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9-2020

### Decreasing Linen Use: A Nurse-Driven Policy

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# Decreasing Linen Use: A Nurse Driven Policy

## BACKGROUND

- Health care facilities are energy intensive and emit up to 10% of greenhouse gas emission in the United States
- Linen is a significant expense in healthcare
- Efficient Linen use reduces environmental impacts and decreases costs

## PURPOSE

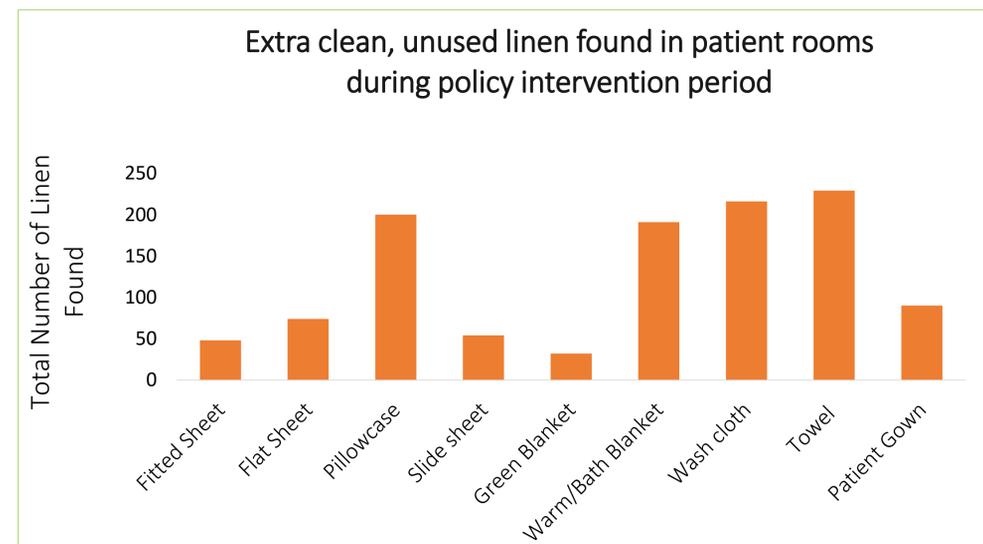
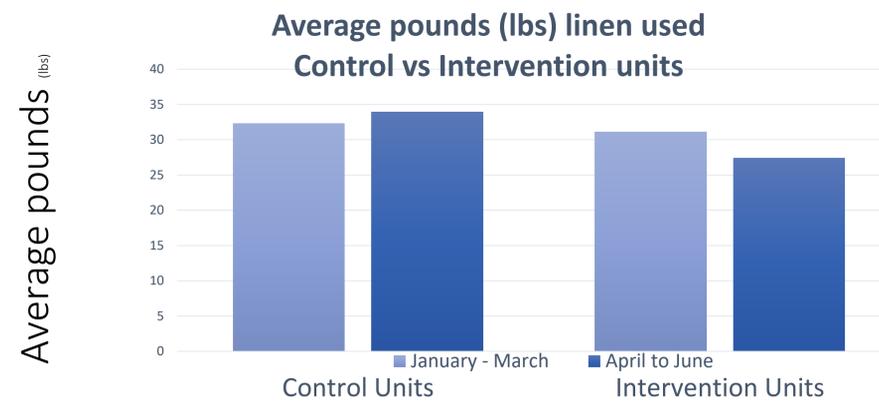
- To measure the impacts of a new linen utilization policy on:
  - linen use and cost
  - nurse satisfaction
  - hospital acquired infection (HAI) rates, specifically *Clostridium difficile* (*C diff*)
  - patient satisfaction on medical-surgical units

## METHODS

- Quality Improvement Project: Implemented a linen policy on 2 intervention units and compared results with 2 control units
- Metrics tracked : lbs of linen/adjusted patient day, infection rate data quarterly, patient satisfaction scores for “Cleanliness of room”
- Nursing staff survey: tracked trends/perceptions on linen use practices pre/post study
- Tracked: Unused, clean/excess linen in patient rooms

## RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- Staff survey demonstrated increased awareness of linen use and management
- No increase in infection rates were found during the pilot
- Linen use and cost decreased on the intervention units
- Cleanliness of rooms” patient satisfaction scores improved on the intervention units



## DISCUSSION/IMPLICATIONS

- Moving from an automated practice of changing linens daily to a more lenient linen change policy did not negatively affect our patient population
- This project increased staff awareness of the links between their practice, cost savings, and environmental stewardship
- There is potential for expanding the linen utilization policy to other departments and hospitals
- Further research could quantify the water, energy, chemicals, and labor cost savings associated with decreased linen use to further demonstrate how environmental stewardship links with hospital management

## LIMITATIONS

- Educating staff due to variable shifts, summer vacations, new hires
- 41% Linen Surveillance tools completed

### References:

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