

SUCCESS AT THE GREEN APPLE AWARDS FOR SHARPSMART CUSTOMERS

Since the introduction of the 2008 climate change act, the issue of environmental sustainability within the healthcare industry is gaining more focus than ever. With statistics showing that the average hospital generates 12 kilograms of waste per patient every day, the NHS's pledge to reduce their CO2 emissions by 2020 may feel like an unrealistic target to many facilities; however, it is believed that this waste output could be minimised by as much as 50% simply by implementing a more sustainable waste management system.

The annual 'Green Apple Awards' is a popular international environmental campaign designed to recognise, reward and promote environmental best practice around the world. As such, it is also the 'must-attend' event for organisations dedicated to promoting sustainability and addressing the ever-critical issue of global warming. At the latest ceremony, Sharpsmart were incredibly proud to support two of our customers, the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust (RFL) and Peterborough and Stamford NHS Foundation Trust, who respectively won silver and gold in the Health category of 'Waste Management'.

Here's how the introduction of the Sharpsmart system helped these organisations to achieve their sustainability targets.

THE CHALLENGE

As an organisation renowned for its world-class expertise, the RFL were looking for a sharps collection solution that would help them reduce emissions, save money, and reduce needle-stick injuries in order to optimise the safety of staff and patients alike. The prior system in use was a single-use sharps container, disposed of via incineration following each use.

Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust were also looking to improve their carbon footprint without compromising on patient safety. Prior to using Sharpsmart, they were using single-use sharps bins, and whilst this met current guidance on disposal of sharp waste, they had the inherent problems of assembly, labelling and the use of temporary closure methods that are difficult to manage and enforce with any such system, and a safety-engineered device such as Sharpsmart was identified as the best solution.

Adrian Toon, Hard FM Monitoring Manager, commented, 'We wanted to ensure that we were doing the very best for our environment and believed that, with a more sustainable waste management solution, we could lower our emissions and meet targets whilst still maintaining a safe environment for staff and patients. After seeing how the Sharpsmart system could help us minimise our carbon footprint, reduce costs and promote safety, we knew this was the best option for the Trust.'



Peterborough & Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust proudly accepting their Gold Award, alongside Ben Martyn.



The Royal Free step up to collect Silver, joined by Sharpsmart's Carl O'Neill & Lulu Robertson.

THE SOLUTION

Sharpsmart undertook an extensive review of the types of container that both Trusts were using, as well as how many they were purchasing on an annual basis. This information was utilised alongside a hospital ward audit to provide a detailed installation plan for Sharpsmart’s safety engineered sharps system.

It was identified that, as well as the environmental advantages, the Trusts would also benefit from a reduction in needle stick injuries due to the inherent safety features of the Sharpsmart System, together with as a substantial reduction in the associated costs of procuring and disposing of bins.

Sharpsmart containers were introduced to the Royal Free in 2014 and implemented across the entire site. At project commencement the safety engineered system was rolled-out and all disposable sharps containers removed in order to ensure that the new system was fully utilised. As well as providing a full-time porter and carrying out monthly audits to measure how well the system was being used, the Clinismart education solution was also implemented across the hospital with a view to educating staff to ensure all containers were filled effectively and helped save money.

Once the waste needs of Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals had been established, a consultation process was conducted to ensure front-line staff and the ultimate users of the system understood and approved the benefits of the system, and that it was implemented without any disrupting patient care. The Sharpsmart containers were then introduced to the Trust in 2012.

THE RESULTS

Since the introduction of the Sharpsmart system to the RFL, the Trust has experienced a wide range of benefits across the board, including significant cost savings, a reduction in CO2 emissions of up to 90% in comparison to disposable burn bins, an improved patient and employee experience, reduced waste volumes and educational opportunities for all staff.

Dave Reavy, Facilities Manager at the Trust, commented, “Since installing the Sharpsmart system the Hampstead site has been able to take ownership of our sharps collections and stock levels on site. It has ensured that disposal is at point of patient care reducing risks of needle stick injuries. It has also provided a sustainable system that has saved the Trust financially too.”

Similarly, Sharpsmart helped Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust save money, enhance staff efficiency time and ensure a safer system of disposal, reducing their carbon footprint by a staggering 82.8 tonnes per year and diverting 14.84 tonnes of plastic from incineration and 1.3 tonnes of cardboard per annum. The table below outlines the savings made across both Trusts.

TRUST	CO2 REDUCTION	SHARPS WASTE REDUCTION
RFL	156.56 tonnes	27.69 tonnes
Peterborough & Stamford	248 tonnes	44.5 tonnes

Sharpsmart currently work with over 80 hospitals in the UK and collaborate with various others to trial the Sharpsmart and Clinismart systems. We also work with SMEs, offering clinical waste collections and a fresh approach to the educational aspect of waste identification and segregations.

If you’re looking to save money and reduce your carbon footprint, call Sharpsmart on 01388 810310, or alternatively email customerservices@sharpsmart.co.uk for more information.

