

SOUTH ESSEX PARTNERSHIP NHS UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION TRUST

The project to complete a review of our procurement practices at South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (SEPT)

is part of the Trust's pledge to meet its Sustainable Development Management Plan and Implementation Framework. SEPT will be the first NHS Trust nationally to implement this approach.

The aims of the review to reduce our environmental impact and improve our sustainable procurement with our office products supplier Office Depot were to;

- Implement "green switches" on stationery products,
- Standardise range,
- Reduce our carbon footprint by reducing delivery frequency from daily to weekly
- Streamline processes
- Save money
- Create a best-practice model to promote adoption across the Public Sector.

To meet the switch criteria:

- product's environmental attributes had to be independently verified
- products were quality assessed, which included a trial of remanufactured toners
- reduce costs on the overall selection

The environmental and social benefits of the projects are:

- reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with deliveries
- reduction in waste to landfill, associated greenhouse gas and job creation* by choosing remanufactured or recycled products
- reduction in the requirement for non-renewable/virgin raw materials
- reduction in the toner carbon footprint; remanufacturing process saves approximately 2.5 kg of CO₂ per cartridge compared to the production of a new cartridge, source www.remanufacturing.org.uk
- protecting the worlds' forests and supporting the social, economic and environmental benefits of FSC and PEFC certified products
- Incinerating 10,000 tons of waste creates 1 job, landfilling the same amount creates 6 jobs while recycling the same weight creates 36 jobs. Source <http://www.ecoforce.co.uk/green-facts.htm>



ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:

- Progression with Good Corporate Citizenship precepts and the Trust's sustainability aspirations
- Electronic ordering and approvals implemented across 157 sites removing paper and postage costs whilst improving transparency & efficiency
- Since the product start over 500 products replaced with "green" products with an independently verified environmental attribute
- Spend on "green" products increased from 32.97% to 57.33% of invoiced sales
- Percentage of available "green" products purchased has increased from 43.95% to 89.84%
- Spend on remanufactured toner and inkjet cartridges has increased from 16.93% to 53.27% of invoiced sales
- Percentage of available remanufactured toner and inkjet cartridges purchased has increased from 18.45% to 88.24%
- 475 more remanufactured cartridges purchased per month equating to a reduction of 1187 kg CO₂ a month (2.5kg CO₂ x 475 cartridges) or 14250 kg CO₂ per annum
- Reduced stationery costs estimated at over £46,000 per annum
- Changing from daily to weekly deliveries reduced the number of drops by 269 in a like for like comparison of Q1, giving the potential for over 1000 less deliveries than the year before. Based on the average Office Depot drop of 3.14 kg CO₂e this equates to a reduction of 3379 kg CO₂e per annum.
- By consolidating orders SEPT has seen the average order value increase by 16%. The Trust has plans to tackle the number of non-urgent/avoidable small orders under £30 by further promoting the reduced CO₂ emissions this would give.

SEPT has grown exponentially in the past few years diversifying from Mental Health into Community Services. During the review of our procurement practices we noticed that the services we had taken on were working individually, using different products and delivery services. We therefore decided to

standardise the products we were buying and combine deliveries to reduce both costs and our environmental impact.

The project included a new approach with Office Depot to buying office supplies. In order to implement a comprehensive "green switch", SEPT worked extensively with Office Depot to review every product used by the Trust. As part of a quality guarantee, all suggested alternatives were subject to evaluation tests to ensure that they could deliver at least the same level of quality, durability and functionality.

A major product area of the switch was from original to remanufactured toner cartridges, but there was an historic perception of poorer product quality. To evaluate the proposed remanufactured toners' yield rates, coverage and quality, they were tested during a six-month trial with the Trust's IT department and a number of high usage teams. Additionally the toner manufacturer provided SEPT with written guarantees to pay for any servicing and/or replacement costs of any printer due to toner failure, to give added reassurance.

The success of the switches is reviewed every quarter so that adjustments can be made where products have been unsuccessful and new products to market can be added. Green product switching is an ongoing challenge, as whilst more sustainable products are becoming available, pushing prices down, there are still some products purchased where there is no green alternative. Office Depot continues to source greener alternatives for SEPT to ensure the Trust remains at the forefront of public sector sustainability.

SEPT has 157 delivery points, and as such, a true reshaping of the Trust's previous procurement system into a greener model required an inclusive, multi-dimensional approach. Consequently, the project not only incorporated product review, but also an overhaul of the end-to-end process of ordering and delivery.

The key to achieving this has been through consolidating orders into as few deliveries as possible to reduce on-site packaging waste and the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the deliveries. A decision to change from daily to weekly deliveries was made. A like-for-like first quarter comparison shows the success of this

decision, with a reduction of 269 drops in 2013 compared to the previous year, giving a potential reduction of over 1000 deliveries each year. Based on the average Office Depot drop of 3.14 kg CO₂e this equates to a reduction of 3379 kg CO₂e per annum.

This also has given knock-on time-utilisation benefits to on-site porters and administration staff.

By implementing electronic ordering across all 157 sites this has given further benefits by removing paper and postage (reducing both carbon & costs) whilst improving transparency and streamlining processes. The system has been set up to automatically switch products to the Trust-approved green alternative making it extremely simple for staff to use. This innovative approach also ensures minimum 'leakage' to non-green products if a sustainable alternative is available, whilst giving staff full visibility of what products are being switched at point of order.

The Trust has also instigated consolidated billing with electronic feeds being supplied on a monthly basis giving more carbon and process efficiencies. This was extended to the (Jan 2014) to full e-billing with Office Depot (the first NHS Trust to do so) taking even more paper out of the system and realising a 1% discount against all purchases made.

SEPT's Executive Team support for sustainability is demonstrated in the development of its Sustainable Development Management Plan and Implementation

Framework; a set of guidelines in response to national drivers including the UK Government Climate Change Act 2008 and the NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy. This project is part of the Trust's pledge to meet its sustainable aspirations.

In addition to operational support, senior executives have been key in the communication of the project. This was demonstrated at the project launch made by our Chief Executive; whose detailed communication included why the project had been developed, the sustainability and cost benefits and how it would work in practice.

In addition to communication within the Trust there has been a focus on sharing best practice with other organisations. Examples of this are articles in Supply Management, <http://www.supplymanagement.com/news/2013/sustainable-approach-adopted-by-south-essex-nhs-trust/> and Facilities Management, <http://www.fmjdata.com/2013/05/30/south-essex-nhs-trust-switches-on-to-greener-office-supplies/>.

SEPT is now sharing the initiative within the local health economy by meeting with the newly formed CCGS, regionally through the East of England Procurement Hub, nationally through the NHS Sustainable Procurement Forum and with the education sector at the National Union of Students Roundtable Green Impact Event in Manchester.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Over 500 products have been replaced with "green" products with an independently verified environmental attribute
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- 475 more remanufactured cartridges purchased per month equating to a reduction of 1187 kg CO₂ a month (2.5kg CO₂ x 475 cartridges) or 14250 kg CO₂ per annum
- Reduced stationery costs estimated at over £46,000 per annum
- Estimated annual reduction of 1000 deliveries. Based on the average Office Depot drop of 3.14 kg CO₂e this equates to a reduction of 3379 kg CO₂e per annum.
- Awarded Green Apple Award NHS & Health Sector UK Overall Green Champion Award
- Winner of The Health Care Supply Association Sustainable Procurement Award (Nov 2013)
- Finalist in HSJ Sustainability Awards

In conclusion, this initiative is in line with both Good Corporate Citizenship precepts and the Trust's sustainability aspirations. It's providing SEPT with a more efficient service; not only giving significant and tangible environmental benefits, but also measurable gains in terms of real cost savings, which we hope others across the Health Sector will follow our lead to adopt.

