

## Communication and Engagement: How to foster support and maintain interest for green interventions in healthcare Counties Manukau Health

### GGHH Agenda Goals

- Leadership

### Hospital Goal

- Foster engagement and support from staff

### Progress Achieved

- Financial benefits
- Environmental benefit
- Human health benefit
- More satisfaction

### The Issue

Successful communication achieves support and engagement and helps to spread important messages and provide vital information. Two recent staff surveys suggest many of our employees are not aware of the green programme that we have in place here at Counties Manukau Health. The hospital newsletter is said to reach only 30% of the employee population and many employees, mainly senior clinicians, reportedly delete all group emails. Many communication strategies are therefore required to ensure key messages are received.

### Sustainability Strategy Implemented

A range of communication strategies have been adopted including internal Website, an electronic monthly newsletter, written material, verbal presentations, attending team meetings and holding green expositions.

### Background

Working in a large DHB with over 7,500 employees unsurprisingly provides many challenges when it comes to communicating organisational messages. Many methods are recommended in the literature including a range of written approaches and oral presentations. Written messaging can take the form of posters, prompts, emails, fact sheets and memos all of which can be delivered electronically or placed on notice boards. This type of messaging may capture a wider audience as passers -by may see a notice and briefly read the information just because they happened to be walking by. Verbal presentations tend to capture individuals who have an interest in the content as they choose to attend, unless the presentation is part of a mandatory organisational training session. Video can be useful tool when it comes to repeating important messaging in a consistent manner. Direct face to face contact has the added advantage of being able to answer any questions that arise at that time and gives people the permission to make contact and make enquiries, thereby laying the foundation for future working relationships.

### Implementation process



Website-The Website was launched in February 2013. It contains several pages and provides links to internal and external resources. The Website benefits from monthly updating which takes anything from one hour and up to two hours each month.

e-Update- The newsletter was launched at the end of 2013 and provides a summary of projects underway. It is designed to capture the attention of people who are interested in green initiatives who are encouraged to forward the newsletter onto their teams. The newsletter is an important engagement tool. It includes updates on green team activities in various organizational departments, provides information on upcoming events, explains forthcoming projects; aiming to draw people into the growing green network. The newsletter is compiled each month and takes up to two hours to produce.

Written material- Posters and fact sheets are developed most commonly. These are placed onto the intranet and emailed out to various groups prior to making any changes. Fact sheets to date include: Recycling in Theatres, Composting, Energy Efficiency, Desk Top Cube Package (see below) and CUP Campaign (Promoting the use of reusable kitchenware versus throw away items).

Verbal presentations- Presentations are delivered on any number of occasions and can take the form of formal PowerPoint presentations or less formal smaller scale team presentations.

Team meetings- More and more frequently team leaders ask for updates at their senior team meetings or regular monthly meetings. These prove to be most useful when setting up and supporting green team networks.

Green Expos- Green expos are held annually and showcase successful projects, demonstrate new equipment, provide opportunities for staff to suggest and make comments about the programme whilst recruiting enthusiasts.

## Tracking Progress

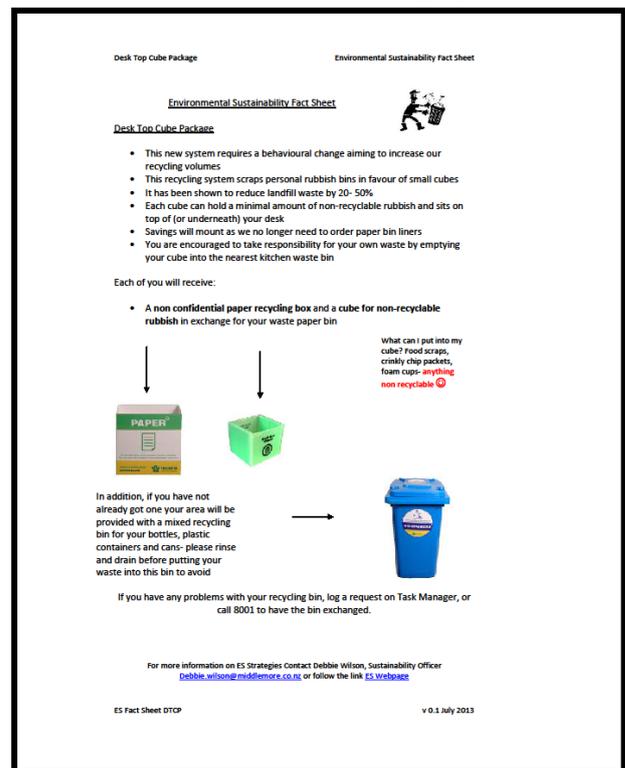
As time moves on there is a growing number of requests from individuals to receive the newsletter directly into their inboxes. There is also a hit counter on the Environmental Webpage showing a steady number of hits. Requests from departments to join the various initiatives are also on the increase indicating progressive uptake of the green programme.

## Challenges and lessons learned

- Keep internal messaging clear and succinct
- Offer more detail if requested
- Repeat messaging, never assume your emails are being read
- Maintain the Website to keep the information fresh
- Be prepared to change your messages based on feedback, often less is more
- Try a variety of approaches appreciating how some people prefer pictures whilst others prefer data
- Tailor your messages to your audience
- Maintain consistent messages throughout using the same logo- marketing your brand
- Do not dwell on negative feedback, keep a total perspective and see the positive

## Next Steps

Plans are currently in place to develop further tools, such as using videos, and holding regular green workshops as quite often people request more information.



**Demographic information**

CM Health provides health and disability services to an estimated 512,000 people who reside in the local authorities of Auckland, Waikato District and Hauraki District. Our population is growing at a rate of approximately 2 percent per year. Overall, Counties Manukau population is expected to grow by approximately 8,500 residents each year for the next 20 years. From 2006 to 2026 the number of new residents in Counties Manukau is projected to be 169,800. We currently employ in the region of 7,500 staff and provide care across many sites. The main inpatient site is Middlemore Hospital which has 800 beds.