



'BACK TO BASICS' FOR BIG REWARDS IN WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trusts, Estates and Facilities Department have recently undertaken a "back to basics" review of its services. The rationale for this was twofold, the current economic climate and increased financial constraints could not be sustained by previous procurement approaches nor reconciled with the Trusts sustainability agenda.

One outcome of this review was the introduction of a New Waste Management System bringing best practice to its waste management operations, improving;

- environmental compliance,
- best value for its service,
- the patient experience, and,
- maximising efficiency of the waste disposal operation.

Guided by the Department of Health "Safe Management of Healthcare Waste and feedback from our service users new disposal methods were developed by our project teams.

Among the agreed changes were:

Introducing new waste streams

- Introducing the "bag to bed to bin" methodology to remove the need to have clinical waste bins in patient bays, and
- Introducing new silent closing bins complemented the need to improve patient's experience.
- Ensuring the products used for the collection of waste had the best possible sustainable life cycle, and provided value for money.

Although this scheme is still in its infancy, efficiencies have already been shown for ward areas they include;

Increased waste separation rates which have increased as follows:

- Total Offensive waste collection: 160 tonnes/yr (at current separation rates)
- Total Recyclable waste collection: 320 tonnes/yr (at current separation rates)

The replacement of hundreds of waste bins with the silent-closing units has also improved the hospital at night experience for the patient. They are no longer disturbed by the irritating disruptive noises associated with the previous bins closing mechanism.

Improvements in the patients environment has also been evident, because clinical waste associated through treatment is now removed from the patient's immediate location, giving a more pleasing visual impact; and reducing any offensive odours associated with the waste products.

In addition by working in partnership with a local provider who refurbishes/ re-fabricates to an "as new" condition metal based equipment such as our waste bins the life of these receptacles can be extend by up to 5 years.

This procurement approach generates savings on new bins/pods by up to 60% (Recycling pods £500 new v £80 refurbish). This initiative as already provided savings on refurbishment of £22,200 to date.

Therefore, our back to basic approach has allowed us to improve the services we offer, aligned to our sustainability agenda and supportive of our cost improvement target by;

- improving the patients environment by reducing the opportunity for noise and offensive odours,
- reducing waste disposal costs for equipment suitable for refurbishment, reducing landfill,
- increasing recycling,
- increasing the sustainable lifecycle of waste receptacles,
- reducing our carbon footprint,
- investing in our local providers,
- contributing the health and well being of the users of our service by ensuring our services are efficient, effective, improved quality and value for money

Adopting, this approach has shown we can be sustainable, financially efficient and provide better socio economic benefits to the wider community.