

EVS Green Careers Project Snapshot

“Project Green Clean”

Hospital: Los Angeles County & USC Medical Center (LAC+USC) is licensed for 1,395 beds and budgeted to staff 745 beds. Approximately 215 EVS workers and supervisors are participating in this project.

Union: SEIU Local 721 represents 60,000 workers in Los Angeles, California.

Training and Implementation: Worker Education and Resource Center, Inc. (WERC)

Project Goal: Improve Cleaning Practices and Reduce HAI’s Through Green Cleaning.

Project Description:

LAC+USC’s EVS labor-management committee launched “Project Green Clean” in the summer of 2010. The project was conceived as a new phase of an ongoing labor-management effort, coordinated by WERC, to improve EVS practices hospital-wide. Project Green Clean launched with a month-long effort to train all EVS workers on an EVS Green Careers custom training module “Project Green Clean: The EVS Worker’s Role in Reducing HAIs through Green Cleaning.” This two-hour workshop reviews the connection between infection control and cleaning and disinfection policies at LAC + USC. The curriculum also introduces workers to the idea of green cleaning and its importance in reducing the exposure to toxic chemicals by using Green Seal approved products. Last, the workshop provides a review of the facility’s chemicals used by EVS workers and allows participants to identify chemicals by name, explain their purpose, and demonstrate their proper use.



Following this training module, Project Green Clean launched another month-long round of training on the EVS Green Careers module “Seeing Green” which contextualized their Green Cleaning project within the broader hospital and environmental sustainability movement. In this module, EVS workers learned the concepts and vocabulary related to how waste, energy, and water affect patients, workers and the community. Project Green Clean continues today with ongoing facility-wide EVS training and a new focus on OR cleaning practices.

Project Results To-Date

Drawing a direct connection between reduced HAI’s and EVS cleaning efforts is difficult, but two recent experiences at LAC+USC provide evidence that Project Green Clean is producing results

1. Patient Cleanliness Satisfaction Scores are Improving. Following implementation of new practices and the EVS Green Careers training program, patient satisfaction with cleanliness of the hospital environment increased **18 percentage points** in the last quarter of 2010, according to patient satisfaction surveys conducted by the hospital survey organization Press Ganey.

Patient Satisfaction: Cleanliness of Hospital Environment	
Sept.-Nov. 2010	Dec.2010 – Feb.2011
49%	67%

2. A visit from the Joint Commission produces almost perfect results and demonstrates worker knowledge.

Four months after training on the first cleaning module the Joint Commission arrived for an unannounced inspection of LAC+USC. Multiple Joint Commission teams investigated and scoured every inch of the hospital's buildings and processes, opening closets and taking extensive notes.

Happily, the results for the EVS team were almost perfect, with just a couple of minor problems. Luis Fonseca, Facilities Management Director for LAC+USC, reported on the inspection and went over the Joint Commission's findings at a meeting of EVS staff. At one point he put up a picture of a cart that had been noted in the report. Before he could say anything about it, Victoria Arellanes, an EVS worker in the audience said loudly, "Hey, that's not Spitfire, that's Triad! They got the wrong chemical in the wrong bottle!" Then another worker, pointing to a plastic bag hanging from the side of the cart said, "And what's it doing hanging there? It isn't supposed to be there!" Two other workers hollered out two different problems with the cart.

Luis Fonseca and Allen Gerber, EVS Manager beamed. Victoria and the others had been through the Project Green training on cleaning, chemicals, and Hospital Acquired Infections four months earlier. They had practiced the proper storage and application of the chemicals they used regularly, and understood how those chemicals and their cleaning practices help prevent infection for patients, visitors, and staff. They now recognized themselves as a vital part of the care team. And while it was clear that *one* person hadn't gotten the message, most of the EVS staff not only knew how to properly store and handle the chemicals, they could spot a problem and felt confident enough to point it out to management. "I won't say whose cart this is," Luis said, "but you guys have to look out for your fellow workers and make sure they're doing the right thing."

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