



INFECTION CONTROL

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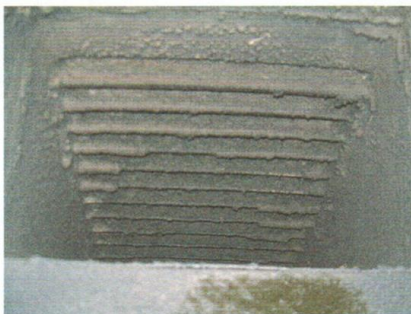
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Ductwork Cleaning is Essential



Debris accumulating in ductwork can propagate allergens, mould and provide a breeding/feeding ground for insects and even vermin. At best this can result in impaired staff productivity and an unpleasant environment, at worst it's a serious health risk. And in hospitals poor air quality can be detrimental not only to staff and visitors, but can impair the healing process too. In addition, dust and debris found in un-cleaned ductwork, together with temperature and humidity levels, have been linked to the risk of growth and spread of MRSA and other micro-organisms in hospitals.

According to the National Healthcare Associated Infection Research Network, on average, patients with a healthcare associated infection have been found to be around 7 times more likely to die in hospital than uninfected patients. Regular inspection and cleaning of hospital ducts and filters is one simple but highly effective step hospitals can take as part of their procedures to combat cross infections. Indeed under workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) regulations, building owners and managers have a legal obligation to ensure that enclosed workplaces are ventilated with fresh, purified air. Mechanical systems must be cleaned, maintained and inspected regularly and records kept showing evidence that ductwork continues to meet regulations. But while one would assume this is a standard procedure it is likely that as much as 99% of the ducting systems in hospitals may not be properly cleaned. It's essential that duct cleaning is carried out by qualified duct cleaning specialists according to current industry standards as laid down by B&ES TR/19 and the BS EN 15780. Ordinary cleaning companies may lack the expertise to clean systems to the necessary standards. In any event, the cost of not having a thorough and regular ductwork inspection, cleaning and maintenance programme could be very high indeed, both in human terms and cost to the NHS - an estimated £1 billion a year. www.indepthhygiene.co.uk