

Progress in Practice

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Winner of the Good Corporate Citizenship HSJ Award 2007, the Trust were commended for a holistic approach to sustainability coupled with innovative initiatives. NUH is leading the way in Good Corporate Citizenship.

Summary

The fourth largest trust in the UK, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH) embraces the principles of Good Corporate Citizenship: implementing a free bus service between sites; investing in advanced recycling facilities; procuring food from local sources and setting up a social enterprise coffee chain employing local staff. In an area of high social exclusion, NUH understand the positive role they can play in the local community.

Food Procurement

In 2004 the City Hospital campus began to undertake a major redevelopment in its catering plan in the adoption of the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI). In realigning the catering plan with the PSFPI the City Hospital campus opened the catering menu to local and regional suppliers as well as drawing employees from the community.

The practicalities of integrating local produce into the hospitals' menus have necessitated new ways of thinking. It has required action at a number of levels:

- redesigning the menu to allow for seasonal food supply
- changing the menu language to allow for flexibility
- engaging with local and regional suppliers through an open day in partnership with organisations such as The Food and Drink Forum, Nottingham City PCT and The Government Office East Midlands.

95% of meat is now sourced from local suppliers in the East Midlands, while all the City Hospital's milk, nearly 1000 pints a day, is supplied by a farm 11 miles away.

Links and organisations involved: Nottingham University Hospital Trust (www.nuh.nhs.uk). Medilink Website (www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/cdt_medilink.htm). PSFPI (www.defra.gov.uk/farm/policy/sustain/procurement/index.htm). Medical Waste Solutions www.medicalwastesolutions.co.uk

Contact:

Jay Clifford, Senior Public Transport Officer. Nottingham City Council, The Guildhall, South Sherwood Street, Nottingham, NG1 4BT. Tel: 01159 155159. **John Hughes**, Catering Manager, Nottingham University Hospitals, City Hospital campus, Hucknall Road, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG5 1PB, 0115 969 1169 (john.hughes@nuh.nhs.uk).



Alan Johnson congratulates the 2007 HSJ Award Winners

Clinical waste recycling

The Trust's innovative approach includes waste management - they are currently working with Medical Waste Solutions to set up a scheme to recycle clinical waste into building material.

Recent waste management guidelines from the Department of Health (HTM 07-01) suggested that alternative treatment technologies could be suitable for up to 90% of clinical waste, which inspired the Trust to place a strong emphasis on sustainability and innovation when putting out tender specifications.

Anticipated to be operational by April 2008, the Nottingham-based plant is expected to reduce road miles by 50,000 per year, significantly reducing transportation costs and emissions, as well as carbon released from incineration.

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Transport

Launched in 2005, the Medilink is a free, direct bus service, linking Nottingham's two hospitals. This scheme is part of the Trust's overall Sustainable Transport Strategy.

The project was made possible by joint input and funding from the Trust and Nottingham City Council, who generously invested just under £1 million for the bus fleet, in addition to providing infrastructure upgrades and contributing to ongoing costs.

Since expanding in February 2007, the service now runs every 10 minutes, making the NUH Trust one of the largest independent bus operators in Nottingham. It also links up with other public transport providers including the Nottingham tram link, and a park and ride facility offering free parking.

The Trust saved over £180,000 in taxi fares during the project's first year, and the number of staff journeys by car have been reduced by 400,000 per annum.

"As the demand for the Medilink service continues to grow the environmental benefits will be even more evident, with reduced emissions from vehicles and less congestion on the roads and on our two hospital campuses."

Jo Tomlinson, Travel and Security Manager, NUH Trust



Community Engagement

Having failed to find a business partner from within the coffee sector, the City Hospital decided to go it alone and set up their own chain. With four 'Coffee City' outlets across the campus, the chain has a projected turnover of £300,000 a year.

Now managed by Social Enterprise East Midlands, the shops employ staff from the local community and sell Fair Trade coffee. This project is a good example of social inclusive wealth generation in the local Nottingham community.

Strategic Learning Points

- Bridging the gap between the NHS and local suppliers is possible by insuring tenders are accessible and available.
- Recognising the significance of new guidance and acting on it can deliver financial and carbon savings.
- Partnership with local authorities can be highly beneficial in terms of funding sources and in developing mutually beneficial schemes, such as transport provision.

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