

HCSC LAUNDRY BULLETIN

Focusing on Linen Cost Savings

Over the past several months, **Doylestown Hospital** (Doylestown, PA) has been making significant improvements in the cost-effectiveness of its linen program. Anne Marie York, SPD Manager, and her staff, with the guidance of her HCSC Account Representative, have been implementing changes that will bring about a reduction in cost per patient day of approximately 15%. This initiative has been given the full support of the hospital's Director of Materials Management, Dominic Panacio, as well as the hospital's administration.

The process of identifying opportunities for savings began with the HCSC Benchmark Analysis. This compared the hospital's usage of the top ten patient linen items to the benchmark established by HCSC. For Doylestown Hospital, the analysis indicated opportunities for savings in nine of the ten items. The next step was to find out where these items were being used and/or misused, and develop a plan to address each situation. The Departmental Usage Reports, kept by the SPD staff, provided the data with which to identify these areas. A tour of each department was conducted and meetings held with managers to review their linen requirements and offer cost saving alternatives, where applicable. The department visits also provided additional opportunities for savings by observing and questioning usage practices. Each cost-saving initiative that has been implemented has been measured by using the Linen Usage Report and the Departmental Usage Reports.

Feedback has been provided to the department managers on a regular basis. The Director of Materials Management has been updated on an ongoing basis through reports and meetings to provide details of the progress being made.

Following HCSC's **Discharge Bed Linen Make-Up Policy** and minimizing the **Surplus Linen in Patient Rooms** has contributed to reductions in the usage of thermal blankets (-35%), pillowcases (-8%), bed sheets (-5%), knit contours (-5%), and bath towels (-12%). A substantial reduction in reusable washcloths (-35%) was also attained, by providing disposable washcloths for incontinent care and reusable cleaning cloths for housekeeping and other departments. In addition, the use of scrub uniforms has been restricted to only those departments approved by the hospital's Infection Control Officer. Patient robes were eliminated when it was found that they were being worn by the staff, instead of the patients. The use of TIV gowns was reviewed, and the less-expensive patient gown was substituted in those applications that did not require the snap sleeve or telemetry features of the gown. Reusable underpad usage has also been reduced by 28%, by providing draw sheets to be used as a lifter for non-incontinent patients. The exchange cart standards for underpads were reduced and replaced with an equal number of draw sheets. The net savings for the underpad/draw sheet conversion has been \$.28 per patient day.

See **DOYLESTOWN** pg. 2



DOYLESTOWN HOSPITAL'S (PA) LINEN COST SAVINGS EFFORTS HAVE GARNERED POSITIVE RESULTS. PICTURED ARE DOYLESTOWN HOSPITAL STAFF (LEFT TO RIGHT) XHEVAT JAHQ, CHRISTY NUTTALL, ANNE MARIE YORK, MARGARET FAIRBANKS, AND STEVE MIRTH.

HCSC: More Than Just Sheets & Pillowcases

Did you know that HCSC-Laundry supplies many other products to assist your facility in meeting day-to-day caregiving activities? Not only does HCSC provide over 275 available linen rental items, but we also provide a vast array

See **HCSC** pg. 2



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Focusing on Linen Cost Savings 1
- HCSC: More Than Just Sheets 1
and Pillowcases
- Staff Changes 2
- Business News 3
- HCSC Conducts Seminar in Indy 3
- Responsiveness Eases Effect 3
Of Power Outage

HCSC Continued from pg. 1

of auxiliary programs in disposable and reusable supply items, including:

Garments. HCSC has available 8 colors of v-neck tunics, 3 colors of front-snap tunics, 8 colors of elastic-waist pants, 5 colors of warm-up jackets, 3 colors of lab coats, male/female lapel coats, fluid-resistant lab coats in blue or white, 9 colors of scrubs, blue work garments, and navy cobbler/bib aprons. All are available under an individualized or bulk program. Energize your wearing apparel with our *customized logo program!*

Dust Control. HCSC offers 12-oz, 16-oz. and 24-oz. wet mop heads, as well as 12", 18", 24" and 36" continuous loop dust mops. Fiberglass mop handles and specially designed containers for transporting clean and soil mops are provided at no added cost.

Disposables. Available are disposable washcloths, plastic laundry bags, and scrubs, all at very competitive prices.

Pillows. HCSC offers quality disposable and reusable pillows. Our reusable pillows are 21"x 27", packed in compressed form, 18 ounces of 100% polyester fill, cover made with "Care Check" blue vinyl with polyester

scrim, latex-free, anti-microbial, bacteria resistant, anti-fungal, non-allergenic, flame retardant, liquid-resistant, wipe clean surface. Our disposable pillows are 18"x 24", packed in compressed form, 12 ounces of 100% polyester fill, white cover, flame retardant. Both are packed 12 pillows to a case.

Non-sterile Pack Program. An O.R. Pack Program is available in which HCSC will assemble the packs using top-quality, light-table-inspected reusable O.R. linen (exceeding AORN standards) with standard folds, or construct the packs to the hospital's specifications and deliver them with the linen order ready to be autoclaved. Most packs can be wrapped using the Kimberly-Clark "One-Step" wrapper, to meet 'event-related' storage/use procedures. As with the inspected O.R. linen, the packs will also be plastic wrapped.

VIP Linen Program. To magnify the impact of your high-profile areas or to enhance any room environment, HCSC offers our V.I.P. Linen Program. Consisting of an array of T-180 thread bed sheets, pillow cases, contours, hotel-quality blend of smooth 90% cotton, 10% polyester terry towels and washcloths, and a variety of colored bedspreads to coordinate with almost any environment. And for your hyperbaric

Business News

NEW ACCOUNTS

Cedarbrook Nursing Home
Allentown, PA

Fountain Hill, PA

Malvern Institute
Malvern, PA

UPMC Northwest
Franklin, PA
Oil City, PA

Shriner's Hospital for Children
Philadelphia, PA

linen needs, we offer 100% cotton patient gowns, blankets and sheets.

Select Supply. HCSC can supply commodity items for Materiel and Environmental Services such as cart liners, PVC carts, garbage bags, etc. for direct shipment. Commodity items carried at the HCSC warehouse may be delivered as many times per week as your linen order.

Direct Sales. Why not take advantage of HCSC's volume purchasing power? Direct sales of linens and garments are available below retail prices.

These product offerings maximize your acquisition supply dollars and optimize your precious floor space through distribution from our current delivery system of trucks. For more information on any of these exciting programs, contact your HCSC Account Representative.

Doylestown Continued from pg. 1

"We are well on our way to attaining our cost saving goal," says Anne Marie York. "We even uncover more opportunities for cost savings as we go along. I would highly recommend that anyone interested in reducing the cost of their linen program utilize the expertise and support offered by HCSC. We are very pleased with the results-oriented approach that has been taken in this project."

Staff Changes...

KATHY STOVER has re-joined HCSC-Linen Services as Account

Representative. Stover, who

served as an Account Representative from 1998 to 2000, was most recently employed with HCSC-Financial Services... **TIM LACEK** and **ROBERT**

PAULS have been named as the on-site linen coordinators for Atlantic Health System, New Jersey. In this capacity, they will manage the linen operations for Morristown Memorial Hospital, Overlook Hospital and The Mountainside Hospital. Lacek has been with HCSC for over 16 years; Pauls joined the Linen Services division in 2000...



STOVER



LACEK



PAULS

Responsiveness Eases Effect of Power Outage



ATTENDANTS AT THE HCSC PRESENTATION IN INDIANA LISTEN INTENTLY TO DISCUSSION.

HCSC Conducts Seminar For Indianapolis-Area Hospital Personnel

It was a great honor when **United Hospital Services (UHS)** of Indianapolis (IN) invited HCSC to present a Cost Management Seminar at their quarterly Linen Coordinator meeting, which took place on September 25, 2003. HCSC's Mike Kirsch, Director of Customer Service, and David Balliet, Coordinator of On-Site Linen Manager Programs, presented a two-hour presentation to the Linen Coordinators, whose hospitals make up the third largest laundry cooperative in North America.

The day's agenda focused on three major areas: **Inventory Control** (Maintaining Proper Inventory Levels and Par Level Analysis), **Cost Management** (Linen Committees, Walk-Through Surveys and Benchmarking) and **Linen Awareness** (Linen Awareness Days, Unauthorized Scrub and Gown Use and Poster Campaigns).

While linen cost management programs and services are not new to HCSC's Service Department, presentations to anyone outside HCSC's cooperative members are new offerings. As the largest laundry

See **SEMINAR** pg. 4

Everyone awaited her arrival and wondered what effect Hurricane Isabel would leave on the East Coast. As meteorologists monitored her path, HCSC's Baltimore Plant employees continued their efforts to prepare weekend orders for their customers. After Isabel swept through the area, the plant, located at 3001 Cowan Avenue, Baltimore (MD), was left without electricity. Although basic 110-volt power was restored soon after, the voltage necessary to operate large equipment, such as tunnel washers and extractors, had not been restored.

The lack of necessary power caused HCSC to execute its linen conservation alert to all clients served by our



HCSC'S MIKE KIRSCH (STANDING, LEFT) AND DAVE BALLIET (STANDING, RIGHT) DISCUSS LINEN MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES WITH ATTENDANTS.

Baltimore plant. One such client that promoted linen conservation prior to HCSC's posted alert was **York Hospital**, part of the **WellSpan Health System**, in York (PA). York Hospital's Director of Linen Services, Frank Smith, immediately spread the word to conserve linen. After receiving HCSC's official conservation notice, he instructed his staff to post the information on all linen carts located both on-campus and off-campus at various outpatient centers and offices.

In addition to notifying users of the crisis, Mr. Smith also reduced linen on all carts and linen orders by 20%. With various power outages affecting the area surrounding York Hospital, linen usage decreased for a 24-48 hour period. As scheduled appointments were cancelled and several outpatient centers were without electricity, linen conservation was

aided by the trickle-down effect. The reductions continued as HCSC's Reggie Tabb, Baltimore Plant Manager, frequently kept Frank Smith informed of progress at the plant.

Not only did York Hospital display the essence of being a "cooperative" member, other Laundry customers significantly assisted during the outage. HCSC's four other regional plants were called into action and shipped clean linen and processed Baltimore's soiled linen to maintain consistent delivery to our customers. The cooperation received from neighboring laundries was also quite remarkable. While General Healthcare of Lancaster (PA) and Mayflower Textile Services of Baltimore (MD) laundered HCSC's linen, St. Agnes Hospital, Baltimore (MD), permitted HCSC employees to process HCSC linen at their on-premise laundry during non-operating hours.

As operational efforts continued, HCSC management frequently contacted Baltimore Gas and Electric. When BG&E's response did not result in restored power, HCSC requested assistance from York Hospital. Mike Kirsch, Director of Customer Service, HCSC, contacted Jim Smoker, York's Director of Material Resource Services, to request that he contact BG&E on HCSC's behalf.

Mr. Smoker left an adamant voicemail at BG&E's customer service center to report a 220-volt dangling line. When BG&E returned his call, Mr. Smoker explained "the HCSC Baltimore plant is a critical supplier for the well-being of WellSpan Health's patients and that we are on linen conservation mode until the Baltimore plant is operational." Shortly after the conversation, a technician from the utility company arrived at the plant to

See **POWER** pg. 4

Power continued from pg. 3

assess the situation. Power was fully restored within 48 hours of the call.

After power was restored, Baltimore management quickly directed their efforts toward returning operations to normal. As a result of their expertise, the plant was fully operational within 15 hours from the point of power restoration.

No thanks to Hurricane Isabel, HCSC and its customers experienced the longest power outage in its 33-year history. But, thanks to its customers, end users, neighboring laundries and HCSC's multi-plant resources, those affected realized the advantages of "weathering the storm" together.



AFTER A DAY ON THE ROAD, HCSC ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVES BOB REIFSNYDER (LEFT) AND RUSS MACK RETURN TO THE OFFICE WITH A VAN-FULL OF RECLAIMED HCSC LINEN.

For more information, contact Dave Balliet, Coordinator, Linen Management Programs, at 800-444-4272, ext. 2269, or dballiet@hcsc.org.

SEMINAR continued from pg. 3

cooperative in North America, HCSC is always willing to help its members reduce linen costs by promoting strong linen management and proper usage programs; offering such programs to other companies opens a new frontier for the organization.

United Hospital Services laundry

management did a superb job of coordinating the seminar with all their cooperative members. It was truly impressive that every hospital in the UHS Cooperative had someone in attendance for the seminar. Working together with UHS and its members was an enjoyable experience for everyone.

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