



Sustainability Perioperative Services – Warm Toes Project

Virginia Mason donates PACU socks to the homeless. Here is the idea summary from our Everyday Lean Idea system. It is being shared across the organization.

Idea Ref:	3833
Idea Title:	Donation of PACU Socks
Categories:	Green Idea
Date Created:	08/04/2014
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Idea Originated From:	None - Original Idea
Problem before Improvement:	The yellow surgical socks that each patient wears were being thrown in the trash. These socks are wasted when they are needed by the local homeless population.
Idea Description:	Disinfect and donate the socks to the local homeless.
Idea Source:	Personal Experiences / Observation
Type(s) of Waste Reduced:	Defects
Specific Results:	We worked with EVS, Infection Control, Mail Room, and Community Benefits to create the sock donation program. * we donated an average of 10 pounds of socks per week to Mary's Place Homeless Shelter, which would have otherwise gone in the trash, eliminating \$1 per week in disposal costs and diverting 520 pounds/year from the landfill * We estimate that the cost of laundering the socks is equivalent, or slightly less than the disposal costs. * We donated the socks using the Mailroom's normal delivery route. This helps build a strong community relationship as well as fills a void that would have otherwise gone unfilled.
Implementation Status:	Idea Implemented
Suggestions for others who want to try this idea:	The socks must be laundered by our laundry service prior to donation for infection control reasons.
Ideas Generated:	None at this time