Implementing Successful Waste Management/Recycling Initiatives in the OR
NorthShore University HealthSystem Presenters

- Valerie Sosnowski, MSN, MHSA, RN, CNOR  
  Clinical Director, Perioperative Services, Highland Park Hospital

- Mike Mollerino, MBA, CHESP  
  Corporate Director of EVS and Patient Transport

- Matt Waskerwitz, MHSA, MBA  
  Senior Business Director, Perioperative Services
• Four hospitals, 3M+ sq ft combined
• 10,000 employees
• 2400 Physician medical staff
• 700+ Physician group practice
• 37,000 Surgical cases/year
• 900 Beds / 40+ ORs
• $100+ M Research Institute
• University of Chicago principal teaching affiliate
Impact of Recycling Program

Solid Waste and Medical Waste

Recycling
Clinical Perspective

Valerie Sosnowski, MSN, MHSA, RN, CNOR
Clinical Director, Perioperative Services, Highland Park
AORN Position Statement on Environmental Responsibility

“As stewards, perioperative RNs also should actively promote and participate in sustainability practices that preserve natural resources, reduce waste, and minimize exposure to hazardous materials.”
Nurses’ Passion for Recycling

- Desire to incorporate concept of sustainability into practice
- Nurses wanted to take responsibility to care for their environment as they do for patients
- Corporate Green Team established 2009
- Once periop team became educated they willingly joined the cause
Start-up of O.R. Recycling Program

- Leadership commitment
- Resource allocation
- Collaborative initiative
- Onsite assessments by vendor
- Goal to minimize disruption of workflows
What Do We Recycle?

• Blue wrap (100% polypropylene/#5 plastic)
• Plastics/bottles & wrappers
• Disposable tourniquets/SCD sleeves
• Batteries
• Non-corrugated cardboard (i.e: suture boxes)
• Single use devices:
  – laparoscopic trocars/instruments
  – energy devices, (i.e: ultrasonic scalpels)
  – arthroscopic devices
Staff Engagement in Recycling Efforts

- Concern about proper sorting of recycled items
- Concern about increasing room turnover time
- Concern about space for receptacles
Education

- Education was vital to get staff buy-in
- Data presented
- Signs and pictures posted as educational aids
- Staff input regarding bin location
- Visual aid was provided showing amount of material that would have been discarded into waste stream
Use of Reusable Positioning Devices & Instrument Trays

- Converted from trays needing blue wrap to covered, reusable instrument trays
- Converted from foam to gel patient positioners
- Converted some OR pads to newer style Tempur-Pedic type material
Signage Used as “Legend” for Recycling
Take Aways

• Find a champion for the cause
• It takes a handful of people with a passion
• Involving stakeholders in the process brings results
• Seeing the difference it can make, efforts are driven further!
• Ongoing focus and attention is critical to ensure long term program success
Support Services Perspective

Mike Mollerdino, MBA, CHESP
Corporate Director of EVS and Patient Transport
Recycling In the OR

• Keys objectives
  – Passion (The want to)
  – Collaboration (right people at right time)
  – Adapting to Workflow (Effortless)
Misaligned objectives
Workflow - Effortless
Containers in the OR
Placement - Strategy

• Consistent placement in each room to match workflow

• Partnering with OR staff to gather input and increase ease of use.
Medication Waste - Setup
Blue Wrap Journey

- Green Committee
- Infection Control
- Vendor (commingled recycling)
- Labor - Logistics
Blue Wrap

Wrap is collected.

Removed from room prior to patient arriving

EVS tech sends bags in blue carts

Vendor recycles blue wrap

Driver delivers to Skokie Hospital

EVS driver collects
Blue Wrap - collection

- Pre-case collection which altered workflow
Blue Wrap - Transport
Current State

• Waste Vendor rebid for other campuses
• Increased recyclables removed from OR
• Reduced reluctant team members
• Added collection during case
• Expanded to other procedural areas
• Expanded to sterile processing
Business Perspective

Matt Waskerwitz, MHSA, MBA
Senior Business Director, Perioperative Services
Building a Business Case - Overview

Key steps to getting people to “buy-in”

*This is not a Finance Discussion*
Business Case is Dependent on the Initiative

• All different flavors of initiatives in Healthcare
  – No magic Return on Investment Formula
  – No magic Break Even Analysis

• The key is to navigate the customer landscape and develop a proposal that meets your customers’ and organizations’ needs
Clearly define the goal

- Define the goal
- Ensure you are aware of risks/challenges and answer those questions proactively
Identify a “Champion”

• Important to garner strong support

• In Healthcare.....
  – Champion is usually a Clinical Leader
    • Physician or Nurse

*The Champion does not drive the effort, but he/she serves as a key supporter
Develop the Business Proposal

• Identify the opportunity and justification which will clearly capture attention of key decision makers
  – Ideas (depending on the goal)
    • Savings
      – Straight expense cuts or substituting one method/process for another.
    • Break Even Analysis
      – Upfront investment with longterm advantages
    • Return on Investment
      – Revenue
Important Elements to Consider When Developing Business Proposal

• Quality
• Review with the appropriate committees
  – Clinical and Corporate Purchasing
• Experiences from other organizations
• Savings Methodology
• Employee Engagement
• Be cognizant of potential impact to revenue
Ensure Ongoing Success

• When finalizing the Business Case –
  – **Clearly define** the metric for ongoing success
  – Determine the milestone at which the organization makes the decision to continue or abort
Transferability to other Service Lines or Departments

• Our success in the Operating Room is just one example of many
What should we do?

• Many unknowns will impact healthcare

• Regardless of the direction of healthcare reform
  – Quality, Cost Containment, and Environmentally Safe Practices are a certainty!!!
What’s Next at NorthShore

• Construction Projects and focus on implementing sustainable best practices where feasible

• Organic waste composting program

• Internal durable goods repurposing (furniture, equipment)
References

