

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

60th. Society of Hospital Linen Services and Laundry Managers Conference Stratford - upon - Avon, April 2011.

Another new venue for the Society Conference and what a discovery it was; without doubt the best venue delegates have enjoyed in so many ways: accommodation, food quality, conference facilities and exceptional service from the entire Hotel staff, all these combined to make the event special. The Conference itself was pretty good too and contained several thought-provoking presentations, while the suppliers provided a good display of their Healthcare offerings in a spacious exhibition setting.

During the two days more than 100 delegates attended and many of these were there to hear the opening paper on the benefits of further protecting ward staff, linen handling staff, both internal and external; by the installation of metal detection scanning equipment at strategic locations within the linen flow of the Laundry. Simon Holt represented Lock Inspection Systems based in Oldham who are the only international metal detection equipment manufacturer based in the UK.

All too frequently stray pieces of Hospital hardware are mislaid or lost in the linen and textiles within the Hospital environment. Those items defined as 'sharps' are often extremely dangerous and they are also very likely to exhibit a high risk of infectious contamination. Needles, scissors, scalpels, syringes and metal identity badges have been detected in linen en route to the laundry and the Holt detection system can play a significant part in eliminating these threats to staff safety.

Next up was Katie Liversidge representing Whitaker Services to describe the many causes of the current crisis in the cost of cotton in the marketplace for textiles. Cotton fibres in many forms, comprise more than half the textile fabrics delivered worldwide. As a universally accepted cloth, cotton has a pre-eminent place in customer satisfaction with the end product and it also has very commendable durability in service when used for all forms of bed linen and apparel.

When the price of the raw cotton fibre suffers a price rise per kilo in excess of 181% in less than a year between May 2010 and January 2011, the textile supply chain is put under great strain because there isn't only a reduction in available cotton through floods in Pakistan and late frosts in China, there is also a critical shortage of raw cotton free to the market because the Chinese textile industry in particular, but also in conjunction with all other manufacturers throughout the world have increased their demand in the face of the crop disruptions and failures in three of the principal production areas.

This price rise will be sustained for several months to come and it will never return to the previous level. The increased acreage put into raw cotton production will not fill the gap between demand and supply and shortages will inevitably occur. In Whitaker's view synthetics will not fill the gap in the short term, disposables are not seen as a practical alternative on durability and excessive cost grounds as bed linen and 100% Polyester sheets are equally far from being practical in many ways. Genetically Modified (GM) versions of the staple are not yet market-ready and won't be on stream for some time.

All in all the cotton price is a function of many competing forces and the price reflects these pressures. There is very strong pressure on manufacturers, wherever they are located in the world, to increase their finished goods price; there is equally strong pressure from customers to resist the

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

price increase. Supply contracts are under severe strain and all parties involved will be forced to compromise if cotton goods are to be delivered in anything like the quantity expected.

This was an excellent presentation and Katie clearly explained to a large audience of ‘cotton customers’ exactly why the situation had developed so quickly and with such important financial effect.

Jerry Richardson is Business development Director of Sunlight Textile Services and he was the ideal person to explain to the delegates how Sunlight, as a very large textile services provider to the NHS in UK, was approaching the problems caused by cotton prices and also by the continuing rising costs of diesel in particular. These fresh approaches by Sunlight will affect every customer in the NHS Estate with contracts for laundry with the Company.

Richardson identified areas of significant concern and posed some remedies to them. ‘Losses and abuse are far too high in some sites we service, and these we must endeavour to control. We see ‘*true losses*’ arising from permanent depletions of stock caused by clinical waste contamination, simple and direct theft and damage beyond realistic repair. There are also partially concealed losses arising from inadequate management of stock within a hospital complex, arising from a variety of well known situations. Some linen stocks are effectively out of circulation through inadequate local control. Scrubs exist in quantity in lockers, informal stocking and storage locations proliferate in the hospital. The Ambulance service absorbs a great many ‘missing’ or ‘lost’ items and externally Care Homes and Funeral parlours nationwide are the recipients of considerable quantities of hospital linens.’

‘What to do about it? ‘We will create systems of much clearer labelling of Hospital linen and garments in healthcare, we will identify the exact areas within each site where stock is shrinking faster than expected and by revising our routines of site inspections and strengthen the Audits which already take place and we will undertake more frequent stock takes. In parallel with these improved logistics actions we will also undertake – in conjunction and with co-operation at customer sites - a programme of staff education highlighting costs of linen and garments and the need for everyone at every level the need to have physical count of the ‘ins and outs’ of linen movements. We will also be installing RFID chips and their control systems on all products we supply and service’.

‘At all our plants we will be installing boiler stack economisers to drive down energy costs and we will be modifying or installing the most efficient dryers as well as recycling as much water used in the wash process as possible and where practical and possible in conjunction with our chemical suppliers, we will be moving to low temperature washing. Also in the workplaces of our business we will be installing automatic low intensity lighting and in production areas we will switch to the use of variable speed motors to drive appropriate pieces of plant.’

‘All our transport fleet has had a speed reduction of 5mph – down to 52mph – per vehicle, reduced height truck bodies are being purchased as renewal comes around, and we are changing to standard 12 Tonne load capacity across the fleet. Meanwhile we are undertaking research into alternative fuels for road vehicles including LPG, and Electricity’.

This was an impressive statement of intent by the largest supplier of textile services to the NHS and shows no small ambition for the company. As observers from the periphery we were prompted to

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

wonder how these efforts would translate into positive effect where local sites were concerned. There is a quite significant overhead cost implication in performing all the checks and audits from ward level upwards. Who will bear this increased cost of manpower - especially when Richardson also signalled that linen costs will certainly rise as a direct result of market conditions affecting cotton, diesel fuel and general operational costs in the various laundries around the Sunlight laundry estate?

This will be an interesting war of attrition between provider and user, who dares will very probably win, thereby increasing the disparity of prices offered for the same linen service to different hospital sites across the country and even - as we were about to hear – different linen prices offered within the same NHS Trust by their linen service contractor.

The afternoon session began with a dissertation on How Clean is Clean and how Safe is Safe? This detailed paper presented the latest micro-biological research thinking on HAI – Healthcare Acquired Infections and was given by Peter Hoffman who is Consultant Clinical Scientist in the laboratory of the Health Protection Agency.

‘In all hospital events and in hospital stays there is considerable risk. For example from a patient admissions number of 75,843 cases, 5743 developed an HAI – 7.5% of the total. Infection occurs where the HAI resident bacteria meet incoming patients and colonise their poorly defended body which is not sufficiently immunised against the hospital bacterial pathogens. Risks of infection vary from high – from contact with a normally sterile body area, medium- where anything comes in contact with an intact mucous membrane, and Low – where contact occurs with an intact skin and finally Minimal risk where items causing infection are not in close contact with the skin.’

‘In laundry, disinfection is achieved by either heat or with chemicals. *Quality Assurance* of the process is vital and QA *MUST* work 100% of the time – all the time! In general washer-extractor microbial reduction is by dilution. Hospital laundry machines should deliver microbial reduction by dilution and disinfection. Using heat disinfection we in effect return to the Pasteurization process whereby we kill all microbes except bacterial spores. The temperature and time taken in the wash process are critical and these can be effectively monitored’.

‘Under chemical disinfection we are not certain that the laboratory tests show that chemical disinfection in the laundry actually works. If protein residues are not removed in the wash there is still a greater risk of infection transmission. How do we know if a disinfection process works? We must reproduce that failure and control it, as, even if a disinfection process passed a test in a laboratory it is not necessarily an indication that the same disinfection process will work in the laundry wash processes’.

‘What we have to look for in effective disinfection are: the concentration used, the temperature used throughout the test, the exposure time taken in the test and the presence of organic matter on the test piece. Types of disinfection test include: suspension, surface tests and a swatch with a suspension dried on to the surface.’

‘In chemical disinfection multiple parameters need to be controlled and monitored but real time monitoring is difficult. At the present time there is insufficient evidence that chemical disinfection can play a high, Quality Assurance role. In post-process contamination the numbers of infectants are not important but the source of them *is* a critical factor. This is the basis of EN 14065 and the

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

RABC system of monitoring and recording of the whole process. Contamination decreases with each subsequent contact and areas of contamination are not uniform in density across the surface. Separation of batches is more important than surface disinfection in these cases.’

‘In the cases of uniforms and PPE it is important to remember that Health Care Workwear – HCW – items, are *NOT* PPE; neither are they Patient Protection Equipment! A sheet is more significant than an HCW uniform. Uniforms will give a lower level of contact than direct exposure and in all cases the rate of increase is dependent on temperature prevailing.’

‘Which brings us to the fundamental question – How clean is clean and how safe is safe? This needs to be seen in the context of the process applied to all items rather than to sporadic sampling. A process that decontaminates needs to be established and this process must be monitored. Recontamination from contact with undecontaminated pieces *must* be forbidden. Finally – HSG 95 18 is still in force and the upgrade is still not issued – and it is important to remember that *there are no existing protocols for validation of processes under RABC.*’

Paul Gibson, who is National Chairman of SHLSLM and Linen Services Manager at Royal Bolton Hospital, took the floor to outline the current position regarding small washers, launderette’s and their design, use and compliance with new regulations affecting such machines and systems in the health and Social Care sectors.

‘The first rule is that Social Care Homes *MUST* comply with the new regulations *PRIOR* to registration. Compliance extends to *ALL* current legislation and extends to all inmates. Because HSG 95 18 is mentioned in the report the content of that regulation must be adhered to. The much heralded and equally frequently postponed arrival of CFPP 01 – 04 and HMT 01 – 04, Parts A, B and C, include sterilization requirements as a new Standard, as well as HTM 01-01 regarding decontamination of Medical Devices. CFPP 01 – 04 gives the ‘*intended*’ meaning of the new documents. In a typically dry comment Gibson announced that he was giving the ‘actual’ meaning as he understood it.

‘In summary there are to be NO domestic washing machines installed for use in the Health Care sector. All work contracted out must be processed according to the new standard. Essential Quality requirements in Social Care are: maintenance of a log book detailing service and maintenance activity and events, an up-to-date manual of safe working practices, a manual of processes, PPE equipment must be provided and there must be a procedural separation of ‘clean’ and ‘dirty’ linen in process and in storage, there must be no sluice in the same room as linen processing.’

‘Best Case for Health and Social Care Premises: Washing should be in an industrial machine, existing washers cannot be replaced by an ‘A’ rated domestic washer. Machine process cycle times must comply with Thermal Disinfection times of 71°C for 3 minutes OR 65° C for 10 minutes. The wash process must be validated and the equipment professionally installed. There must be a ‘clean’ exit and a separate ‘dirty’ entrance to the wash house area and linen should arrive pre-sorted and, when processed, pass to a clean finishing area, in best-case situations a negative air flow from clean to dirty should be an installed feature. Best Practice will be the same for both Health Care and Social Care operations for processing linen in laundry.’

‘Enhanced Process requirements, as in the case of infected linen, will be delivered in red soluble bags and sorted *post-wash*. The timescales for the implementation of the new standards are: For

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

Social Care – within 12 months. For best Practice in Health Care complete by 12 months.’ In Gibson’s closing remarks – the PG Tips as it were – he noted that: ‘there will be continuing debate on the comparative benefits between Thermal and Chemical disinfection as well as the favoured type of operation in cost terms between OPL’s and Contracted-out service delivery. But the bars of regulation and the expectations of a quality result will continue to rise’.

Came the dawn of the second day of Conference, after a splendid banquet which was attended by upwards of 100 delegates, the first presentation was delivered by Alison McCree, Associate Director of Estates and Facilities at County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. This job description does not give full justice to the size and scope of Ms McCree’s responsibilities which include management of 550 staff working at eight hospital sites and a large number of Health Centre premises operating an annual budget of £15 million. Success in the delivery of exceptional results has led to national prominence for Ms McCree who is also a member of the Acute Stakeholder Group for the ‘Premises Assurance Model’ and combines all these roles with her position as National Secretary of HEFMA.

In a brief summary of recent developments at her Trust McCree described how the former laundry was closed in 2007 and contracted out. The majority of the staff were re-deployed elsewhere across the Darlington estate and the sewing room was relocated - a decision which in the light of current developments in the country was a very prescient action. Options for laundry processing were between Out-Sourcing and sharing facilities with a neighbouring Trust. The final outcome was to out-source initially using two contractors, this has since been concentrated with one supplier but initially from two laundry plants – in Leicester and West Auckland, and laundry service is now all from the West Auckland plant. Numerous ‘situations’ have been resolved over the 4 years of contracted service. The cost of ‘Lost’ mattress covers for instance, was eventually reimbursed, and external laundering of Trust-owned mops was brought back in-house for laundering.

Some things however continue to give cause for lengthy and very ‘direct’ discussion. The Darlington Trust has eight active laundry requirement sites, these, for reasons not apparently uncommon in other Trusts, are each billed for laundry services at eight different prices. The three PFI Hospitals operating within the Darlington Trust are an obvious case for difference, but McCree is finding it difficult to understand why the five ‘standard’, NHS sites, with virtually identical laundering requirements, are treated in markedly different ways when it comes to the prices charged, which range from 24p to 40p for identical textile pieces. Fortunately Jerry Richardson was on hand and after her presentation Ms McCree and he were able to set an appointment date for a full discussion. This observer was not alone in being eager to learn the outcome of their meeting.

‘Last year Darlington Trust was tasked to deliver £1.4 Million in savings, this was achieved and this year the savings target is £2.2 Million. Not surprisingly the Estates and Facilities operations are focused on laundry and domestic cleaning to deliver a significant proportion of this target. So what else are we doing? Our own staff came up with a novel design for Patient Gowns – the *PYJOWN* – which has received lots of goodwill from patients while the design has met with lots of entrenched opposition in many areas, the good news is that we make them in our own sewing room with consequent cost savings.’

‘To achieve the required savings we are focused on the detail not just on the bottom line and across the Trust we are striving to improve working relationships between departments. In this we definitely would welcome more guidance from the Strategic Health Board so that we can straighten

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

out the variances in quality of the services supplied both internally between the sites and externally to standardise the delivered quantity, quality and cost’.

Reg Ramsden is a familiar figure at the SHLSLM Conference and speaks effectively on his subjects – which have covered in the past, more than one key topic of particular concern to Linen and Laundry Managers within the NHS. At Stratford Reg’s subject was of real interest to all present: the subject of managing linen services from a major out-sourced laundry, in this case Sunlight.

‘Basically we had a stressful start with our contract as we were on a steep learning curve, but we resolved to succeed and we think we have done so and we still retain a good relationship with the contractor. At the outset in 2007/08 we were having 50 complaints covering most aspects of linen service and I was making an average of 15 complaints to the laundry plant each week. We also had innumerable meetings which had no positive result. This situation had to change and we instituted procedures and disciplines to ensure that it did change.

Here’s how:

- We used monitoring tools and equipment: Camera, Diary, Spreadsheets and full staff involvement home and away.
- Stock Control was critical for every reason - including invoice checking. We check stock levels and we rotate the stock in-house.
- Periodically we allocate one and a half days to take a full stock.
- We reject sub-standard linen coming in.
- We enforce penalties using the Framework Agreement.
- We monitor and log delivery times against the contract.
- We check the simple fact of ‘Is it clean?’
- We match the invoice to the contract.
- **AND** we have quantifiable direct savings every month.

Now in 2011 we have 2 complaints into the department each week and we are making two calls to the contractor per week.

What are the savings? We found invoice discrepancies of £7,100 in the first year and in each subsequent year we are running at a +/- £6,000 discrepancies saving.

We have made the contractor listen to us and we keep that pressure on.

We record rejections of linen carefully and we have secured the co-operation of the Ward nurses, they see the benefits to them of good housekeeping and they have fresh, clean linen to hand when they need it.

David Schreinner is a Partner in MIP the ‘*Fitted, knitted, sheet, company*’ based in Canada. To say he is no shrinking violet in presentation terms would not be an injustice to him. His lifetime achievement is to bring effective and efficient products to the patient bedside environment and his paper was on ‘*Recycling Incontinence*’

‘The ‘*Knitted – Fitted*’ concept has won us many friends in UK and we are now beginning to deliver effective recyclable Pads to protect mattresses. These will have similar impact on ward efficiency as our fitted sheets and be instrumental in improving patient comfort and general hygiene

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

in the ward. We are successful in other countries and we now have a joint venture delivering efficiencies to the bedsides of all the Hospitals around Lima in Peru.'

Ian Hargreaves raised the subject of Who Pays? This detailed the pressure of dealing with the vexed topics of the true cost of linen services and the constant issues which bedevil Linen management in hospitals in the 21st Century - working under constant changes in priorities from NHS 'Central Command'. In earlier years we had a fixation on 'savings':- in the 80's on Labour, in the 90's on Energy, in the 00's on Water, now in this decade on Textiles. So what's left to squeeze? How about transport, water, energy, labour and linen usage? The current NHS fixation is on average price per piece. But linen usage figures, as the latest ERIC table shows all too clearly, can be manipulated to suit any argument.

The real problem is that no one knows what the real problems are. Finance pays the bills, Monitoring staff know the quantities and times and the Ward Staff haven't a clue because they have never been told and the information is considered to be un-necessary for colleagues at this level. Equally the impact of differing bed change policies has significant impact on linen costs. In one Trust linen savings amounting to £473 per bed per year are being achieved through a near 10% saving in linen usage from a change in frequency of bed changes and a fresh approach to linen management at ward level.

How were these changes achieved? By the introduction of itemised and costed delivery notes to wards thus informing ward staff of real linen costs; by distributing prominent cost leaflets asking pertinent questions like: *Would you re-use this item at home?* By giving weekly usage reports to wards showing actual costs and cumulative savings and holding Team Briefings where every cost item is discussed with the ward staff and a 'save it' mentality is being developed. The changes were also made at ward level by making doctors and nurses aware that their actions with regard to linens and their use, are not cost free, thus bringing the real world of costs and benefits straight to the point of use.

Last to take the stage was Steve Moss, Linen Services Manager at Pennine Acute Hospitals Trust and his paper was entitled 'Saving Money – Saving Lives'. At Pennine Acute Hospitals Trust we are required to save £48 Million this year and this also anticipates the removal of 1000 staff jobs in the process. Historically NHS costs have always risen and inflation alone will add 5% to costs annually. In January this year our laundry cost index showed an increase of 3.89% in Laundry and 15.3% increase in transport fuel costs. In transport we will achieve savings by cutting delivery costs, rationalising routes and changing the truck specification as we renew them. We will also be investigating trolley specifications, bag designs and all other related logistics costs.

In linen we are focusing on the quantity in circulation and quantity in use as well as fabric type, design and weight as well as investigating textile losses and general efficiency in procurement. In laundry we are investigating our whole approach to processing and the comparative merits of OPL's against efficiencies of various sizes of laundry solutions especially from the standpoint of energy saving and efficiencies.

In labour cost terms we are looking at pieces per hour operator figures, assessing both the necessity and the need for specific services we pay for or perform with a view to cutting redundant services with commensurate reductions in staffing. We are also reducing overtime and enhanced working costs in all operations connected with laundry. We are also negotiating variations in supply

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION

contracts with suppliers and testing and checking all factors which impact on our linen supply and laundry operations.

This was a very interesting conference and the papers delivered addressed the very serious topics which affect the operation of linen and laundry management in today's NHS. Every delegate will have taken away positive ideas for possible inclusion in their own establishment. As the majority of business managers know the deadening effect of overhead costs creates a very negative drag on operational economy and efficiency. However it may be welcomed, constant change almost always throws up positive opportunities to change habits of work and deliver better performance day to day.

©I C Scott

Partner, Marlborough Marketing 5th May 2011.



Conference production colleagues: Paul Gibson, National Chairman, SHLSLM, Bolton Royal Hospital; Lynn Fort, National Secretary, SHLSLM, Royal Blackburn Hospital; Ian Hargreaves, National Treasurer, SHLSLM, Laundry Solutions

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION



Left: Society President, John Gallagher. Another successful conference but was this: ‘Swan Song or call for an encore?’



Right: Jerry Richardson, Business Development Director Sunlight Textile Services. The man to co-ordinate all your linen service prices



Left: Alison McCree, Associate Director of Facilities, County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. Setting standards in cutting costs and making sense of linen contracts across her Trust.



Right: Steve Moss, LSM Pennine Acute hospitals Trust. Where to make the savings work best for you.

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384

MARLBOROUGH MARKETING

PRESS INFORMATION



Peter Hoffman, Consultant Clinical Scientist – Health Protection Agency Laboratory for HAI sets a poser for Simon Fry director of Fenland laundries Ltd.



TSA CEO, Murray Simpson, enjoying a stimulating discussion with Chairman of TSC Commercial Laundry Committee Julian Carr, Managing Director, Sunlight Textile Services.



The Rexodan Team

Marlborough Marketing, The Limes, Ireby, WIGTON, Cumbria, CA7 1EQ.

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 169 737 1205, E-M@il: IrvingCScott@aol.com Cell: +44 (0) 781 631 5384