



24 Sustainability Success Stories in 2024

Story 6 of 24: Sustainability in IT

Less Paper Waste Across UPMC

UPMC continues to upgrade its printing infrastructure while pursuing its key sustainability goals. A system-wide printer refresh occurs every few years to upgrade and consolidate printing and faxing operations within UPMC. With approximately 40 million pages printed monthly by close to 14,000 printers across the system, the significance of optimizing printing and faxing cannot be overstated.

A printer refresh includes the upgrading of old printers, consolidation of printers, digital faxing, and the “tap and print” strategy to minimize waste, decrease energy consumption, and promote resource efficiency.

Reducing the number of printers spread across various locations and considering placement where they are most needed allows UPMC to optimize use of space, cost savings, and energy efficiency.

The transition from traditional paper-based faxing to email faxing eliminates the need for paper. Surgery schedulers can now schedule surgeries faster through digital faxing and can also do this remotely, increasing workforce flexibility.

The process started approximately a year ago with fax machines being continuously added into the new digital faxing process. In December 2023 and January 2024, 642,573 faxes were sent digitally through the system rather than using the previous paper-based fax system.

With the 'tap and print' strategy, printers only activate and print documents upon manual confirmation. In 2023 alone, 4,474,204 abandoned pages were prevented from being printed, saving \$63,488.95 in printing costs.

With environmental benefits and improved operational efficiency, the printer refresh exemplifies a smart approach to sustainability in healthcare operations. This is a collective effort and all of us at UPMC get to be part of it. As organizations worldwide increasingly prioritize sustainability, UPMC is demonstrating how strategic initiatives can drive tangible sustainability outcomes while delivering exceptional healthcare services.