



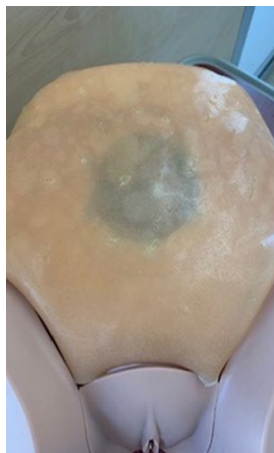
How Your Simulation Center Can Contribute to Environmental Sustainability

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Many items used in health care are made from plastic, silicone, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), or a combination of materials. It is estimated that 1 million tons of clean, non-infectious health care plastics are generated at health care facilities nationwide every year. As part of a high reliability organization (HRO), we must learn, inquire, and improve how we manage our contributions to this waste problem. By being inquisitive, we can improve not only how much waste our facility generates but also how repurposing items can be transformative for learners.



Expired supplies at the Clement J. Zablocki VAMC



Bladder Scanner Trainer promotes environmental sustainability in simulations

The Clement J. Zablocki VAMC Interprofessional Simulation Center in Milwaukee is committed to environmental sustainability. We have focused on reusing and repurposing outdated supplies and unused items. We started by collaborating with our logistics colleagues to implement a process for the review of expired supplies before disposal. Our teams will be notified by the Logistics Department on a quarterly basis when items are scheduled for disposal. Selected supplies are repurposed for simulations or workshops. Some consistently repurposed supplies include syringes, IV catheters, Tegaderm bandages, IV tubing, Foley insertion kits, chest tube insertion kits, and intubation items.

By collaborating with our interprofessional colleagues, we frequently identify the need for specific task trainers for learners. Given the limited frequency of use, our simulation program taps into its creative side, thinking outside the box, and repurposing items to contribute to a greener environment.

For example, a 12-lead task trainer was converted into a chest tube/cricothyrotomy trainer. By collaborating with stakeholders and understanding their needs, we repurposed the old, unused trainer, allowing it to support procedural steps for two procedures. This repurposing saved over \$7,000 for taxpayers and prevented the trainer from ending up in a landfill.



Chest tube trainer with inserts and tubes

Other examples of innovative repurposing include:

- A pelvic trainer became a bladder scanner trainer.

- A shoulder injection trainer became a NIO, which is an intraosseous access device, trainer.
- Chest tube inserts were transformed into trainers for various line placements.
- A central line insert was transitioned to a central line trainer for line removal and care.

It is our duty to be environmentally responsible by repurposing supplies and trainers. We must also be fiscally responsible, weighing the costs and benefits, considering the time and effort spent on creating new items, and collaborating with our stakeholders to innovate. These efforts align with our commitment to zero harm to our planet and our Veterans.