

For immediate release

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Sodexo scoops sustainable FM award for waste reduction and recycling initiatives

On-site service provider Sodexo in partnership with Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CMFT) has won top honours at the 2012 Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) Awards for Environmental Excellence, which recognises and rewards good practice in sustainable waste and resource management.

The Sodexo/CMFT partnership scooped the Sustainable Facilities Management Performance of the Year award against stiff competition at an award ceremony held at the London Marriott Grosvenor Square hotel yesterday. The awards ceremony was hosted by TV presenter Julia Bradbury, and the judges included Dr Liz Goodwin, chief executive of the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and John Ingham, environment editor of the Daily Express and Gemma Clinton, vice chair of the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee.

CMFT is the leading provider of healthcare services in Manchester, treating more than one million patients every year. Sodexo manages and delivers the catering and facilities management services for the Trust in accordance with its own sustainability roadmap to 2020, the Better Tomorrow Plan, of which one of the commitments is to reduce waste.

Focusing on reducing waste, Sodexo has a robust system in place where stock is monitored and linked up with operations on site, ensuring that it manages and orders the right amount of stock with minimal wastage. With CMFT serving over 4,395 meals a day, food waste is a particular issue and close monitoring has allowed Sodexo to determine preferred patient meals and tailor menus accordingly, with the aim of avoiding unnecessary food waste. The food waste that does occur is segregated and the bins are weighed on collection in order to identify peaks and troughs aligning with hospital activity. As a result of these initiatives, Sodexo was able to deliver a 50% decrease in the volume of food waste produced over a six month period.

Work has also been undertaken with WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) who carried out site visits and a compositional analysis of the waste streams. One recommendation which has been put in place includes additional engagement with ward staff to address negative perceptions regarding hospital food, including tasting sessions with matrons, lead nurses and dieticians. It is anticipated that this will lead to further food wastage reductions, as well as other clinical benefits.

Sodexo also increased the recycling and recovery rates for CMFT from 40% to 92% in less than six months. This was achieved by segregating food waste which is sent to a local anaerobic digestion plant; by working with their waste suppliers to utilise a local materials recycling facility that processes and separates CMFT's non clinical waste to recycle as much material as possible and by changing from domestic black bags to clear bags so that the quality of the recyclables collected can be easily checked.

All these initiatives have been supported by a range of awareness raising and communication activities, including Waste Awareness Days with CMFT staff and visitors and engaging the Trust's Green Champions Group and Operational waste group to help spread the word.

The award presentation was made by Stephen Gee, Events Director for the RWM in partnership with CIWM event, who sponsored the award.

Simon Scrivens, managing director for Sodexo Healthcare said: "We are delighted with this award as it is real recognition of our work to reduce waste and increase recycling rates. The team at CMFT has been fantastic with helping us to implement these initiatives and without their support we would not have been able to engage with their staff and visitors who also play a major role in helping reduce waste and recycling more."

Kathryn Mitchell, assistant director of facilities for CMFT said:

"The Trust have found that this partnership has provided a very simple way of greatly increasing our recycling rates, and reducing waste to landfill"

CIWM chief executive Steve Lee said:

"Sustainably managed facilities have the potential to have a large and extremely positive effect on the environment and the people that use them. The initiatives put in place by Sodexo and CMFT have been successful in engaging staff, changing behaviour, and delivering tangible environmental benefits."

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