

# Environmental Sustainability Update

Update No. 17, May 2016

## Introduction

The Department of Health and Human Services produces the quarterly sustainability updates to inform health services on sustainability initiatives being implemented across the health care sector, as well as key sustainability issues of interest. We welcome items of interest from health services.

## ANMF Health and environmental sustainability conference 2016

Over 520 nurses, midwives and other health professionals gathered at the 2016 Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) (Vic Branch) Health and Environmental Sustainability Conference, held on Friday 29 April, to hear from leaders in health and environmental sustainability.

In its 4th year, the conference aims to explore the health impacts of climate change and the growing stress our health practice places on the environment, and to showcase the innovative sustainability initiatives driven by nurses and midwives within health. The conference provides a networking forum for nurses and midwives, and other health professionals to connect and share environmental sustainability ideas and resources. The conference also provides the opportunity to gain CPD (Continuing Professional Development) points and provides an opportunity for gaining sustainability education



**Figure 1: Lisa Fitzpatrick State Secretary, Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch), Mary-Anne Thomas MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Health. Photo: Angela Wylie**

This year the conference featured inspiring nurse/midwife led projects, including Monash Health's award winning, chemical free microfibre and steam cleaning system, the extensive and successful Royal Melbourne Hospital theatre recycling project and the pioneering farmer health project, including the impacts of climate change on Australia's farming communities.

In addition Ros Morgan inspired participants as she explained the motivation that inspired her to set up the Dandenong ICU recycling project and that is the reason for her continuing sustainability journey as Sustainability Officer at Monash Health. The department is finalising two case studies on these initiatives which will be made available from the Sustainability in Healthcare website in the following months.

The ANMF have prepared a lengthier article on the day, including information on other presentations which is available on the ANMF website. In addition, copies of the presentations will also be available to ANMF members in the members-only section. For more information visit: [www.anmfvic.asn.au](http://www.anmfvic.asn.au)

## Outcomes of audit of environmental management planning

A recent departmental audit of environmental management plans (Plans) across the health system has found that health services are meeting the *Policy and Funding Guidelines* requirements of having an environmental management plan, but that there is a variation in the quality, depth and currency of Plans.

Health services with higher quality Plans, tended to provide strong governance processes. These Plans were likely to be overseen by active environmental committees, often chaired by an executive, with regular monitoring and reporting, including to the Board. These health services often produced stand-alone sustainability reports and integrated sustainability with other communications across the health service.

There was a strong correlation between the quality of the sections on action plans, governance, communication and the quality of public environmental reporting.

In other health services, without a clear and active action plan, communications did not appear to occur regularly and there did not appear to be a clear process for gaining sufficient oversight and commitment to monitor and drive actions, even when the organisation might have undertaken significant actions in some areas. This often resulted in a reduced quality or lack of public reporting of environmental performance. Further details on the audit are available from Sarah Bending on 9096 2049, or at [sarah.bending@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:sarah.bending@dhhs.vic.gov.au).

## NABERS for Hospitals

The National Australian Building Energy Rating System (NABERS) is a national rating system that measures the environmental performance of Australian buildings, tenancies and homes. Put simply, NABERS measures the energy efficiency, water usage, waste management and indoor environment quality of a building or tenancy and its impact on the environment.

The department, in conjunction with other States and Territories, through the Australasian Healthcare Infrastructure Alliance, is developing a NABERS for Hospitals tool. The tool will provide an important benchmarking mechanism to allow hospitals to measure and understand their energy use and compare environmental performance to similar hospitals. The tool will initially focus on energy and water but it is hoped it will be expanded to include waste. It is expected that the tool will be launched in late 2016. For further information contact Julian Freeland, 9096 2063 or [julian.freeland@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:julian.freeland@dhhs.vic.gov.au)

## Environmental data management system

The environmental data management system (EdMS) roll-out is well underway with 61 health services using the system and the remaining 26 in the process of transitioning. The final Phase 6 (Barwon South-western) has commenced with these health services expected to be live by the end of June 2016.

The development of health specific functionality for waste (clinical, general and recycling), transport, office paper, medical and refrigerant gases is undergoing final testing.

The department has exercised the contract option to continue using the EdMS for 2016-17 and the cost model as per 2015-16 will continue. The department is negotiating details of refresher training and further details will be provided in due course. Queries on the EdMS can be directed to Julian Freeland, 9096 2063 or [julian.freeland@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:julian.freeland@dhhs.vic.gov.au)

## Nominations Open for Premier's Sustainability Awards

Entries for the 2016 Premier's Sustainability Awards are now open, with Victorians who lead the way in innovative and sustainable projects encouraged to apply. There are a number of categories including health and last year Monash Health won the health category, with Melbourne Health and Austin Health as finalists.

In addition to these awards, the Premier of Victoria will select two overall winners in the Premier's Recognition Award and the Premier's Regional Recognition Award.

Entries close Monday 27 June. For more information and to apply, visit [www.sustainabilityawards.vic.gov.au](http://www.sustainabilityawards.vic.gov.au)

## Waste signage returns to the sustainability website

Waste signage has returned to the sustainability website following the department's move to a new web platform. The signage was developed a number of years ago in conjunction with Sustainability Victoria and images are available under a creative commons licence and can be customised by health services. Feedback is welcomed on the signage. The link to the site is: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/planning-infrastructure/sustainability/waste/waste-and-recycling-signage>

## Sustainability Unit staff changes

Julian Freeland has joined the Sustainability Team. Julian joins the team from the Department of Defence where he spent the last three and half years working as the Victoria and Tasmanian Energy and Sustainability Officer. Projects in Defence included lighting retrofits, energy efficiency upgrades to heating and ventilation infrastructure and the design and installation of a solar electricity system at the Victoria Barracks in the heart of Melbourne. Prior to that Julian was an Environmental Project Manager in the Victorian Department of Justice.

## Further information

The sustainability in healthcare website is available at: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sustainability>

To join the Sustainability in Healthcare online forum (open to public health service staff) email [sustainability@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:sustainability@dhhs.vic.gov.au)

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