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## **Continuously Killing Microbes Never Looked So Good**

A world-class centre being constructed at Sheffield's Northern General Hospital is due to set the gold standard for infection prevention, and with this brief in mind, the architect turned to Antimicrobial Copper.

“Common materials such as plastics may look clean, but they have no inherent antimicrobial efficacy,” explains Rebecca Haverty of Race Cottam Associates, the architectural practice tasked with creating a revolutionary facility that will meet the unique needs of young adult Cystic Fibrosis patients. “Antimicrobial Copper can help to fight infection, so we were very keen to use it. It seems almost too good to be true, and yet it's proven to work. The range of alloys available means any project can gain from the benefits of copper. We chose to use an almost pure copper to make a statement, but a nickel-silver finish would look good too.”

Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is one of the UK's most common life-threatening inherited diseases, affecting some 8,500 children, teenagers and young adults. Hospital treatment is complex and lengthy, and whilst in hospital patients are isolated from family and friends and removed from their normal lives.

With the new facility, it was the hope of Dr Frank Edenborough, Consultant at the Sheffield Adult Cystic Fibrosis Centre, and the Cystic Fibrosis Team that they could create an environment to meet both the clinical and personal needs of patients. They helped design a ward that would combine key infection prevention measures with a comfortable and appealing environment that aims to mitigate the boredom of sometimes very prolonged stays.

Dr Edenborough explains the role copper will play: “In a bid to set the gold standard for infection prevention in CF, we felt that copper could make an important contribution towards minimising surface contamination from hands or coughing, killing potentially dangerous pathogens in between cleans and augmenting rigorous hygiene protocols. It is our hope that, in this way, copper will help reduce the risk of infections.”



Instinct Hardware, the company supplying the Antimicrobial Copper components, have seen the demand for such products rise steeply in recent months as more infection control professionals are becoming aware of its potential for their facilities.

“The increased interest in copper coincides with Instinct’s progressive research and development into antimicrobial products,” says Nilesh Chohan, Works Manager at Instinct Hardware. “It is proven as the most effective antimicrobial touch surface material, whilst being completely recyclable, thus complying with the sustainable demands of today. These factors have led to the addition of a copper range that is in keeping with the Instinct philosophy for providing reliable, superior quality products, where integrity of the material is a critical factor.”

Recognising copper’s beauty as well as its antimicrobial properties, a piece of copper artwork has been commissioned for the clinic, which will greet patients, staff and visitors when they enter. The artwork is by prominent London-based metal smith Adaesi Ukairo, who has a long-standing love of working with copper and its alloys, such as brass and bronze.

“I was originally drawn to copper for its malleable qualities and its ability to patinate beautifully, and it rapidly became the material of choice to evoke my designs,” she says. “It was the perfect material to embark on an ambitious design for a 2 metre-long wall piece for the clinic. My intention is for the piece to act as a window, allowing the viewer to soar through a landscape, transported momentarily as they enter the clinic.”

From the innovative and contemporary room designs to the Antimicrobial Copper touch surface components and the vibrant, welcoming copper artwork, it is hoped by those working on the project that the new ward will not only provide a safe and hygienic environment for patients to be treated, but also one that will feel more comfortable and inviting for long-term stays than existing facilities, setting a gold standard for infection prevention and revolutionising Cystic Fibrosis care.

	
<p>Antimicrobial Copper door furniture installed at the Sheffield Cystic Fibrosis Clinic</p>	<p>Artwork by Adaesi Ukairo, to be installed at the ward entrance</p>

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## Editor's Notes

### Clinical Trials

In a trial on a busy medical ward at Selly Oak Hospital, Birmingham, copper surfaces were shown to have 90-100% less contamination on them than standard surfaces. Trials in the US and Chile have confirmed these results.

<http://www.copperinfo.co.uk/antimicrobial/literature.shtml#scientificpapers>

### Antimicrobial Copper



The Antimicrobial Copper brand signifies that a product bearing it is made from a recognised antimicrobial copper alloy – scientifically validated as the most effective antimicrobial material. Leading manufacturers of hospital equipment, furniture and fittings are starting to use the mark to indicate that their products contain Antimicrobial Copper. For more information, please visit [www.antimicrobialcopper.com](http://www.antimicrobialcopper.com).

### Contacts

Funding for this special clinic is coming largely from charitable donations to the Sheffield Cystic Fibrosis Appeal. This £1 million appeal is being run by healthcare charity Sheffield Hospitals Charitable Trust. Any queries about the appeal or offers of donations should be addressed to:

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For more information, visit [www.shctonline.org.uk/cysticfibrosis](http://www.shctonline.org.uk/cysticfibrosis)

Enquiries about the products of Instinct Hardware should be directed to:

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Adaesi Ukairo works in copper and brass, employing the metalsmithing techniques of blocking out, raising, forging and plannishing to shape and manipulate metal.

Her website is <http://www.ukairo.com>