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## **Labcaire urges Industry to adopt Full Traceability and Safe Protocols in Endoscope Storage**

Labcaire is encouraging hospitals with endoscopy departments to move towards implementing full traceability systems for endoscopes that are placed in an Endoscope Storage Cabinet following reprocessing.

This coincides with the company's decision to drop non-traceable version Endoscope Storage Cabinet (ESC) and introduce versions where traceability is possible. This follows a growing trend towards ensuring the history of an endoscope can be traced to patients. The precautionary principle is also seen in the recent MHRA statements concerning damage to endoscopes during storage.

These follow reports of significant deterioration in the outer coating of flexible endoscopes due to prolonged exposure to UV light. In one case endoscope storage and drying cabinets had been fitted with a non-standard programme that allowed the UV light to be switched on for eight hours a day instead of the expected 15 minutes every six hours. The MHRA state that these conditions might cause trauma to the patient, affect the functionality of the endoscope, allow ingress of fluids into the endoscope, inhibit effective decontamination of the endoscope by allowing micro-organisms to be retained in the damaged area of the endoscope and reduce the number of endoscopes available for use in the unit whilst the affected endoscope is being repaired.

Labcaire has developed an ESC that enables the identity and storage time of endoscopes to be tracked while in storage. Labcaire advocates a safety-first approach to endoscope storage. There is a case for describing an ESC as a medical device under the terms of the MDD because they preserve the cleanliness of endoscopes following processing. ESC enables hospitals to implement a traceability system that can be applied from the time an endoscope is presented for cleaning to the point of use.

By using traceable ESC's users can protect their position because they can demonstrate full traceability. For instance, the absence of door open alarm and access interlocking with loader/unloader ID on non-traceable cabinets means that it is possible to remove and replace a scope without the movement being logged. This makes it impossible for users to verify that the scope has not become re-infected during storage.

Labcaire's new ESC5T and ESC10T models (5 and 10 scopes) provide HEPA filtered air over all surfaces and into all channels of flexible endoscopes whilst they are in the cabinet. In addition, the channel air is molecularly dried ensuring that endoscopes are not exposed to any potential contamination that could be associated with storage of instruments in conventional cabinets and any residual contamination after reprocessing is removed.

### **About Labcaire**

Labcaire Systems Limited is a leading supplier of automated endoscope reprocessors (AERs), bench-mounted and mobile filtration fume cupboards, laminar flow cabinets, microbiological safety cabinets, tissue culture cabinets and PCR cabinets. Labcaire sell directly in the UK and through a comprehensive network of distributors throughout the world. The company is based at 175 Kenn Road, Clevedon, Somerset, BS21 6LH.

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