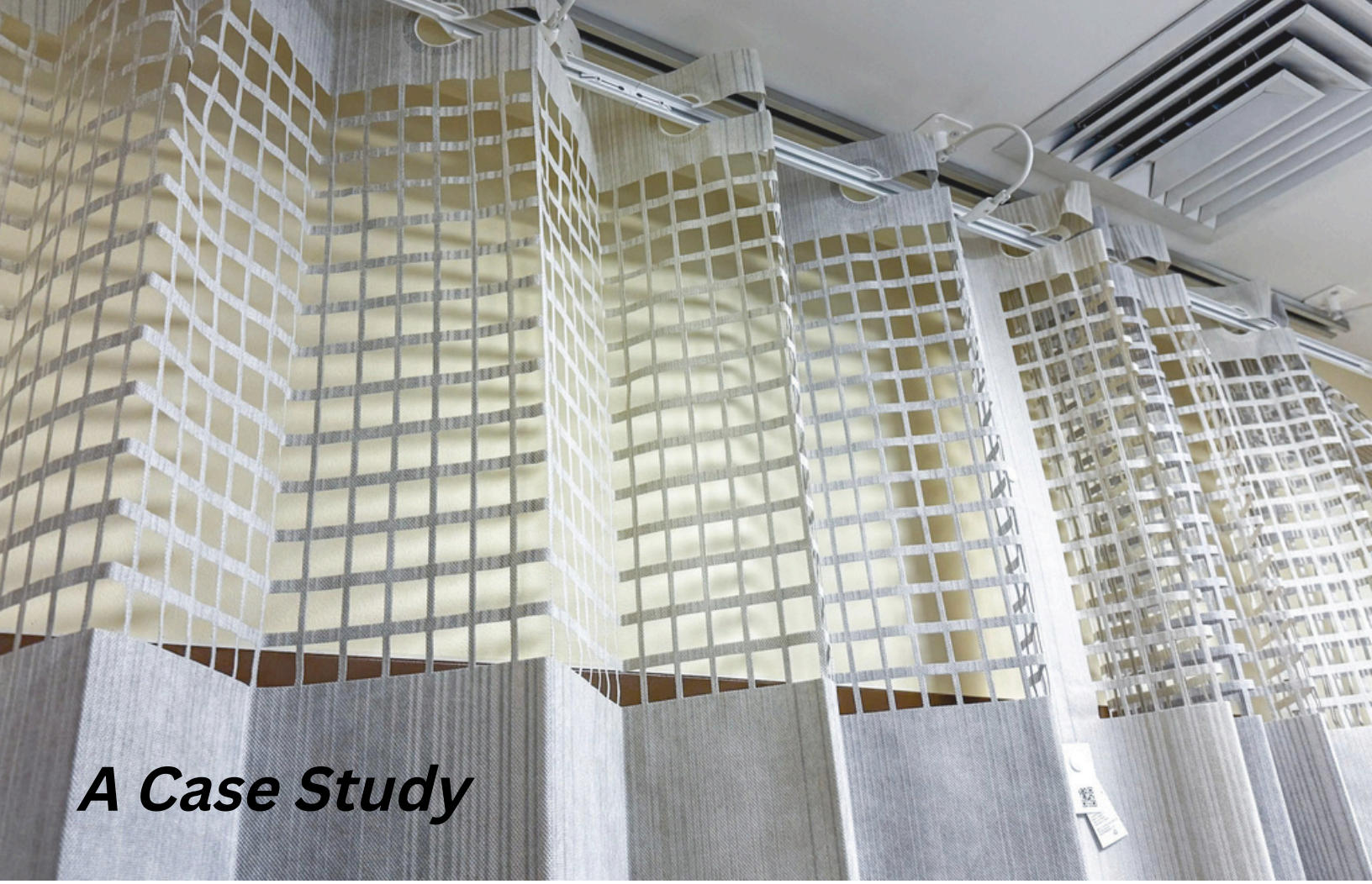

From Chaos to Order: Huggins Hospital's Curtain Revolution

Implementing On the Right Track's innovative disposable and automated curtain solutions to streamline operations and improve patient care.

When Kurt Roessler, the new director of Environmental Services and Food + Nutrition at Huggins Hospital, located in Wolfeboro, NH, stepped into his role in September 2023, he quickly realized he was facing a challenge that was significantly impacting patient care and staff efficiency—privacy curtain management. "When I took over the department, we had launderable curtains that were reusable across the hospital - and I couldn't find any record of when they were being cleaned," Roessler recalls. It was a process laden with inefficiencies. "It could take 20-plus minutes to replace one curtain, and that doesn't include the time to launder them and get them back to where they belong. Plus, it involves being on a ladder, which always invites the possibility of injury."

Huggins Hospital
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on the right track

“We were spending more time just trying to keep the hospital clean and disinfected than replacing curtains,” he explains. The imperative became clear: find a new system that could streamline this process and enhance operational efficiency.

A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

Roessler turned to his network within the American Environmental Services Association (AHE), part of the American Hospital Association, to see what solutions were being successfully implemented at other institutions. “I went searching to see what best practices were across the industry as curtains go by, searching back to some conversations with people that had it before,” Roessler remembers.

Among the array of suggested solutions, one company stood out: **On the Right Track**, which offered disposable curtains that could be replaced without the need for ladders, along with automated tracking via their app and QR codes printed on every curtain panel.

The Changeout Curtain Tracker app automates compliance management and updates in real-time to the cloud.

> "On the Right Track was the only solution where they retrofitted easily over our existing track.”
>
> **Kurt Roesller**
> Director Environmental Services

“When we weighed everything together, including cost, ease of change, and how it would affect staffing on environmental services, ultimately we decided that On the Right Track with the hookless tracking system, disposable curtains, and automated tracking app was the best way to go,” he adds. An essential aspect was their adaptability, “On the Right Track was the only solution where they retrofitted easily over our existing track.”

SEAMLESS IMPLEMENTATION

Transitioning to a new system often comes with fears of complicated setup and disruption, particularly when it comes to implementing tech like the Changeout Curtain Tracker app - but On the Right Track made the process remarkably straightforward. “It's not bad at all,” Roessler shares, smiling as he recalls the setup process. “I was able to setup the app on a conference call with them, and they walked me right through it. Their tech person could see what I was doing to make sure that I was doing things correctly.”

The physical installation of the hookless tracking was similarly smooth. “They said it might take two full days [to retrofit over all areas], and they came out and were done in a day.”

This easy implementation wasn't just technical but also logistical. “We have one day a week where we don't schedule procedures in the operating room, it was easier to work on that day for us, and they were fine to adapt to our schedule,” he continues.

A TRANSFORMATION IN EFFICIENCY

The switch to On the Right Track's system marked a significant leap forward for Huggins Hospital. "We've gone basically from zero to almost fully automated," Roessler beams. The new curtains and the accompanying app meant efficient tracking and replacement. "I just scan them with my phone when they're installed," he explains, describing the process as transformative.

The hospital now follows a bi-annual curtain replacement schedule, with additional replacements as needed. "We replace all the curtains twice a year, and then we immediately replace them if they're soiled or stained or torn."

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

The change hasn't gone unnoticed by the clinical staff. "They like the look, they like how easy they are to change," Roessler notes. The hospital's transition to a uniform curtain system across all areas has also been a hit. "Previously we were dealing with a mishmash of curtains that accumulated over the years, it's immensely simplified and helpful now that they're all the same."

Although patient feedback hasn't been directly targeted toward the new curtains, maintaining overall cleanliness perceptions remains a priority. "Every little part helps. If they see one thing that's soiled, it's going to affect their perception of everything else."

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

When asked about sustainability, Roessler acknowledges the ongoing conversations. "We definitely want to recycle the curtains. As we get ready for our first changeout, I'm sure that will be a topic of discussion."

Looking ahead, Kurt is optimistic about the long-term impact of this shift. While it's too soon to conclusively link the curtain changes to infection rates, the proactive steps with infection prevention show promise. "We run pretty low on infection rates anyway. I'm not sure we'll see significant data changes, but every little improvement helps."

CONCLUSION

Roessler's journey at Huggins Hospital highlights the importance of efficient, innovative solutions in healthcare settings and the positive impact they can have. Through his proactive efforts and the seamless support of On the Right Track, Huggins Hospital has significantly advanced its environmental services processes, benefitting both staff and patient outcomes.

on the right track

About On The Right Track

On The Right Track® (OTRT) disposable cubicle curtain solution allows health systems to build an efficient, safe, and healthy environment. OTRT serves customers across North America to:

- Automate curtain tracking, compliance reporting, and changeout
- Further minimize the risk of Hospital Acquired Infections (HAIs)
- Lower curtain-replacement labor costs by 90%
- Entirely eliminate laundry costs
- Overcome the risk of ladder accidents
- Maximize patient throughput
- Provide a better patient experience through consistent aesthetics and a virtually silent track system

On The Right Track® is 100% committed to creating environmentally conscious products. For more information about OTRT, visit **www.ontherighttrack.com** or contact us at **moreinfo@ontherighttrack.com**.

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