

An innovative bag-to bedside system is proving to be a major factor in improving the patient environment, reducing risk and providing incredible reductions in clinical waste volumes, and costs at many hospitals across the UK.

The unique waste minimisation system, introduced by Clinismart, is based on the diversion of offensive and general waste from the clinical waste stream, and facilitates the creation of a patient environment which is free from storage of clinical and offensive waste bins.

The system was pioneered by Richard Winch, formerly managing director of Well Waste Solution's and now general manager of Clinismart. Richard explained: "Throughout my many visits to hospital wards and departments, while performing healthcare waste compliance audits, I became increasingly aware of the unsightly condition of the clinical waste bins - sited a matter of feet away from recovering patients.

"Many of the unpleasant smells associated with some hospital wards were emanating from these very same waste receptacles.

"Observing the waste disposal procedures used by nursing staff, it was apparent that there was little or no segregation of packaging and offensive waste taking place, so it became my goal to develop a system which achieved a two-fold benefit - improve the patient environment by getting these waste containers away from patients, while at the same time reducing the amount of clinical waste generated."

The Clinismart Bag-to-Bedside system has achieved both these goals.

It is common knowledge that as much as 50% of waste consigned as clinical waste is actually made up of general waste and waste which could be diverted to the offensive waste stream. The financial implications of diverting this non-clinical waste could constitute as much as 20% of the entire clinical waste budget. This was confirmed by Jeff Trevor, waste manager at University Hospitals North Staffordshire NHS Trust.

From the subsequent waste stream analysis report Clinismart developed detailed standard operating procedures,

Trust wins three ways

- Improved patient environment
- Reduced infection risk
- 50% less clinical waste volumes



educational tools and a site-wide rollout plan for bag dispensers and point-of-use bag holders. The bag dispenser and holder facilitate the complete removal of waste bins from areas where patients are being treated.

"Many waste segregation initiatives fail due to the fact waste companies and waste managers simply do not have the time or resources to develop and execute procedures and educational tools which will ensure consistency," added Richard. "The clinical waste bin on wards has been the least risky method for a 'catch all' waste disposal method."

The Clinismart Bag-to-Bedside system ensures that the clinical and offensive waste bin is removed from the ward, with the bag dispenser and education

material provided by Clinismart becoming the focal point for bag collection. Once inducted, staff educate themselves on the disposal route for the procedure they are about to undertake by

simply referring to the segregation matrix and instructions which are clearly visible at all times.

During installation of the bag-to-bedside system at University Hospital North Staffordshire, Richard saw that the hospital was utilising another waste reduction tool - the Sharpsmart reusable safety container. Richard identified a number of synergies between the two systems and Clinismart was subsequently formed from a union of Well Waste Solutions and Sharpsmart.

The bag-to-bedside innovation is now available as a complementary system to work alongside Sharpsmart on mobile devices to facilitate point-of-care segregation of all waste types. This has led to a further

diversion of around 15% of the waste that found its way into sharps containers to less expensive waste streams. It has also produced a further a reduction in sharps container usage.

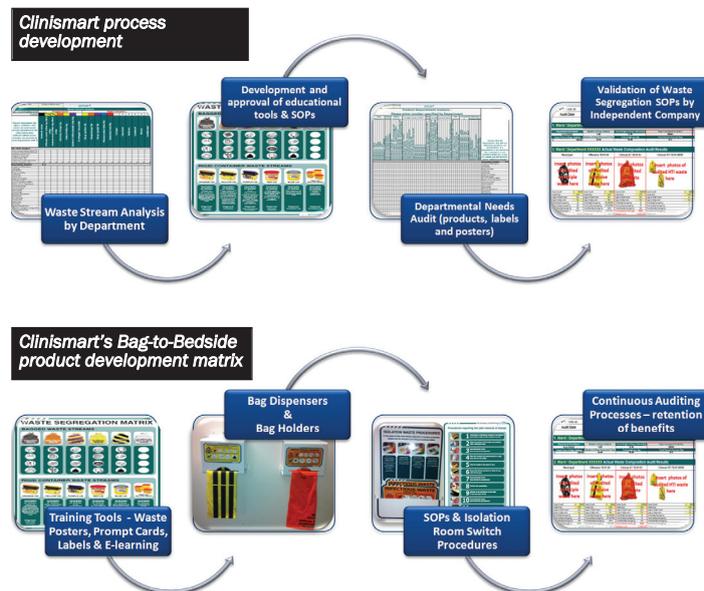
A joint competency development programme introduced by Clinismart includes a blended learning approach to healthcare waste management including the introduction of e-learning materials, waste segregation posters, staff prompt-cards and audit methodologies - all developed from departmental level SOPs.

Jeff Trevor, waste manager at University Hospitals North Staffordshire NHS Trust, said: "The introduction of the Clinismart Bag-to-Bedside system has not only created a cleaner ward environment and more pleasurable patient experience, it has ensured that we have made significant reductions in both waste treatment costs and clinical waste output.

"Initial estimates following rollout in April 2011 show that we have diverted close to 50% of orange bag waste to the offensive and domestic waste streams, which has resulted in a 20% reduction in our costs for these waste streams.

"The introduction of the Clinismart Bag-to-Bedside System coupled with the use of Sharpsmart's reusable sharps container has resulted in a safer and more sustainable working environment for our staff, and gives us the confidence that we are providing a risk free environment for our patients by removing and providing complete containment of the clinical and sharps waste streams within patient access areas."

For more on the Clinismart Bag-to-Bedside system, e-mail Richard Winch at rwinch@clinismart.co.uk



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