



Final Project Submission Form

Health Service:

Royal Children's Hospital

Title of project:

Junior Medical Staff Sustainability Education

Department:

Medical Education

Introduction

We are Consultant Paediatricians and the Director of Medical Education at RCH. We are alarmed by the significant health and wellbeing impacts of climate change and planetary health on children and future generations. We feel that it is particularly important as doctors working with children that we do everything we can to avoid these harms and believe (as a children's hospital) that we should be leading by example in both advocating for climate action and improving the hospital's own carbon and waste footprint

Education around climate change, planetary health and healthcare sustainability are being increasingly integrated into the medical education curriculum for medical students and doctors in training.

Junior medical staff attend a weekly 1-hour educational session about various medical topics. We wanted to deliver the education around healthcare sustainability in an engaging and meaningful way to encourage attendance and to promote active learning around sustainability

What was the problem you tackled?

1. Education sessions for residents/registrar's have variable attendance, depending on workload and competing priorities
2. Education sessions are often didactic, one-directional communications which are not always engaging

What was your SMART Goal?

To deliver targeted educational sessions on hospital sustainability at RCH using a "scavenger hunt"/"excursion" approach and peer-to-peer teaching to improve engagement and learning

What system factors contributed to the problem?

Patient care and workload often prioritized over education

Educational sessions are often didactic and not engaging

Hospital sustainability often not seen as "core business" but as a "nice to have"

Need to discuss with/survey junior medical staff to determine teaching formats that they prefer, preference for timing, barriers/enablers to attending

Who were the key stakeholders?

The learners - Junior Medical Staff

Medical Education team

Sustainability team

Staff members from the following departments/areas:

- Support Services
- Kitchen and Food Services
- Pharmacy
- Theatres

- Infection Control and Prevention

What was the intervention?

Instead of a didactic, powerpoint-driven educational session, we sent small groups of junior medical staff to 5 different areas of the hospital (Support Services, Kitchen, Pharmacy, Theatres, and Infection Control and Prevention) which are not entirely visible to junior staff in their day-to-day work but are critical to sustainability efforts and to overall care delivery within the hospital.

The groups were met by a staff member who has been championing sustainability work in their respective areas to discuss the work/projects/considerations that each is doing. After approximately 30min of discussion in their respective areas, the groups re-convened and shared their learnings with the other groups (for 20min), facilitated by a senior medical education clinician and the clinical sustainability lead.

What impacts/outcomes were measured? How did you measure them?

Impacts/outcomes were informally measured through feedback given by both junior medical staff and by the RCH staff in the different involved areas of the hospital (Support Services, Kitchen, Pharmacy, Theatres, Infection Prevention and Control)

Feedback from junior staff has been overwhelmingly positive. They

- were able to explore areas of the hospital (kitchen, sub-basements) that they have never seen nor been exposed to
- gained a much broader understanding and appreciation of the non-clinical but essential supporting services required to operate a hospital
- learned about the wide range of sustainability actions which were being (or could be) taken in the various areas
- learned from their peers who attended other areas of the hospital

Feedback by RCH staff who have participated (from Support Services, Kitchen, etc) has also been overwhelming positive. Staff have embraced the opportunity to teach and share their expertise, and the time commitment is not daunting.

What challenges did you face? What enablers facilitated the change? What were the learning points?

Main challenges (not many):

- coordinating a time/date in which staff from all 5 areas could participate, but this was not onerous
- finishing in 1 hour! Most of the smaller groups wanted to continue discussion with their smaller area/location - 30min in the small groups was not enough
- no didactic teaching due to time constraints - might be better to give a short didactic session to teach the basic principles around sustainability and/or climate change and planetary health threats

What are the next steps with this project?

We have started using this format to teach sustainability to other craft groups (e.g. our Sustainability Nursing Reps) within the hospital and would like to continue expanding to other areas/groups



Environmental Sustainability Competition 2025/26



Points will be awarded in the following categories:

Environmental sustainability: What were the carbon savings from your project? (Please include your raw data and calculations)

No direct carbon savings

Environmental sustainability: What were the waste reductions? (If possible, please specify what waste stream – reduced clinical waste by diverting to recycling, reduced clinical waste by using reusable equipment etc.)

No direct waste savings

Clinical outcomes: How did your project improve patient care? (include outcome data if available)

No direct clinical impacts

Financial sustainability: Have there been any financial savings? (please include your calculations)

No direct clinical impacts

Social sustainability: How did your project socially benefit patients, staff, or wider community?

Overall, this teaching format

- fostered valuable cross-discipline engagement and appreciation between clinical and non-clinical staff
- promoted active learning (walking around, active discussion)
- created a culture of sustainability and networking across campus

Generalisability: Could this project be replicated in other areas of the hospital?

Yes, other groups within the hospital could replicate this model of teaching as it primarily involves liaising with key supporting services within the hospital. However, it will require members of the Sustainability team to facilitate the discussion (once all of the groups re-convene) in order to distil the sustainability principles and answer questions.