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Subject: NIB Private Harnesses Nature to Improve Patient Welfare

NIB Private Hospital is the first in the Hunter Valley to install a unique instrument and equipment sterilisation system that uses hydrogen peroxide and gas plasma technology.

The new STERRAD Sterilisation System is a technological breakthrough that offers major advantages in terms of safety, speed and cost savings.

The system sterilises instruments and equipment by using a combination of hydrogen peroxide and gas plasma, a phenomenon of nature that occurs in the Northern and Southern Lights, known as aurora borealis and aurora Australis respectively.

The gas plasma is generated by the application of radio-frequency energy to vaporised hydrogen peroxide. The system destroys micro-organisms, as well as highly resistant bacterial spores, leaving only oxygen and water vapour as by-products.

"NIB Private is continually striving to provide better care for less, and the STERRAD System is a great example of this commitment to excellence," Chief Executive of NIB Private, Mr Ron Denison, said.

"The system further improves patient safety by enabling full sterilisation of some instruments which, to date, have only been disinfected, while the gentleness of the system also lengthens the life of surgical equipment, thereby reducing costs.

"It also enables us to meet new infection control standards that will take effect from July 1 this year," he said.

Used as a general purpose steriliser, the STERRAD System is ideal for heat- and moisture-sensitive items such as fibre-optic devices, respiratory equipment, surgical power tools and microsurgical instruments.

The system is now in service in the Central Sterilising Department of NIB Private, a 38-bed facility at New Lambton Heights which opened in May 1994.

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