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Madigan listed among 25 most green hospitals

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Madigan Army Medical Center Public Affairs

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JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD -- The green efforts of Madigan Army Medical Center earned it the honor of being ranked as one of the top 25 green hospitals in the United States and Canada in 2014.

The Top 25 Environmental Excellence Award is the most prestigious environmental achievement award offered by Practice Greenhealth, an organization that encourages and recognizes environmentally responsible practices in hospitals.

“To me, it’s an amazing achievement that this happened because of Team Madigan ... everything that we’ve done came from teamwork,” said Michael Kyser, the acting chief of Madigan’s Environmental Health Service; Madigan is the only hospital in the U.S. Army Medical Command to earn this award.

That teamwork Kyser talked about starts with a Green Team at Madigan that meets monthly and includes members from a cross-section of departments from nursing to logistics, and from safety to the dining facility (where all food waste is now composted).

“We want an effective decentralized environmental program in place,” Kyser said, and they create this by establishing environmental coordinators in each section of the hospital.

The Green Team ensures that all 300 employees involved in the procurement process, whether in purchasing or contracting, get educated on how to purchase as many green products and services as possible.

“Anybody that’s involved with the procurement actions, they’re responsible to seek green alternatives when making their purchasing decisions,” Kyser said.

This idea of making green purchases expands to also meeting the Army’s standard of ensuring all new buildings are certified at the environmentally friendly level of LEED (or Leadership, Energy and Environmental Design) Silver. Madigan’s new Preventative Medicine building and Winder Clinic are both a step above that standard at LEED Gold certified.

Madigan also strives to find ways to conserve energy, recently earning an Energy Star award from the Environmental Protection Agency for obtaining an energy efficiency rating of 83 percent. Their next goal is to save energy by increasing the use of LED lighting.

Inside the hospital, overall conservation is practiced through the three Rs: recycling, reducing and reusing. While the traditional sorting of plastics, paper and aluminum is encouraged, it’s in the behind-the-scenes efforts to reduce medical waste and trash where the major muscle movement lies.

“Back in 2010, we were generating approximately 30,000 pounds of regulated medical waste a month, and now we’re generating on average about 12,000 pounds a month, because we have an intensive waste management monitoring program, and we just launched a waste standardization project,” Kyser said.

The Green Team also encourages increased recycling to include many traditional single-use items. It turns out going green can save money; Madigan saved more than \$120,000 in 2013 on recycling and reprocessing of single-use medical devices, and it is saving money



John Liston

Madigan Army Medical Center Environmental Health Service staff Spc. Adoria Terrell and Pete Anderson, environmental health technicians, and Anthony Medica (center), lab manager for Madigan’s state-certified water lab, test the water in the Madigan pond on May 21. Madigan recently earned top honors for its environmental programs, named one of the top 25 green hospitals in the U.S. and Canada by Practice Greenhealth.

in reducing its medical waste output.

“We’ve achieved a culture change towards sustainability and it happened because people care; it’s because people really care,” Kyser said.

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