

SUSTAINABLE PERIOPERATIVE CARE

Project Charter Summary

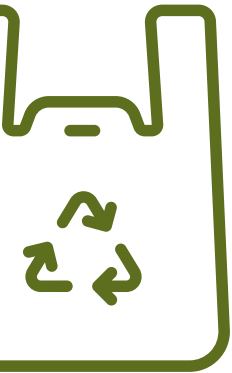
SUBSTITUTE REUSABLE ALTERNATIVES

Bringing Your Own Bag

Within the health sector, plastics account for approximately 30% of waste. Operating rooms are a significant source of plastic waste, with the bulk of plastic waste generated during the pre- and post-operative phases of surgery.



PROJECT CHARTER: See the full version of the project charter for more change ideas, details, and a complete list of references.



One source of pre-operative plastic waste that is relatively simple to address is patient belonging bags. On average, thousands of these bags are given out to patients on a monthly basis. They are used to store patient belongings, such as clothing and shoes, during surgery. These bags, which are thicker and larger than regular single use plastic bags, end up in landfills, where they break down very slowly into toxins that pollute the soil and water, damaging the environment and, subsequently, animal and human health.

GOAL: Reduce the number of plastic patient belonging bags used in your unit or hospital, by increasing the percentage of scheduled patients that bring reusable bags for their belongings

PROJECT SCOPE: Unit or institution-wide

EMISSIONS SCOPE: Scope 3 (emissions arise from activities or products related to health sector activities, but not owned or controlled by your organization)

ESTIMATING IMPACT

ACTIVITY/OUTCOME METRIC

Total number of plastic belonging bags used per month

- Source(s):
 - Procurement data
 - Self-audit
- Considerations:
 - Monthly counts are recommended to observe progress, but data can be processed for any given time frame.

RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL METRIC

Emissions per heavy duty plastic bag in kg CO₂e

- 0.153 kg CO₂e per bag
 - This data does not come from a Canadian source, and may differ from the Canadian context.
 - The metric is for a generic heavy duty plastic bag as there are no available figures for patient belonging bags in particular; as such, the calculation will yield estimates only.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Estimation of total impact in kg CO₂e

- Considerations:
 - There should be a reduction in this number over time.
 - Use the [Natural Resources Canada Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator](#) to translate your results to stakeholders.

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Root Causes and Change Ideas for Bringing Your Own Bag



PLAYBOOK:
View the playbook for other perioperative sustainability opportunities and resources.



VIDEO: BYORB with Dr. David Smith
VIDEO: BYORB with Dr. David Smith & team

Staff and patients may be unaware of the environmental and health impacts of single-use plastics, the number of plastic belonging bags used in the unit/organization, and the social acceptability of asking patients to bring reusable bags when possible.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

- Put up posters outlining the carbon footprint of single-use bags in change rooms
 - Resource: [CASCADDES implementation resources](#)
- Include the infographic below your email signature to socialize this idea
- Share [videos of the NYGH team discussing their Bring Your Own Reusable Bag initiative](#) with your team

Habitually, patients are given plastic bags—sometimes more than they actually even need. There is seldom an existing method to track bag use.

CLINICAL WORKFLOW

- Surgeon's secretaries can include a Bring Your Own Bag reminder in:
 - The pre-op call
 - The pre-op email
 - Resource: [sample phone and email scripts](#)
- A Bring Your Own Bag message can be included in the Day Surgery pamphlet
 - Resource: sample note in [Day Surgery pamphlet](#)
- Include questions related to reusable bags on the pre-procedure checklist to track compliance
 - Resource: [sample pre-procedure checklist item](#)
- Assess success via:
 - Surveys to assess patient compliance
 - Resource: [sample patient survey](#)
 - Survey to establish impact to workflow
 - Resource: [sample workflow survey](#)
 - Reports generated from EMR

There are no reusable bags on hand to give patients instead of plastic bags.

FINANCES & PROCUREMENT

- Create an irresistible business case to show potential monetary savings associated with a BYORB project.
 - Example: At North York General Hospital, one plastic belonging bag costs \$0.14. Multiplied by the 3,000 bags used in the Day Surgery and Endoscopy Units monthly, there would be a savings of \$420 per month and \$5,040 per year if every patient used reusable bags. At the institutional level, where 12,000 plastic belonging bags are used per month, there would be a savings of \$1,680 per month and \$20,160 per year if every patient used reusable bags. These are financial savings on top of environmental savings!

Winter boots and coats require larger bags; patients may be reluctant to store footwear in a reusable bag as they may get soiled. Patients may not want to leave reusable bags on an unclean floor.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Consider using a cart to store reusable bags during surgery if floor is unclean