

World Without Linen Bags
Vancouver Island Health Authority
First Annual Update
For period: January 1, 2002 – December 31, 2002

Background

Between 1999 and the end of 2001 the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital successfully introduced a new soiled linen handling system which reduced occupational injury. This initiative was funded by the Workers' Compensation Board of BC. The final report of the project provided post-intervention figures for a one-year period, and indicated a cost recovery period of less than four years. This first annual update provides details on the second year of implementing a "bagless" laundry system.

Injury Statistics

In 2002, there were three reports of injury from handling soiled linen, although only one was a time-loss claim. The cost of this claim was relatively minor at under \$4000. This is still below the average of 5 time loss claims per year that the facility averaged before the system was put in place.

Cost Effectiveness

The cost of workplace injuries from handling soiled linen is still lower than before the project's implementation. The amount of soiled laundry being collected is estimated to be the same as during the project phase. The equipment is still early into its life expectancy, and there have been no significant costs associated with equipment maintenance.

The cost-effectiveness of the intervention is estimated to be similar to that calculated in the report (with a payback period of fewer than four years).

Changes in Equipment Utilization

In some areas, there have been changes in the number of totes required and in the tote exchange times. Otherwise, there have been no major changes made in the system. We did find that we had an abundance of totes and they are being put to use in other areas. Two additional "tuggers" have been purchased to use for pulling trains of totes and to also pull the large clean linen carts. The possibility of using the "tuggers" to pull food carts is currently being investigated.

(signed)

Tracey Newlands

To read the original report click on:

http://www.healthandsafetycentre.org/pdfs/healthcare/linen_bags.pdf