Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust - Waste Prevention

Summary

The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust (RLBUHT) is one of the largest and busiest hospital trusts in the North of England, providing a comprehensive range of specialist services to 750,000 people each year.

In 2014/15 the Trust cared for over 90,000 people in their emergency department, around 95,000 day case and inpatients and had over 587,000 outpatient attendances. It is due to open a new hospital adjacent to the existing Liverpool hospital site (image above), which will be demolished and redeveloped, in 2017. The new hospital is aiming for BREEAM rating ‘Excellent’, and its development supports a range of community benefits.

The Trust has for some time had a strong focus on sustainability, supported by the Head of Sustainability, Environmental Services Manager and others.

WRAP undertook a waste prevention review in 2014/15. This included a review of Inventory Management and associated processes regarding consumables within Theatres and consideration of relevant requirements in facilities management contracts for the new facility.

The development of the new hospital offers an opportunity to embed effective processes and practices that will seek to prevent waste, in all of its forms, once it is operational, leading to cost and environmental savings.

Key Facts

- RLBUHT is one of the first Trusts to use the Government Buying Standard - Balanced Scorecard in contract requirements for Catering Services;
- The Trust has a number of examples of good practice, including its innovation of theatre procedure packs;
- The review emphasised the importance of effective inventory management, together with a focus on specific consumable items.
Setting standards

In 2013/14 the Trust provided 882,564 in-patient meals in 2013/14 at a cost of £2.7m, as confirmed in the annual Estates Return Information Collection (ERIC) returns.

In Spring 2015, RLBUHT tendered contracts for Catering, Healthcare Cleaning and Portering for the existing hospitals and the new facility, which becomes operational in 2017.

As part of procuring the new catering contract, the Trust asked bidders to respond to the requirements within the Balanced Scorecard\(^1\) and the Soil Association’s Food for Life Catering Mark\(^2\).

The Balanced Scorecard ‘Toolkit’, launched in July 2014 is designed to help procurers and suppliers understand how to apply the Government Buying Standard for Food and Catering Services.

This toolkit has been adopted by the Trust and is one of the first NHS Trusts to do so.

In addition the Trust is asking bidders to work towards the Food for Life Catering Mark, which provides an independent endorsement that food providers are taking steps to improve the food they serve, using fresh ingredients which are free from undesirable additives and trans fats, are better for animal welfare, and comply with national nutrition standards. The Catering Mark has been cited by NHS England as a way to improve hospital food.

As part of the new contract suppliers are required to achieve this standard, thereby further supporting the work that has already been undertaken.

Theatres management

RLBUHT was a leader in the development of Theatre procedure packs for standard procedures. The Trust wanted to reduce the amount of time medical teams took to prepare for each patient in order to improve turn around times. One area highlighted was the number of items required per operation and the amount of time it took to unwrap them. The development of standard packs has resulted in reduced time needed for preparing for procedures. For example, this allowed for an increase in the number of knee operations from 154 to 226 in a six-month period. It has also saved the Trust £175,000 per annum and reduced associated packaging by 90%.

As a result, procedure packs are now routinely used by acute hospital Trusts. RLBUHT currently uses 28 packs ranging from Trauma Hip Screw Nail Pack to Spine Pack\(^3\).

The use of procedure packs does require a review process to be in place - are all appropriate items included within the pack? Are there items included that are not always required and is it therefore best to store some items separately? Is the quality of all items within a pack as high as it should be?

Plaster casts

Following a successful pilot, the Trust has worked with Tradebe Ltd to avoid landfill disposal of approximately 20 tonnes of plaster casts produced each year.

The plaster produced by the hospital is made of fine high quality plaster that can be reprocessed and recycled as an alternative for natural mined gypsum. One of the major applications of gypsum is in the cement manufacturing industry, where its properties slow down the hardening of cement making it more workable.

The processing costs are similar to disposal. The Trust did benefit from reduced landfill costs of about £1,440 each year. Although the financial savings have been modest, this has been an excellent environmental opportunity to recycle the material instead of landfilling and has helped to reduce the Trust’s carbon footprint by 1.8 CO\(_2\)e tonnes per annum.

The WRAP waste prevention review emphasised a range of further potential opportunities for the Trust, such as:

- Liaison regarding procurement requirements;
- Inventory management principles to support the focus on stock levels and usage;
- Sterilisation wraps;
- Extending use of a scrub dispensing system.


\(^2\) [http://www.sacert.org/catering](http://www.sacert.org/catering)

\(^3\) [http://www.sduhealth.org.uk/resources/case-studies.aspx](http://www.sduhealth.org.uk/resources/case-studies.aspx)
The review provided estimated financial and environmental savings and the Trust are considering how best to take forward some of the recommendations.

“We continue to work closely with suppliers to identify innovative cost effective ways to manage the Trust’s waste, which enables us to minimise environmental impact and achieve zero waste to landfill”. Andrew Johnson, Energy Manager

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