

Indexor - Pathology's solution to plastic reduction Mrs Jo Walsh, Pathology, Royal Cornwall Hospital

Pathology has for many years employed a single containment system for submitted bloods from primary care by use of plastic bags. Previous initiatives have included use of colour coded plastic bags to identify prioritised samples. It was clear that these practices whilst effective at containment and prevention of contamination contributed greatly to the Trusts carbon footprint as these bags required incineration to prevent risk of infection. It was time to find a solution to receiving samples within plastic bags within plastic bags!! Over the course of a year almost 780,000 specimen bags are sent to the Blood Sciences laboratories which is more than enough to fill an Olympic sized swimming pool!

Before



After



Objective

Pathology recognised the need to reduce plastic usage within the healthcare setting and Indexor has provided the opportunity to implement a plastic bag free containment transport system. The Indexor system also enables us to maintain the quality of the sample taken at a primary care source throughout its journey to the laboratory at RCHT, by recording temperature, transport time frames and any excessive G force vibration. The system also enables time sensitive priority samples to be identified on receipt in the laboratory to aid timely processing of samples

Method

In the GP surgery samples are labelled with electronically requested barcoded labels and are simply scanned via an iMini scanner into a iRack. The iRack contains a RFID tag which holds the barcode identification and associated test but does not hold any patient identification. The samples are then placed into the rack and once collected by the dedicated courier the rack is placed into an iLogger case which starts recording transport information.

On receipt at the laboratory racks are loaded into docks all sample information is downloaded into the laboratory system and samples are ready for processing. Worklists are then interrogated for priority or time sensitive samples.



Results

This has been rolled out to 17 surgeries and has already had a positive effect on the usage of plastic and has been well received - *Just to say here at Lostwithiel we are all really pleased with our 'zapper' - so easy to use and saving us all time and helping the planet as well !*

- *Thank you for your support, everyone is loving the kit and all very excited about producing less plastic and waste in general*

- *Thanks Jo, All is going swimmingly thanks – the nurses have got quite fond of it already!*

- *They are delighted with it – in fact staff thought it saved time which is even more impressive. Thank you so much for your flexibility with fitting in around us*

Conclusion

We intend to reduce the current yearly plastic usage from Pathology which is comparable to the weight of six elephants to one and half elephantsAnd this is just the start of our plastic reduction mission!!

