Benefits

- An integrated waste management system initiated at the North Shore Medical Center in February 2011 has resulted in waste diverted from landfill, reduced costs, simplified invoicing, and improved compliance performance.

The Problem

The Integrated Waste Stream Solution at NSMC resulted from the need for better strategic management of the multitude and growing number of identifiable waste streams; each with their own set of compliance rules and regulations.

The Strategy Selected

Through an RFP process a vendor was selected to provide NSMC with a pilot study and comprehensive waste stream assessment. An initial assessment and pilot study developed collection and data collection procedures, resulting in a central customized waste management and integrated waste stream contract and program starting in February 2011.

Implementation Process

By appointing an outside vendor to implement the waste management plan it was possible to learn from an experienced practitioner, avoid beginner’s errors and allow current staff to concentrate on other sustainability programs in the hospital.

- Decreased aggregate cost for disposal and handling
- Reduction in the number of invoices to one billing cycle limiting customer service and interaction to one responsible vendor
- Continuous maintenance of policies and procedures supporting compliance and regulatory changes, The vendor is responsible for compliance issues related to waste management and for any costs associated with audits and penalties.
- Added benefit permits NSMC to focus on other sustainability programs and interconnect departments for institution wide initiatives.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- FY 2010 – 33% of 2,840 tons of waste was recycled and diverted from the landfill
- FY 2011 – 40% of 2,885 tons of waste was recycled and diverted from the landfill
- NSMC saved 13% resulting in an annual cost savings of $60,000

On the basis of the experience at NSMC, Partners is in the process of negotiating similar integrated waste contracts throughout the system. Using NSMC’s benchmark of 13% would result in a system savings of approximately $1 million dollars. $650,000 would be attributed to an integrated waste system and $350,000 is the potential cost savings of annual spend on Regulated Medical Waste.

Demographic Information

Partners HealthCare consists of 15 principal facilities in Boston and eastern Massachusetts providing acute inpatient care, ambulatory care and rehabilitation with a total of approximately 3,300 beds. Including administration, the total built assets amount to 16 million square feet, of which approximately 10 million SF is owned and 6 million SF leased.

North Shore Medical Center supports 395 inpatient beds in 922,253 square feet of facilities on two campuses.