



Hepburn Health Service

Victoria

The Health Care and Social Assistance industry has a relatively low recycling rate of 21%¹ yet Hepburn Health Service (HHS) is leading the way in sustainability initiatives, using **BusinessRecycling** as a key tool. In 2010, HHS developed an Environmental Management Strategy, an important component of this strategy being recycling. Prior to this, the organisation participated in the former WasteWise Program, becoming the first health service in Victoria to achieve gold certification.

Recycling & Green Initiatives

Vision

Sustainability is a Key Result Area of the HHS Strategic Plan, as the organisation aims to champion environmental management in the health sector and the broader community. The Service targets reductions in energy, greenhouse gas emissions, clinical waste volumes, paper and water use and improvements in waste segregation.

HHS strives to operate in a manner that protects the environment, including the health and safety of staff, patients, residents, clients and visitors, and to provide continual education and impact monitoring to ensure quality improvements.



The aged care facility located in Daylesford

Planning

Through participation in ResourceSmart Healthcare (a former **government program**) in 2010, an Environmental Management Committee was formed to identify the environmental impacts of HHS operations. This Committee now has ongoing representation from departments across the Service including Nursing, Engineering, Administration, Infection Prevention and Control, Catering and Domestic, and Purchasing. Under the Committee's direction, an ongoing action plan has been developed to address the environmental impacts identified, to save money through reduced energy, water and resource consumption, and to provide a healthier, more productive environment for HHS staff, clients and visitors.

Implementation

Overall, a wide range of sustainability actions from the HHS Environmental Management Strategy have now been implemented:

- △ Recycling all mixed paper and cardboard, cartridges, batteries, plastic containers (1-7), cans, bottles, mobile phones, spectacles and corks. HHS staff members used the **BusinessRecycling** service to find recycling options for many of these materials.
- △ Minimising travel between campuses by using phone or video-conferencing technology.
- △ Organising car sharing and participating in a Department of Transport (MIC) program – **Fleetwise**.
- △ Segregating clinical waste to reduce waste disposal.
- △ Installing water tanks.
- △ Implementing green purchasing policies such as sourcing recycled content office paper.
- △ Encouraging staff to switch off monitors when away from their desks for over 15 minutes, shut down computers at the end of the day, and turn off lights when not needed (through signage).
- △ Encouraging staff to print double-sided and use scrap paper for printing drafts, notes, etc.

A communications plan has helped ensure continual education for staff and the HHS community through newsletters, intranet and public webpages, and an induction program.



Results and Benefits

HHS has a well-organised monitoring schedule, including waste audits, that measures its achievements and progress towards set targets. Impressively, the organisation has significantly reduced water use, decreasing 2011-12 expenditure by 44%. In the same year, energy use also decreased by 2% for electricity, 29% for natural gas and 6% for LPG. In addition, HHS reduced its clinical waste quantities per bed per day to 2.79kg, exceeding the target of 2.91kg.

The key to success has been a well-planned environmental strategy and shared knowledge from a similar organisation that had already implemented a strategy.

Challenges & the Future

One of the challenges was running the program across four sites, but HHS staff overcame this issue by having cross campus participation on the Environmental Management Committee. A communications plan, with regular newsletters and educational emails, helped manage the challenge of ensuring full staff participation as new programs were implemented. HHS is looking forward to engaging other local and global organisations to share its knowledge in this area, and including community representation on their Committee.

¹ Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2013) A study into commercial and industrial (C&I) waste and recycling in Australia by industry division www.environment.gov.au/wastepolicy/publications/pubs/commercial-industrial-waste.pdf



Installed water tanks at the Creswick facility

“At HHS we have an extensive Environmental Management Program and endeavour to recycle everything we can!”

Chris Jenkins
Compliance & IM Support.



Material sorting during a waste audit

Make recycling at work easy! Visit BusinessRecycling.com.au to check out reuse and recycling options for around 90 different materials, find out how to choose the right recycler, download signage to help with recycling, and learn what other workplaces are doing to manage waste and improve sustainability.

Foundation Partners



Major Partner



Planet Ark's BusinessRecycling.com.au is a partnership program that has been funded by the NSW Environment Protection Authority, and the Victorian Government.

Promotion Partners



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