testing. These included swabs from handles fitted with the Hand Hygiene devices and handles cleaned manually by the hospital's own staff. The results were dramatic, with almost 90% of the samples taken while the units were in operation showing zero levels of contamination on the handles, compared to just over 13% when the handles were cleaned manually.

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