

Le Dr Florent Huang,
Julie Swaenepoël,
Julien Lagarde
and
Michaël.



COLLECTIVE MOMENTUM

A GREENER, MORE SUSTAINABLE HOSPITAL TAKES SHAPE AT FOCH

By Joëlle Hayek / Having recently been awarded the THQSE (Très Haute Qualité Sociale et Environnementale - Very High Social and Environmental Quality) Gold label, Hôpital Foch is continuing to work towards a greener, more sustainable hospital. This establishment The Suresnes, Hauts-de-Seine-based private community health centre is stepping up its virtuous initiatives, which are now part of a collective dynamic that is set to expand. Here's a report.



At the beginning of 2023, we unveiled a major CSR strategic plan, aimed at better structuring the cross-functional actions to be implemented from 2021 by the hospital's functional departments, and those to be initiated from 2022 in the various care services. We also quickly decided to commit ourselves to the THQSE standard, because it covers a number of areas that are important to us in the field of CSR », explains Julie Swaenepoël, Director of Quality,

Risks and Logistics. The audit, carried out last March, was based on four pillars - economic, social, environmental and societal - for which the Foch Hospital obtained an average score of 98%. "The THQSE Gold label for the period 2023-2026 confirms the efficiency and relevance of our approach to social and environmental responsibility, which takes the form of a large number of initiatives at all levels of our establishment," she continues.

A Sustainable Development Committee and ambassadors
This virtuous dynamic is supported by a particularly active Sustainable Development Committee, which was set up in 2011 and meets four times a year to assess, re-evaluate and propose new projects. Multidisciplinary and multi-

professional, it brings together members of the management team as well as doctors, managers and nursing staff, technicians and support functions. "A few months ago, we also created a network of sustainable development ambassadors, who work in the care departments to raise awareness, facilitate the roll-out of projects, and support the implementation of micro actions that are simple to carry out and whose benefits are quickly visible", explains Julie Swaenepoël, emphasising that the recruitment of around sixty volunteers has been "very easy".

Each has been given a "logbook" containing action sheets on a range of topics, including waste management, optimising water consumption, energy and digital efficiency, and mobility management. As Dr Florent Huang, a cardiologist and himself a sustainable development ambassador, points out, the aim of the scheme is to "bring together individual initiatives so that the sum of them can feed into the collective dynamic". "In the cardiology department, for example, all the professionals approached said they were highly motivated. We were already expecting a favourable reception from the younger generations, who now have a greater awareness of the importance of sustainable development.



Bio-hazardous waste is transformed into solid shredded material that is treated in the same way as household waste.



Automated processing to prevent MSDs.

real requirements in terms of sustainable development. But older professionals are just as positive, seeing it as an opportunity to develop their profession and their practices. They're all aware that they have a role to play in contributing to the advent of a greener hospital, and they're all happy to do so," he smiles.

Infectious medical waste transformed into inert waste

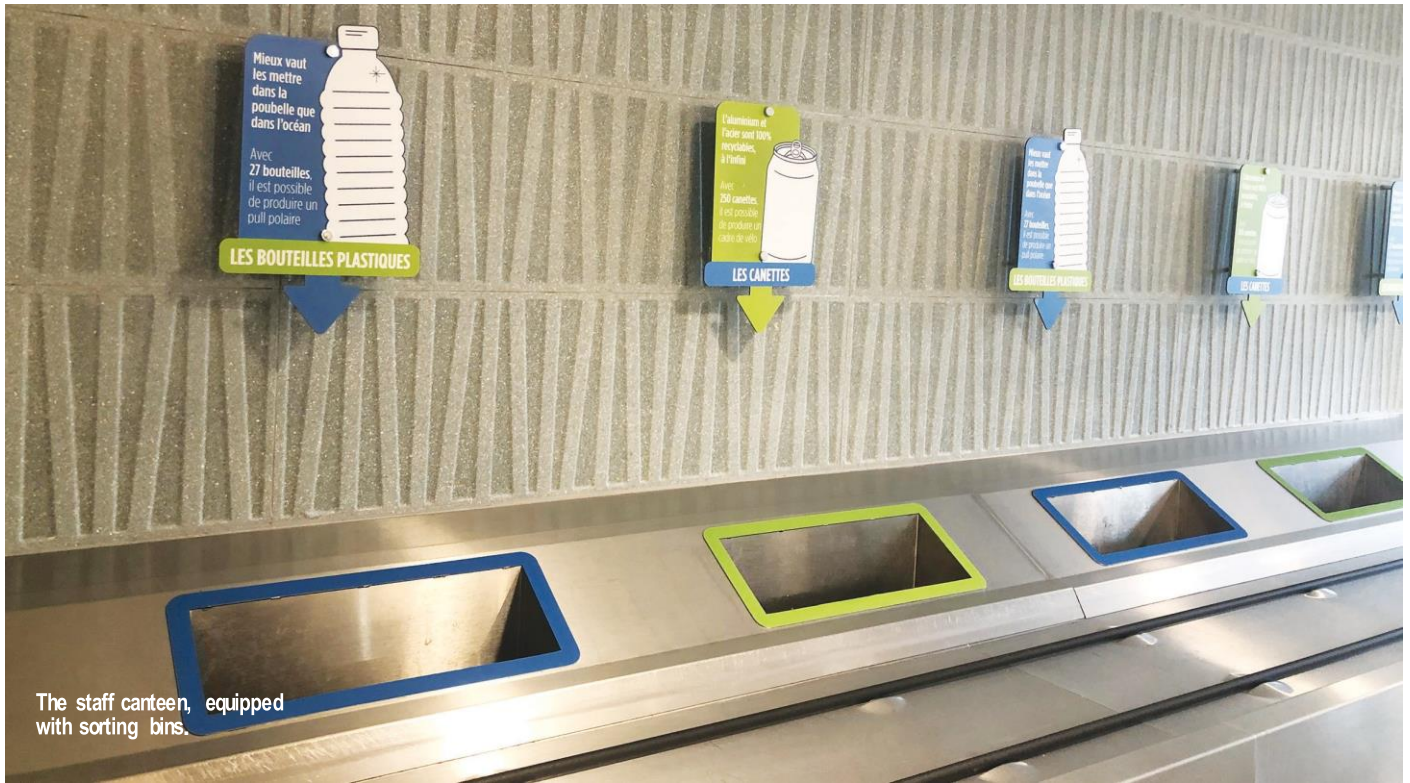
The support functions and technical services are not to be outdone, and are also stepping up their efforts to limit the environmental impact of hospital activities. In this respect, a project launched last spring has put the Foch Hospital in the spotlight: the in-house processing of waste from healthcare activities involving infectious risks (DASRI), i.e. 300 tonnes per year, volumes that previously required a collection truck to pass by six times a week. "This regularly led to traffic jams on the outskirts of the hospital, with a high risk of accidents," notes Julien Lagarde, Head of General Services. With the support of ADEME, the French Environment and Energy Management Agency, now the French Agency for Ecological Transition, the hospital acquired two production machines in April, enabling it to transform the medical waste into solid shred, reducing its volume by almost 80% and dividing its weight by four. "Syringes, compresses, surgical drapes, medical glass - in short, a large proportion of medical waste, with the exception of cytotoxics and anatomical parts - are now processed in-house, in these machines which, to put it simply, work like a microwave. Disinfected at 110°C, they become inert waste on the same level as household waste", he explains. The chips produced are now collected by truck once a week - five times less than before - and incinerated at the Argenteuil treatment centre to supply the district heating networks.

A continuous improvement approach

"This new organisation has had no impact on the way in which medical waste is collected from care units, apart from a slight change in the shape of the bin, whose characteristic yellow colour has been retained", explains the head of general services. Launched at the beginning of May, the system is now running smoothly: the bins collected from the care units have been redesigned and are now ready for use.

are taken to the sixth basement floor of the hospital, where they are looked after by Michaël, a worker seconded to the establishment by a partner adapted company. However, he only carries out light handling, as the heavy operations - weighing before and after treatment, pouring the DASRI into the machine, etc. - are fully automated. In practical terms, the contents of each collection container (with a capacity of 360 litres) undergo a shredding cycle lasting an average of 28 minutes. The shredded material is collected in an airtight bag every two cycles and deposited in the household waste containers, while the bin is disinfected and stored "using the forward motion principle", explains Julien Lagarde, before being sent back to the care units.

More than 15 tonnes of medical waste were processed in just two months using this new system, which also provides detailed data on each cycle carried out (tonnage, disinfection temperature, treatment time, etc.). "We are currently analysing this information to identify new areas for improvement, such as the possibility of collecting the shredded material every 15 days, in order to further improve our carbon footprint," he continues. This initiative, which is being closely watched by many health establishments, is not the only one that the Hôpital Foch has implemented to optimise waste management. "All 31 of our waste streams are part of this continuous improvement process. For example, we are currently focusing on the metal sector in the operating theatre, where we are refining the waste typology and assessing its volume, in order to consider new treatment methods. ●●●



••• This work has already been carried out in the catering sector, for waste from the self-service restaurant, i.e. from employees' meals," he stresses.

Recycling and recovery

Renovated in 2020, the school's cafeteria already had an attractive sorting area, which was part of the architectural design. "The different types of waste could therefore be sorted into specific channels throughout the chain, whether they be car tones, plastic cans and bottles, coffee grounds or, of course, bio-waste. To avoid having to deal with too many people, we looked for a service provider who could offer a grouped approach that put recycling at the heart of the process", explains Julien Laborde. Implemented two years ago, the project has already resulted in the recovery of one hundred tonnes of waste. "Cans are used for bicycles, coffee grounds for firefighters and logs for cheminées, and tetrapacks for kitchen towels," he explains. At the same time, the store has installed a baler, a kind of compactor that compresses and packages cardboard boxes, reducing their volume by half. "We started with cardboard from the catering business, then we moved on to the packaging.

To include waste recovered from care units and, more recently, operating theatres", he continues. All this sorted and reconditioned waste is now collected twice a week, compared with six times a week previously. "We are now looking at ways of reducing the use of plastic in the self-service restaurant, and are considering providing returnable glass containers," adds the head of general services.

Eco-design of care products

As mentioned above, the medical and nursing community is also involved in a number of initiatives to improve the recycling of hospital waste. In particular, a number of departments have begun to think about the eco-conception of care. "Healthcare professionals have been working for a long time on the relevance of care, which is similar to the eco-design of care on certain points. But it also goes further," Julie Swaenepoël points out. Eco-design of care requires the implementation of a cross-disciplinary approach, covering both practices and the life cycle of products and devices used in a given treatment. "Learned societies are beginning - to take an

interest in this concept, which is being has already been the subject of medical theses", adds Florent Huang. The maternity unit, for example, where patient demand is particularly high, has actively embarked on this path, which should eventually enable it to obtain the Écomaternité label.

"At institutional level, we draw on the full range of individual initiatives to align them with our strategic challenges in terms of sustainable development and CSR. THQSE Gold certification is an important milestone, but our approach will continue to grow and expand. What's more, a new version of the THQSE label has recently come out, imposing additional, more ambitious objectives. We're thinking about it", says Julie Swaenepoël. The strength of Hôpital Foch lies in this alignment of wills and objectives, including at senior management level, whose support has made it possible to drive and maintain the dynamic. "Sustainable development is not just about protecting future generations; it's also about self-preservation. The teams at our establishment have heard this message and are doing their utmost to ensure that it is a reality. to respond to them", she concludes. •

