Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Walking Aid Amnesty

Topic Area(s)

* Public health, health equity or prevention;
* Community/public engagement;

Please specify your project approach

Both adaptation and mitigation

Key message / aim

To increase the return rate of walking aids within the NHS trust to meet recycling targets, improve patient outcomes, reduce carbon footprint, and create employment opportunities.

What was the problem?

Low return rates of walking aids, leading to challenges in recycling, cost inefficiencies, and cluttering of space within the trust.

What was the solution?

Implementing an amnesty program, creating awareness among patients to return aids, improving labelling and tracking, employing external staff for decontamination, and establishing partnerships with equipment suppliers.

What were the challenges?

Patient perception regarding ownerships of aids, lack of labelling and tracking, space constraints for storage, cleaning and infection control risks, and resistance from staff.

What were the results/Impact?

Patient outcomes:

Improved patient outcomes due to better access to walking aids when needed.

Population outcomes:

Enhanced population outcomes through increased employability opportunities.

Environmental impact:

Reduced carbon footprint through recycling efforts.

Social impact:

Promotion of social inclusion by providing employment opportunities to diverse groups.

Financial impacts:

Cost savings through recycling and potential revenue generation from returned aids.

What were the learning points?

The importance of clear communication to change perceptions, effective tracking and labelling systems, collaboration with external partners, and considering social and environmental impacts in strategic planning.

Next steps

Rollout of the amnesty program, joint communication efforts, and exploring opportunities to expand the project to include other types of equipment.

Feedback

The team emphasised the importance of staff engagement and clinical input, addressing concerns and resistance constructively, and involving stakeholders in decision-making processes. Patients and carers likely appreciated improved access to aids and the social and environmental benefits of the program.

Want to know more?

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Has this case study or story been made public in any form before?Yes

The Case study was presented during South Yorkshire AHP faculty agenda meetings by means of a poster. The poster will also be shared across SYAHP social media and at department. The Case study will also be uploaded in Future NHS website.