

Communication Editorial



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Welcome to the Autumn 2026 edition of the Medical Device Decontamination Journal.

As we move into the final part of another busy year, this edition brings together a broad mix of professional updates, practical guidance, education, emerging technology and discussion around some of the issues currently shaping Decontamination practice.

There is plenty happening across the profession, and this issue reflects that breadth.

A Changing Landscape

Regulation and national policy continue to move quickly. This edition includes an update on developments around the UK Medical Devices Regulations, alongside wider changes affecting the healthcare landscape.

The Chairman's update also brings us up to date with the Institute's involvement in Design for Life, HTM 01-01 development, national capacity work, education and collaboration with other professional organisations.

These are important areas for IDSc. Decontamination increasingly needs a voice in wider discussions around healthcare infrastructure, sustainability, medical devices, workforce and patient safety, and it is good to see the Institute continuing to contribute at that level.

Back to the Day Job

We also have plenty of content grounded firmly in everyday practice.

In this edition I look at the role of the Decontamination Lead and the importance of having effective oversight beyond the traditional boundaries of sterile services and endoscopy. We also look at medical-device procurement and

why purchase price and regulatory marking should never be the end of the assurance conversation.

Elsewhere, Sharon Fox introduces the direction of travel for education within IDSc and reflects on the findings from last year's Great Debate, including off-label use of flexible Endoscopes and missing instruments.

There is also an excellent contribution looking back over more than five decades of branch involvement and professional development, which is a timely reminder of the value our branches continue to bring to the Institute and its members.

Innovation and Technology

Technology features strongly again.

The edition looks at developments in automated reprocessing, robotics and the changing requirements associated with increasingly complex surgical devices. It is a useful reminder that advances in surgery and medical technology inevitably bring new challenges for those responsible for cleaning, disinfection, sterilisation and assurance.

Digital transformation is part of that picture too. Better use of data, traceability and information has enormous potential, but the value comes from how effectively those technologies support the people actually delivering services.

Looking Towards Brighton

Of course, we are now also heading towards IDSc Annual Congress 2026 in Brighton, 23rd – 25th November. This edition introduces a number of our confirmed speakers, covering areas including medical technology and procurement, robotic instruments, microbiology and sterilisation, automation, certification, regulation, validation, engineering and data.

It is shaping up to be a varied programme and, as always, Congress is about more than the presentations. It is an opportunity to meet

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colleagues, challenge our thinking, share experience and reconnect with people from across the profession.

I hope to see many of you there.

Finally

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition, whether through articles, branch activity, education, research or simply by continuing to engage with the Institute.

There is a great deal happening across Decontamination at the moment, and this edition provides a good snapshot of a profession that continues to develop.

I hope you enjoy the Autumn edition, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Brighton in November

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