
Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust - Realising Cost Savings through Innovation

Overview of the Project

Putting patients first; acting with integrity; respecting others; taking pride in what we do and striving to be the best. These are the core values that drive Guys' and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust to provide the best possible service whilst achieving complete sustainability. The 'Trust' - comprised of Guys' and St Thomas' Hospitals, the Evelina London Children's Hospital and 30 community sites across Southwark and Lambeth boroughs- has been an innovator in medical research and education since its inception. Now the Trust seeks to not only be a leader in medicine, but also to be a leader in sustainability – improving the quality of patient care and of course, reducing their carbon footprint.

Reducing waste and increasing cost savings is high on the Trust's agenda; and in line with their Fit for the Future campaign on service efficiency, the Trust's SAVE initiative (comprised of c.29 Directorates) has been tasked with identifying at least £150,000 in savings per annum; with improvements to sustainability programmes acting as the catalyst for change needed to attain these goals. Working closely with Bywaters, the appointed waste management service provider, to help determine which areas could be streamlined to promote efficiency and develop systems that generate tangible cost savings. The result was a multi-faceted strategy that aimed to reduce overall waste generation, divert materials from landfill and maximise recycling rates without diluting service quality, efficiency and compliance. As well as data provided from Bywaters and the Trust Waste Team's mini-weighbridge systems, other sustainability metrics are also included. These feed into a sustainability dashboard for each Directorate that is taken seriously by decision makers to influence change. The target of £140,000 was on track to being met or just short thereof.

Economic, Health and Carbon Impact of the project

StockDoc and Reuse - the Trust invested in the WarplT system during 2017 and upgraded an already exemplary scheme for reuse across all sites. The new system has already generated c. £60,000 in savings (a 400% return on investment) and surpasses their first year annual target. The online portal has been publicised through the various communications channels across the Trust. And a separate brand and logo, Stock Doc, created for user buy in to the scheme.

Any requisitions for furniture are referred to the Waste Management Team, who will advise whether a suitable item is available from its reuse store, before new items can be purchased. This saves time, reduces costs and most importantly, helps reduce deforestation. The new framework doesn't just support the Trust's internal departments: they regularly donate surplus equipment to hospitals in disadvantaged areas (most recently; furniture, mattresses and uniforms were donated to a hospital in Somalia) – further supporting their values of acting with integrity, respecting others and putting patients first!

The Trust has implemented multiple initiatives in an effort to curb emissions and increase recycling efforts, the most innovative being their advanced weigh-bridge system. The 'Byweigh' system acts as a complete auditing tool, giving precise real-time data on waste activity and offers numerous benefits to the Trust's waste management team; allowing waste managers to monitor which areas are generating high levels of waste, why it's being produced and how the Trust can make changes to improve recycling. The data, which allows waste managers to hone in on 'time in motion' elements, gives the Trust complete transparency of their waste generation: they know, ward-by-ward, exactly which waste streams are being produced, the times when waste generation fluctuates, which waste streams generate the highest costs, and how staff can be managed for maximum productivity.

The cost of Byweigh is offset by the overall reduction in waste-associated costs since its implementation; general waste for example, was reduced by c. £12,000 in 16/17 financial year. Byweigh not only provides an ability to maximise the Trust's resources, it provides the invaluable power of transparency that gives the Trust complete control of their waste operations.

The Trust has a target of reducing carbon emissions by more than 34% by 2020 and complements this aim by keeping its waste within the M25: using local disposal sites in line with the 'proximity principle'. Utilising London's oldest infrastructure – the river Thames – the Trust send non-recyclables to 'energy from waste' facilities just a few miles down river; coordinating waste collections to take place at night and tip into transfer wharves and barges on the river, further reducing vehicle movements.

The use of the Bywaters Material Recovery Facility (MRF), also only a few miles from site, allows the Trust to segregate and recover recyclable materials. The MRF is powered by London's largest solar panel array retrofits, which generates enough power to feed back into the grid and power local homes. These efforts alone have

reduced the Trust's emissions by 15%!

Partners, supporters involved in the Project

The Trust's Procurement Department has worked in close collaboration with the onsite waste management team to ensure that internal departments are using Warplt correctly. Their dedication has been key to Warplt's success; as part of best practice, each requisition for furniture is first checked against the StockDoc database to assess whether a new item has to be procured or whether there is a suitable replacement onsite. This small change to their standard operating procedure has become a huge innovation across the Trust - further reinforcing the benefits of a collaborative partnership approach.

Bywaters are the official service partner for Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. As London's leading waste management provider it's their job to ensure that all waste streams (including the items for Warplt) are managed safely and efficiently. Bywater's Account Management Team (assisted by dedicated Sustainability Managers) goes above and beyond to support the Trust's re-use initiatives. The Trust underwent a competitive tender process in 2014 which Bywaters were successful in winning. And along with this the Trust were able to secure a £250,000 savings per annum through disposal cost savings on the contract. Now within the final year of the contract, this exercise will have yielded close to £1,2million in savings.

Bywaters in turn works with the following organisations to complement their efforts for the Trust:

Tradebe are Bywater's preferred service partners for clinical waste management. Their innovative solutions for waste reclamation and recycling have helped the Trust realise their environmental targets.

Healthcare Environmental Group (HEG) is the largest independent full facilities medical waste management solutions company in the UK; HEG undertakes the collection and management of clinical waste, medical waste, sharps and hazardous wastes via sustainable in-house solutions. HEG also works in close partnership with Augean, which operates a national infrastructure of specialist facilities for the final treatment of clinical waste (including an R3 rated incinerator).

This highly successful partnership has paid dividends to the Trust, as they received a

91% score on the Carbon Trust Waste Standard - the highest scored ever achieved in the waste sector! There is no doubt that the Trust will soon realise their goal of becoming THE flagship for sustainability within the NHS.

Future plans for the project

The Trust has ambitious plans for 2018 and beyond, particularly around maximising their achievements and expanding on current initiatives to yield even greater results; work collaboratively to introduce further resource efficiencies, and enhance current practices to create an ever growing sustainable environment in line with their 70% recycling target. In addition, the Trust is working to introduce a baler that will not only allow for better segregation but it will also generate revenue from waste by receiving regular rebates for cardboard bales – essentially making it a cost-neutral service.

The Trust are completely committed to their passion for keeping their practices green, their resources green and their environment green to become the flagship in environmental practices within the NHS; sharing their (easy-to-replicate) successes with other Trusts within the UK.

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