

## Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network (SCHN) “Kids War on Waste 2018”

### GGHH Agenda Goals

➤ **Waste**

#### Hospital Goal

- To raise awareness among the hospital community about waste generated in our hospitals and to encourage participation in waste minimization and recycling initiatives

#### Progress Achieved

- Environmental benefit (reduction in waste sent to landfill and increased recycling volumes)
- Financial benefits (cost reductions in improved waste segregation)

#### The Issue

One of the six action areas included in the Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network’s five-year Sustainability Plan is waste reduction. Waste education is one of the key strategies included in the waste action plan.

Improving waste segregation and waste avoidance practices is of clear financial and environmental benefit to SCHN and the wider community. For example, there is a greater cost associated with clinical waste disposal than general waste disposal (approximately 2.5 times more expensive). Regular clinical waste audit reports at both hospitals showed that a high percentage of items in these bins could have been disposed of in general waste, for example nappies and packaging. If placed in the correct bins, this would reduce waste disposal costs and reduce the higher carbon emissions associated with clinical waste disposal treatment.

“On average 50% of what was found in clinical waste bins could have been disposed of in general waste or recycled.”

#### Sustainability Strategy Implemented

A week-long waste awareness campaign, titled “Kids War on Waste”, ran across both hospitals featuring events and activities to promote waste reduction and recycling initiatives. These included:

- Waste and recycling information stalls in main hospital foyers featuring hospital waste contractors, local councils, and suppliers
- Staff “Team Talk” waste and recycling presentations from contracted waste and recycling companies
- Waste themed fashion parade and competition
- Fun recycling sessions for patients in the Hospital School and Starlight Rooms (a medical free zone for patients and families to take a break)
- Online promotions sharing the SCHN’s waste statistics, targets and a list of simple actions, including a video starring students from the Hospital School.

## Implementation process

“Kids War on Waste” was first pitched to the Chief Executive who supported the campaign and its objectives. A PR and marketing lead were appointed to coordinate promotions (posters, intranet and website stories, all staff emails and a short video). Key stakeholders including Nurse Unit Managers, Cleaning Services and the SCHN Sustainability Group were briefed about the campaign and shown how they could get involved. External stakeholders including waste management contractors, local councils and suppliers were approached to participate to provide presentations, host information stalls and offer promotional items such as re-usable cups, bags and recycling themed kids’ activities. A schedule of events and activities was circulated to wards, including on patient meal trays, and posters displayed in staff areas and lifts as well as all staff emails sent.

Key to the success of the campaign was keeping the message simple and including fun events such as the waste themed fashion parade. Reaching out to as many different areas of the hospital uncovered many green champions who previously weren’t aware of the SCHN Sustainable Hospitals project.

Being the first waste awareness campaign of its size run by SCHN it was regarded as a trial for future Kids War on Waste annual campaigns.



Waste Fashion Parade

Staff feedback during and after the campaign showed there is significant interest for SCHN to reduce its waste, however barriers exist in achieving this, including the view that cleaning staff were putting everything in the one bin despite the efforts of staff separating their waste streams in wards and office areas.

The waste and recycling presentations to staff (clinicians, cleaners and management) provided information on the recycling process and its importance, clarified the different waste streams and identified the correct bins to use. It was clear there is still confusion regarding waste segregation and a need to deliver further waste management and recycling education to staff and families.

“Kids Wars on Waste” planning began in June 2018 and the campaign scheduled from 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018. The date was chosen to take advantage of the attention generated by ABC TV’s popular series “ABC’s War on Waste”.

Shortly afterwards a campaign debrief was provided to the SCHN Sustainability Group and PR and marketing to assess its success and suggest improvements for the 2019 Kids War on Waste.

## Tracking Progress

During the campaign, success was measured by the level of participation at events and the requests received for wards to become involved in recycling initiatives such as the PVC recycling program. Longer term progress will be measured by clinical waste audits and reductions in general waste disposal volumes.

### Challenges and lessons learned

Getting staff to participate was a challenge. Some staff who initially showed interest forgot or were unable to attend on the day.

Direct communication such as phone calls, team meetings and walking around the wards to remind staff proved more effective than relying on emails, posters and intranet posts. For a first-time event it would have been better to start small, and allow for more lead time with promotions.

Many photos were taken to capture the spirit of the week and will serve as a valuable promotional resource for the future.

### Next Steps

- Develop a refreshed set of waste and recycling training resources and schedule regular education sessions.
- Circulate clinical waste audit reports to the Executive and post on the intranet.
- Continue the roll out of PVC recycling collection to more wards.
- Plan for the 2019 Kids War on Waste.



*Kids theatre show, Starlight Room*

### Demographic information

The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network is the largest network of hospitals and pediatric services for children in Australia. It incorporates The Children's Hospital at Westmead, Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, Newborn and Pediatric Emergency Transport Service, the Pregnancy and Newborn Services Network and the Children's Court Clinic. Total number of beds is 526 and total number of staff and volunteers is 7,400.

### Links

[SCHN Sustainability Plan 2017-2022](#)

[Kids War on Waste website story](#)

[Kids War on Waste youtube video](#)

[ABC TV's War on Waste](#)

Main contact person information:

Email: [megan.shaw@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:megan.shaw@health.nsw.gov.au)

Telephone n<sup>o</sup>: 612 93825676



**Submission date:** 8 January 2019