

Estates Department ask you to 'TRASH IT, DON'T FLUSH IT!'



Estates Department

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The nursing staff were shocked by the photographs that had been taken by trade staff showing blockages caused by clinical items that had inappropriately been disposed of in toilets and macerators. Seeing the photos motivated them to support the campaign in their clinical areas.

AIM

- To reduce the number of blocked toilets and macerators at the Wonford site in both public and clinical areas

APPROACH

- **Project choice:** 714 requests to unblock drains, toilets and macerators were made to estates at the Wonford site over January -July 2019, a 7-month period. This high level of blockages is in line with NHS trends. Many blockages are caused by wipes, which also contribute to microplastic pollution.
- **Measurement:** queries were run on the estates database, Backtraq, to gather baseline data on the work carried out by internal staff and external contractors. The queries were re-run to gather comparative data after a campaign had been run. Quotes were gathered from staff on the impact of blockages.
- **Engagement methods:** meetings with matrons, infection control leads and ward housekeepers, walkabout in hospital to engage staff ad hoc, poster campaign, collaboration with South West Water in a joint campaign.
- **Embedding:** recruiting ward champions to model good practise, regular messaging on Hub, Twitter and Comm Cells, extend poster campaign and refresh the existing campaign, ongoing collection and analysis of data related to blockages, introduce Datix reporting of blockages, contribute to the national consultation on wipes and blockages through the Royal College of Nursing.

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

When comparing the average cost and carbon January-May (pre-and early campaign) and June (during campaign):

- there was a **17% reduction** in requests to resolve blockages from 123 pre-and early campaign (with an average of 9 out-of-hours attendances) to 102 during campaign (5 out-of-hours attendances). Exjet visits slightly increased from 9 to 13 but costs decreased due to shorter time required to resolve these more minor blockages.
- The **carbon footprint** of the service **dropped by 35%**, saving 152 kgCO₂e over 1 month.
- The **cost of resolving blockages dropped by 23%**, saving £1,205 over 1 month.
- Potential 'social' savings for staff and patients include; reduced risk of infection, improved patient dignity, reduced disruption for clinical staff, less sleep disturbance for estates staff.

ANNUAL SAVINGS FORECAST



1,824 kgCO₂e



£14,460

(if trend continued over 1 year)

