



Temple Street cover all the angles to reduce food waste

Company: Temple St. Children's University Hospital • Location: Dublin

Summary

Temple St. Children's University Hospital (CUH), established in 1872, is one of the major Irish paediatric hospitals catering for children from all over the country.

CUH initiated a Sustainable Waste Management Programme in 2004 and has been actively implementing waste, water and energy use reduction measures since. The commitment and support of the hospital's executive has been an important factor in the success of the programme and the move to more sustainable waste management.

As a reflection of CUH's continual work on sustainability and environmental issues they won the Green Awards Green Healthcare Award in 2011 and 2012.

This case study outlines the improvements made by CUH during their involvement in the Green Healthcare Programme. These improvements are in addition to those made by the hospital before joining the programme. These improvements have not only impacted on the hospital's sustainability but also resulted in significant cost savings for the hospital.



Food Waste



Waste reduction per annum:

11 Tonnes

Estimated cost savings:

€4,800 to €18,500*

BENCHMARK:

Pre GHCP: 1.41 kg per in-patient bed day

Post GHCP: 1.03 kg per in-patient bed day (not taking into account the reduction in service) **24% reduction**

*The provision of canteen services in the hospital has changed since the hospital joined the GHCP. Some of the reduction in the quantity of food waste generated will be as a result of this reduced service. In the main the reductions are associated with the improvements to the provision of food, particularly in the canteen.

Wards & Medical Areas:

Over ordering of food by the ward kitchens can be an issue in every hospital. The catering department needs to ensure that enough food is provided to feed the patients actually eating, but not so much food that it ends up as unserved food waste. Following the initial food survey the catering department now requests all ward catering staff to record the number of unserved food portions after each meal. This information is then used to determine the 'general number of portions' of food required for each ward for each meal.

Each day when the ward kitchens send their orders in, they are checked against the 'general number of portions' required. If more portions are ordered than required the main kitchen reduces the number of portions of food sent to the ward accordingly. Ward kitchens very rarely ring the catering department to ask for more food, indicating enough food is being provided.

The main kitchen tries to ensure that ward kitchen staff only order the food required, through regular training and awareness programmes – including highlighting the cost of food waste to the hospital.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland





Hospital Case Study

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Canteen:

Like many of the facilities that participated in the GHCP, the hospital's canteen was observed to be a significant source of food waste. Both staff and the families of patients use the canteen. The hospital managed to reduce the quantity of food waste generated, particularly unserved food waste, by implementing a number of measures, as outlined below.

Unserved food

Timing of the preparation of hot food:

Previously the canteen prepared hot food right up until the end of lunch service (14:30), to ensure that all options were available to customers. It was believed that any unserved food could be reused at tea - when in reality it wasn't. Now the canteen finishes cooking an hour before the end of service, with customers encouraged to purchase the remaining food and sandwiches. This has significantly reduced the quantity of unserved food waste generated.

Reuse of unserved food in vending machines:

Any suitable unserved food from lunch is plated into disposable containers and placed in a refrigerated vending machine. Microwave ovens are provided in the area to heat up meals. Even though the canteen is closed at tea the parents and staff can still have a hot meal or cold salad, with the added benefit of using up the unserved food.

Uneaten plate waste:

Training of staff to offer the correct portion size to customers to reduce uneaten plate waste: Staff were trained to recognise those customers that may require smaller or larger portion sizes. Instead of automatically adding extra food to the plates staff now ask customers if they would like more.



Changes that make a difference to families not just patients



Mealtime is an important break for staff, but even more so for the families of patients, as it may be their only chance to recharge their batteries. With this in mind the hospital re-decorated the canteen with brighter colours, improved the seating and reviewed the layout of the vending machines. There was an unexpected benefit from the improvement in the facilities – a visible reduction in uneaten food left over on plates. It seems customers are happy to spend more time in the canteen eating their meal.



Liquid Waste

Liquid waste (tea, milk, etc.) was previously placed into the food waste bin due to the positioning of the tray clearing area. The catering staff now place the liquid into a small container which is regularly emptied into the kitchen sink. This change of practice has reduced the number of food waste bins to be managed by porters and to be emptied by the contractor. As bins are charged per lift it has resulted in significant savings.

