

Heartland Regional Medical Center addresses environment of care issues with excess oxygen tanks

When Premier Facilities consultant Jim Bue visited Heartland Regional Medical Center, St Joseph, MO, and conducted a mock Joint Commission survey, he discovered that the hospital could address an important safety issue and realize a significant reduction in costs from the excess surcharges associated with excess oxygen tanks.

“We were renting all of these oxygen tanks and they were all over the hospital,” said David Jones, process leader, Support Services. “Departments were sharing them back and forth. According to safety and costs reports for our hospital, we did not need as much as oxygen we thought.”

Jones and his department spend a lot of time on the floors talking with internal customers. As part of the facility’s Environment of Care program, the department also conducts environmental rounds looking for opportunities to keep patients, visitors, and co-workers safe. Jones said the department welcomed Bue’s “fresh pair of eyes,” and agreed that Heartland “had an opportunity to thin out some of the oxygen tanks.”

After a quick assessment with purchasing and nursing, Jones and his staff cleared out hundreds of tanks, realizing an instant cost savings of more than \$100,000.

“I am very proud of the fact we spend time on the floors developing relationships with our internal customers, and very proud that we decreased dollars while Heartland Health increased in safety,” Jones said.

Heartland has received numerous quality and safety awards over the past several years. For the past two years in a row, Heartland has been recognized by HealthGrades with its Distinguished Hospital Award for Patient Safety; HealthGrades examines the performance and quality of care provided by hospitals around the country.

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