

PIGMENT-FREE PATIENT PLASTICS CONTRIBUTE TO DIGNITY HEALTH'S CHEMICAL REDUCTION GOALS.

By Francesca Olivier, Sustainability Manager



Dignity Health accepts the 2012 System for Change Award from Practice Greenhealth.

Hospital:

Dignity Health (formerly Catholic Healthcare West)

Location:

40+ hospitals and care centers in California, Arizona and Nevada

Challenge:

Reduce the toxicity of products used in Dignity Health hospitals.

Results:

With Medline's pigment-free patient plastics, Dignity Health will divert an estimated 2,935 lbs (1.33 tons) of pigment from the manufacturing process.

About Dignity Health

Dignity Health, headquartered in San Francisco, Calif., provides integrated, patient and family centered care. It is the fifth largest health system in the country with 10,000 physicians and 55,000 employees across Arizona, California, and Nevada.

Through its network of more than 150 ancillary care sites and 40 acute care hospitals, Dignity Health is committed to delivering compassionate, high quality, affordable health care services with special attention to the poor and underserved. In 2011, Dignity Health provided \$1.4 billion in charity care, community benefit and unreimbursed patient care.

The Challenge

Dignity Health is committed to purchasing products and services that are inherently safer to human and environmental health and that address environmental impacts throughout their lifecycle. Dignity Health's environmentally preferable purchasing policy includes a mandate to reduce the amount of unnecessary chemicals in products used at its hospitals and health centers.

In FY 2009, Dignity Health adopted a comprehensive chemical policy which articulates

their commitment to create an environment for patients, employees, and visitors that is free from the hazards posed by chemicals harmful to humans, animals and the environment. Implementing the policy has proven to be challenging in that the issues are complex and the constituencies that need to be educated are numerous and diverse.

The greensmart™ Solution:

The greensmart Program provides health care organizations like Dignity Health with a roadmap for every step along their sustainability journey. The program is designed to help customers quantify and report ongoing sustainability initiatives from an environmental and financial point of view.

As part of the greensmart Program, Dignity Health will replace everyday products that are used at the patient's bedside, such as bed pans, wash basins, water pitchers and drinking cups, with Medline's pigment-free products.

“Dignity Health's initiative to provide pigment-free products helps protect and improve the environment and, ultimately, public health.”

Sister Mary Ellen Leciejewski, O.P.,
Dignity Health Ecology Program Coordinator

Pigment-free products support greener manufacturing because they eliminate the need for potentially harmful chemicals during the manufacturing process. Such manufacturing strategies align with Dignity Health's chemical reduction policy, which aims to reduce the amount of unnecessary chemicals in the products used by the health system.

"Dignity Health's initiative to provide pigment-free products to our patients across our network helps protect and improve the environment and, ultimately, public health," said Sr. Mary Ellen Leciejewski, O.P., Dignity Health ecology program coordinator. "Our support for environmentally responsible products underscores Dignity Health's long-standing commitment to sustainability."

The Results

Based on its annual usage of these products, Dignity Health will divert an estimated 2,935 lbs (1.33 tons) of pigment from the manufacturing process by switching to pigment-free plastics.

Pigment-free plastics also use packaging made out of 30% post consumer tree pulp and is marked with the greensmart logo, which is unique to Medline products. After a rigorous testing and documentation

“We provide sustainable products and services so that our customers can do what's right for their patients, their facility and our environment.”

Francesca Olivier,
Medline's Director of Sustainability

process, the greensmart logo is only awarded to certifiably greener alternative products.

"We're excited to partner with Dignity Health to help reduce our impact on the environment," said Andy Mills, Medline's President. "At Medline, we feel that preserving a healthy planet for future generations is not only the right thing to do, but it is our responsibility as leaders in the healthcare industry to do our part. We provide sustainable products and services so that our customers can do what's right for their patients, their facility and our environment."

Other Environmental Initiatives at Dignity Health

Dignity Health has taken a number of steps to reduce its environmental footprint and improve patient safety:

- Since 2005, Dignity Health enacted system-wide usage of polyvinyl chloride (PVC)/ di-2-ethylhexyl phthalate (DEHP)-free intravenous (IV) bags, solutions, and tubing, which prevents DEHP from leaching into the infusion solution or blood contained in IV bags.
- Since 2009, Dignity Health has been pressing food suppliers to provide meat and dairy products that are not from animal cloning, and foods that are made without genetically engineered sugar beets.
- In 2010, 162,000 lbs of medical equipment were diverted from landfills, resulting in overall savings of \$5.4 million; reduced energy use 13.2% and diverted 45,000 electronic devices from landfills.

Medline's pigment-free plastics



Through increasing the use of energy efficient equipment and renewable energy sources such as photovoltaic, solar hot water, cogeneration and fuel cell technology, Dignity Health will achieve the following sustainability goals by 2020:

- 20% reduction in system wide energy consumption (when comparing the same facilities over the period)
- 35% of system-wide energy use will come from renewable sources
- 40% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions from energy used at each hospital campus

For more information on Dignity Health's sustainability initiatives see their Social Responsibility Report at: www.chwhealth.org/stellent/groups/public/@xinternet_con_sys/documents/webcontent/stgss045842.pdf

For more information on Medline's greensmart Program for Healthcare contact Francesca Olivier at 847-643-3821 or folivier@medline.com.

You can also read more at www.medline.com/greensmart.