



STERIS LIMITED

MEDIA RELEASE

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**RAPID REVIEW PANEL BACKS STERIS VHP® TECHNOLOGY FOR
USE AGAINST MRSA AND OTHER HEALTHCARE INFECTION RISKS**

Clinical trials and current uses prove the technology

STERIS, a worldwide leader in decontamination and infection prevention, welcomes the 4 February report from the Health Protection Agency (HPA) Rapid Review Panel in favour of STERIS's patented Vaporized Hydrogen Peroxide (VHP®) decontamination technology. **The panel gives the following recommendation:** *"It has potential application for fumigating rooms in clinical and pharmaceutical areas including areas containing complex electrical equipment. The product is rapidly microbicidal. Research and development has been completed and the product may have potential value; in use evaluations/trials are now needed in an NHS clinical setting."*

Since submitting its information to the Rapid Review Panel last year, STERIS has conducted several clinical trials that reinforce the finding of the Rapid Review Panel and demonstrate the effectiveness of VHP technology against infectious organisms, including MRSA. STERIS has also developed protocols for using VHP technology to decontaminate facilities that are contaminated with MRSA and has developed processes to reduce the potential of MRSA from being transmitted into and out of facilities. This work includes:

- The successful decontamination of hospital wards, isolation rooms, and operating theatres in the UK and abroad
- The decontamination of emergency patient transfer vehicles in the UK and other countries

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- Current research in the UK evaluating the efficacy of VHP technology against SARS and other viruses
- Research in Germany that confirms the effectiveness of VHP technology against the bacteria which cause tuberculosis (TB)
- A recent investigation, due to be published in 2005, showing that VHP technology can reduce surface contamination even if blood is present
- A report published in the *Lancet* (7 August 2004), which proves that STERIS's unique dry VHP process can inactivate prions that cause vCJD and BSE

STERIS invented and pioneered VHP technology and it has been widely used in pharmaceutical and research applications for more than a decade to decontaminate equipment and enclosed areas, providing evidence that it can be a safe and efficacious decontamination process. There are over 80 STERIS VHP systems installed in the UK, 600 across Europe, and more than 1,200 worldwide providing sterile environments in pharmaceutical production facilities and leading research and development labs.

In addition, STERIS VHP technology has been used to remediate anthrax contamination from two U.S. Federal buildings, including a U.S. State Department mail processing facility after the anthrax letters incident of 2001.

Welcoming the Rapid Review Panel announcement, STERIS Limited senior technical director, Dr. Gerald McDonnell said: "STERIS is ready to introduce its VHP technology to the National Health Service (NHS) and work closely with hospitals to ensure its safe and effective application. Our extensive research and practical application has shown that VHP's integrated process can provide a validated solution for reducing the contamination levels in emergency patient transfer vehicles and hospital rooms.

STERIS's VHP technology is easy to apply and can significantly reduce contamination levels to provide a safer environment for patients, medical staff and healthcare workers. Having been used for many years in other industries, we look forward to being able to



apply the same technology to help the NHS improve its hygiene standards in healthcare settings.”

Simon Williams of the Patients Association commented: “We encourage the use of all technologies which can make a real difference to the MRSA problem in the NHS. We hope a product, such as VHP technology, with apparently such clear evidence in its favour will now see a rapid uptake throughout vulnerable areas of the NHS, such as in ambulances, hospital wards, isolation rooms, and operating theatres. This sort of technology is just what the government needs to help meet its bold new MRSA reduction target.”

STERIS will be a major sponsor of the Patients Association Clean Hospitals Summit in April and looks forward to showcasing further research and information to demonstrate the contribution that the company’s technologies can make to infection control.

World renowned virologist Professor John Oxford of Queen Mary’s Medical School, London, said: “This technology has huge potential, all the other evidence already in place illustrates the wide applicability to tackle the threats to health and hygiene. It looks very interesting for tackling a range of viruses including influenza and SARS. Working with STERIS we will be commencing trials for using VHP technology to eradicate influenza and SARS in a matter of days. This work is vital given the ever present threat of a major worldwide influenza outbreak.”

STERIS’s VHP decontamination technology uses a low temperature, DRY vapour process that has proven to be highly effective against pathogenic organisms and bacterial spores.

The process is environmentally friendly, non-carcinogenic, non-corrosive at use concentrations, and does not leave any toxic residues. Unlike many other



antimicrobials, the vapour breaks down into the non-toxic by-products of water vapour and oxygen.

STERIS's VHP technology has been further developed for use in larger enclosed rooms. Recent examples include the decontamination of areas infected with the SARS virus or other viruses, whole building decontamination (for example, anthrax spore remediation), and hospital rooms and vehicle decontamination (including ambulances and aeroplanes). Hospital rooms, including equipment, and other areas can be safely decontaminated without the evacuation of adjacent rooms and with minimum disruption to the hospital staff, patients, and facilities in comparison to other fumigation methods.

STERIS looks forward to making this technology available to the patient care market for day-to-day use and is in discussion with several NHS Trusts now that the Rapid Review Panel has given a clear lead.

VHP® is a registered trademark of STERIS Corporation.

Ends

For further information please contact:

Nick Sutcliffe on 020 7526 3622 or 07730 898 165 for general media inquiries.

Notes:

1. More details of the trials are available upon request, including site photographs.
2. STERIS is the inventor of VHP technology, with more than 1,200 VHP systems in use today. These systems are used in a range of industries, including

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research and development, pharmaceutical production, and food and beverage packaging. The technology is available now for the National Health Service.

3. STERIS Limited of Basingstoke is a subsidiary of STERIS Corporation. The mission of STERIS Corporation is to provide a healthier today and safer tomorrow through knowledgeable people and innovative infection prevention, decontamination and health science technologies, products and services. The Company's more than 5,000 dedicated employees around the world work together to supply a broad array of solutions by offering a combination of equipment, consumables and services to healthcare, pharmaceutical, industrial and government customers. For more information, visit <http://www.steris.com>.

4. The February 2005 Rapid Review Panel announcement can be found at: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/PressReleases/fs/en> and http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/rapid_review/default.htm