

# Reducing Clinical Waste at RIE

Lydia Howells



# Aim: Reduce Clinical Waste by 15% in Main Recovery RIE by September 2019

## Rationale

- Improved segregation can reduce clinical waste by 15%<sup>1</sup>
- Correct waste disposal could save NHS Scotland >£800,000<sup>1</sup>
- **CLIMATE EMERGENCY** - increased interest/activism
- Prime time to investigate own culture/habits



<sup>1</sup>NHS Scotland Waste Prevention and Re-Use Guide.

# The problem

Clinical waste???



# Are we fish?

**“FISH DID NOT DISCOVER WATER”**

Marshall McLuhan



We are unaware of what we are completely immersed in.

- Nurses are leading producers of NHS waste (Nursing Standard 2018)

# What was causing current practice?



## INDIVIDUAL

- Beliefs

*“Anything that touches the patient = clinical waste”*

- No incentive

*‘All ends up in the same bin’*

- Unsure of best practice
- Fear of doing wrong thing
- Habits normalised



## SOCIAL

- No critical friend
- No one leading change
- Lack of input from MDT



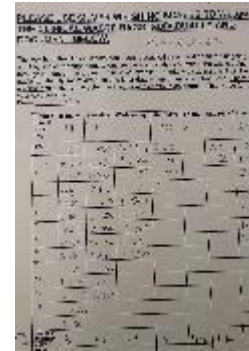
## MATERIAL

- Literature confusing / not readily available
- No information on environmental differences
- Only clinical waste bins at bedside
- Not accessible!



# What we did

- Recorded daily number and weight of clinical waste bags
- Total of 16 weeks: 6 before and 10 after change



## 1. Education/Prompt posters



## 2. Bins on wheels

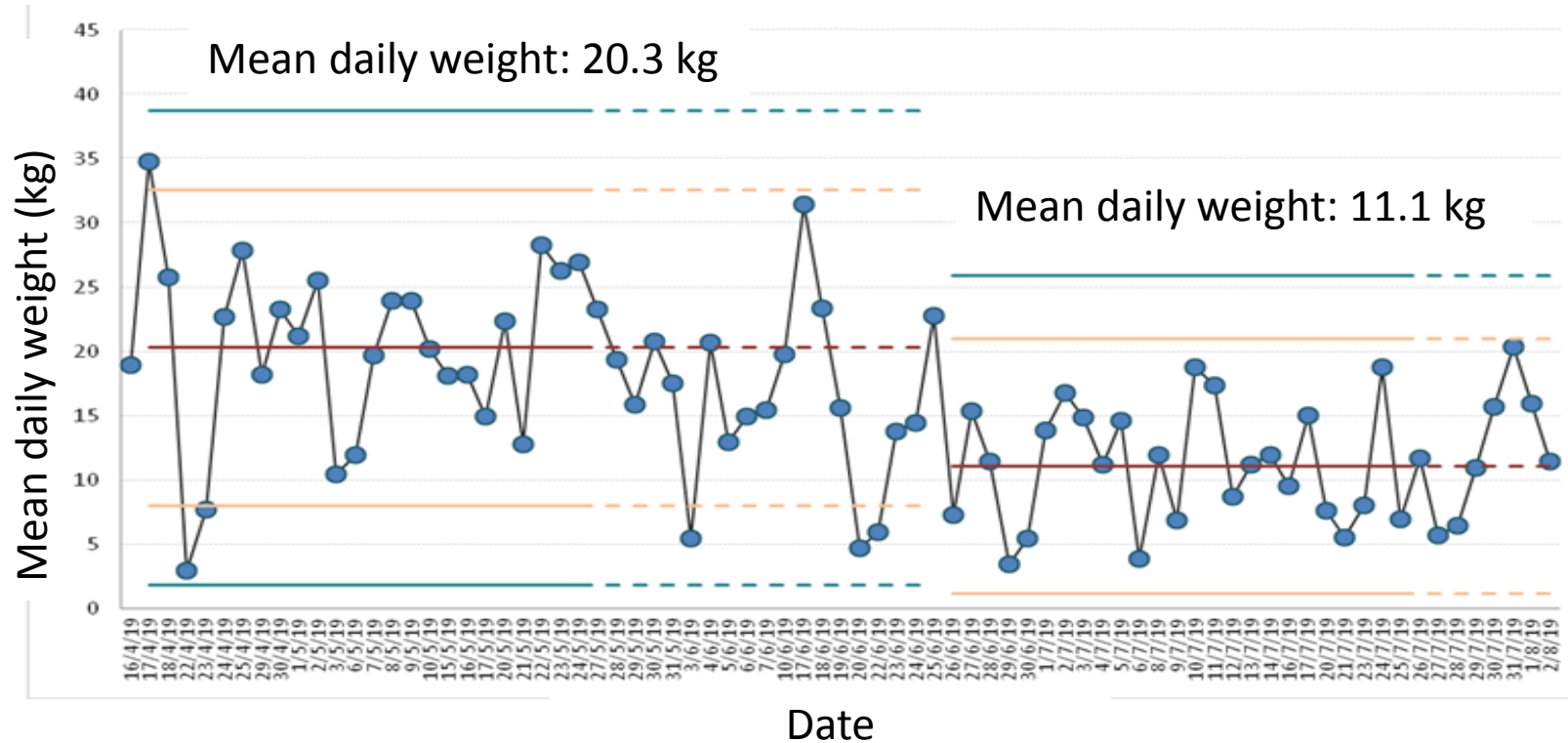


## 3. Green link nurses

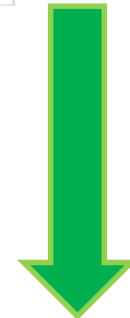
- Quantify whether changes to waste management practice lead to a reduction in clinical waste?



# Results



- **45% reduction** in the mean daily weight of clinical waste



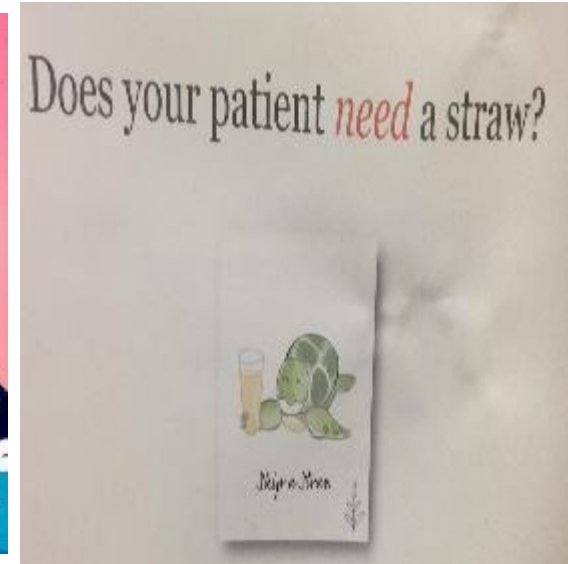
# Other successes



~13,000 plastic cups



~5000 plastic bags

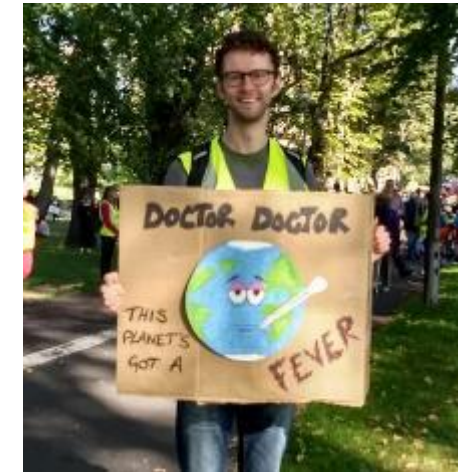


~13,000 plastic straws

**Removed > 31,000 unnecessary single use plastics a year!**



# Identity = Sustainable Unit



EDINBURGH  
STEINER SCHOOL  
PUPILS TO MAKE  
REUSABLE SCRUB  
CAPS FOR  
RECOVERY NURSES

# Summary

- Simple and achievable changes to waste management led to substantial reductions in clinical waste
- Engaging staff with waste segregation has resulted in increased awareness of and passion for sustainability
- Empowering staff to think about sustainability can provide huge benefits



**SMALL CHANGES CAN MAKE A  
BIG DIFFERENCE!**

# Sustainability Action at NHS GG&C

**Martin Johnston**



# Sustainability Action at NHS GG&C

Clinical Waste Segregation

&

Plastic Procurement Phase-Out

# Plastic Phase-Out



NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde  
is trying to change our "Grab & Go" culture.

Take time to 'sit in' and enjoy our new  
**Aroma coffee cups....**



Help NHS GG&C reduce our  
disposable cup use.



NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde  
is trying to change our "Grab & Go" culture.

Please use the metal cutlery available when  
sitting in, and return for cleaning once finished.



Help NHS GG&C reduce our  
plastic waste.



## Move away from 'Grab & Go'

- Customers now offered a 'sit in' china mug rather than a disposable cup for tea and coffee at Aroma café.
- Customers are also offered discount on Aroma branded 'keep cup' option.
- Those sitting down for a meal are given metal cutlery if dishwashing facilities available to avoid single use plastic items.

# Savings – Environmental & Monetary

## Reducing Costs

- Approximately £9,500 spent per month on disposable cups.

## Reducing Waste

- Current take away cup can't be recycled – contamination & harmful plastic lining means cups end up in landfill.

## Meeting Requirements

- Max. of 5% waste to landfill and 70% recycling rate to be expected by 2025.

# What have we done?

## Communications

- Posters, hot topics and intranet communications for staff and customers with National Branding.



## Training

- Encouraging Aroma & catering staff to promote sustainable options via bespoke Toolbox Talks.

## Benefits

- Discounted coffees with re-usable keep cups.



# Clinical Waste Segregation

## IS THAT REALLY CLINICAL WASTE?

USE ORANGE BAGS FOR:

- ✓ GOWNS
- ✓ SOILED DRAPES
- ✓ GLOVES
- ✓ CONTAMINATED PRODUCTS
- ✓ SWABS

**PUT ALL OTHER WASTE IN CLEAR BAGS**



**SUSTAINABILITY  
ACTION**  
Our NHS Our People Our Planet

**NHS**  
SCOTLAND

Significant savings – divert costs from our most expensive waste stream at £440 per tonne.

Common sense approach – Clinical orange stream waste often contains material that isn't actually contaminated.

Golden Jubilee: Less than 10% of waste identified as clinical.

QEUH RHC: Less than 30% of waste identified as clinical.

QEUH Theatre 3: Estimated that 50-60% of the waste identified as clinical.

*\*Figures taken from recent composition analysis by NSS*

**SUSTAINABILITY ACTION**  
Our People Our Planet

**THINK THE RIGHT BIN**  
CLINICAL WASTE DISPOSAL COSTS UP TO **5X MORE** THAN GENERAL WASTE.

**USE ORANGE BAGS FOR:**

- ✓ GOWNS
- ✓ GLOVES
- ✓ SWABS
- ✓ SOILED DRAPES
- ✓ CONTAMINATED PRODUCTS

**PUT ALL OTHER WASTE IN CLEAR BAGS**

Get involved.  
Visit [www.sustainabilityaction.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.sustainabilityaction.scot.nhs.uk)

**NHS**  
SCOTLAND

## Progress so far...

- After a trial run at GRI in 2017/18, of varied success, the predicted savings for financial year were approximately £23,000
- Stobhill is the first sight to segregate in all 6 theatres. Waste invoice tracking showed the Board saved approximately £17,000 before entering contingency in late 2018.

# What Next?

- Data gathering and auditing – visible cost savings and auditing of waste streams to ensure metrics are correct and to pursue constant improvement.
- Create positive case studies – use the figures to get high level and local buy-in.
- Sustainability champions – raise awareness and create demand at a local level.
- Approved action & resource plans with Director/Assistant Director (Medical & Estates) sign off to implement on a site by site basis for clinical segregation and Public/Staff segregation board wide.
- Training – Presentation, demonstrations and toolbox talks to all relevant clinical and facilities staff to ensure practice.

Questions?

# Questions?



# What will you do next?



# SUPPORT AVAILABLE

