

ROBOT ROAMS

James L. West Center for Dementia Care

Don't be surprised to see a five-foot tall robot rolling down the halls and among residential rooms at the James L. West Center for Dementia Care in Fort Worth.

The West Center is the very first long-term care center or any health care facility of any kind in the United States to deploy the full 360-degree suite of UV innovation, according to the center.

Homelike Solutions LLC in partnership with Direct Supply LLC sourced the UV robot and UV cabinet technologies, UV Towers and PathO3Gen Solutions Shoe Sanitizing Stations. This portfolio of products creates a comprehensive disinfection protocol.

"COVID has had a significant impact on the long-term care sector and James L. West Center is moving boldly into the future – a future that includes COVID now and more viruses in the future," said Cheryl Harding, Ph.D. and CEO of The West Center.

"This technology complements our existing environmental services platform with a goal to create germ-free environments for today's residents and our team, as well as for future West Center stakeholders," she said.

The technology extends far beyond a single robot:

- **Mobile UV-C tower** – disinfects tightly confined spaces such as restroom stalls and closets
- Two **UV-C cabinets** – disinfect small items including cell phones, keys, laptops and eyeglasses – stationed at each of the Center's two entry points
- Three **Ozone+UVC shoe sanitizing stations** – eliminates bacteria, viruses and fungi on shoes in just eight seconds – also stationed at each of the entry points
- Eight **UV wands** – disinfect keyboards and other difficult-to-reach devices and spaces
- **Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization System** – installed in the HVAC system to purify the air in the entire building; and
- The star of the show: the **fully autonomous UV-D robot** – disinfects entire rooms and hallways as it travels a pre-programmed path



The James L. West Center for Dementia Care

UV technology has been used in health care before and this new suite of products is providing an elevated level of safety for residents and team members who are dedicated to their care.

Harding and her team had read about the heightened level of protection that UV resources provide so she reached out to one of her vendors, Direct Supply, for a solution.

Funding to purchase the high-intensity UV ray technology was provided by the City of Fort Worth via the CARES Grant Program.

"I have long admired the James L. West Center for being one of Fort Worth's leading health care innovators," said Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price. "The Center's leadership in the health care arena and expertise supporting persons living with dementia and Alzheimer's is recognized throughout the state and nationally."

After 10 days of installation and training, the robot and its UV friends moved into action March 11.

"We are proud to be a part of this historic implementation with Direct Supply and Homelike solutions supporting the James L. West Community," says Andy Molner, VP of UVD-Robots for the Americas.

"We're so pleased that PathO3Gen Solutions' shoe sanitizing stations have been implemented as an integral part of James L. West's 360-degree



A UV cabinet is used for sanitizing smaller items such as mobile phones, laptops and eyeglasses.



A UV shoe sanitizing station



The James L. West Center is staging a competition to name its UV robot.

approach to disinfection and safety," said Scott Beal, COO, PathO3Gen Solutions.

The significance of the UV advancement has impressed Bailie Hillman, Healthcare Administrator of The West Center.

"While we were completing the installation and training, we reached the first anniversary of COVID. At that same approximate time, the United States had experienced the nation's 500,000th death from this virus. We have had a tremendous sense of urgency to push forward. We are certainly grateful for our partnership with the City of Fort Worth for making this UV partnership possible," Hillman said.

Mike Price and Kevin Bergmann, who managed the equipment installation and training for Homelike Solutions, cited the enthusiasm of the James L. West Center team.

Price said, "Everyone here is embracing the UV technology because they all recognize this will be a safer place to live for their residents and they will be safer themselves as well. It's truly a win-win situation," Price said.

The robot is now a member of the West Center family and the center is planning a social media campaign to give it a name other than "fully autonomous UV-D robot."

– FWBP Staff