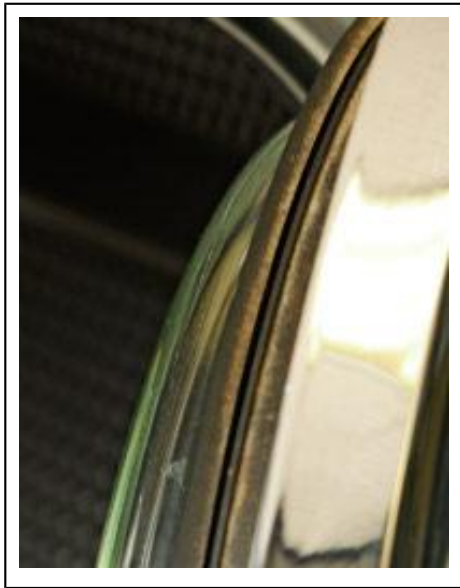


Booth Centennial Healthcare Linen Services



Best in Class in North America

When it was first created in 1968, Booth Centennial Healthcare Linen Services (BCHLS) was two separate Healthcare Central Laundries: Booth Avenue Hospital Linen Services and Centennial Hospital Linen Services. In 1995, the two laundries were joined to improve service efficiency for hospitals in the Greater Toronto Area.

A few years later (in September 2002), the company launched its Steripac™ Division, which provides sterile, reusable linen packs for its members and customers. In 2005, the company opened a 250,000-square-foot plant located in Mississauga. The facility is the largest single-site healthcare laundry in North America with a capacity of 70,000 kilograms each day—and BCHLS couldn't be more proud of its growth and 40-year history serving the healthcare system. BCHLS is currently owned by 23 Toronto area hospitals and long-term care facilities, though according to Joseph Grummel, general manager, the company “operates as a standalone company with a mandate to continually improve laundry and laundry-related services.”

The company was formed during a movement when hospitals were aiming to focus on patient care instead of services like in-house laundry. “We are part of a number of Toronto hospitals who got together to solve the in-house laundry problem,” says Maria Ash, director of corporate services. “We deal with over 110 separate facilities and customers for healthcare laundry and linen services, but it's important to note that we are not just a supplier, but rather a member of Ontario's healthcare system.” These comments illustrate the integrative nature of BCHLS to improving healthcare.

Now with a substantive history, BCHLS has become a leader in the Canadian healthcare industry, serving a unique niche. “With an experienced management team and proud employees, BCHLS gives you the advantage of dealing with people you know and can rely on,” assures the company website.

In fact, Booth's vision clearly reflects their commitment to service: Booth is committed to “provide ever-expanding value to our members and customers.”

Products and market

BCHLS offers quality products, and that quality begins with the company's purchases. “We hold our vendors accountable for the quality of their products. Each product meets specific criteria prior to injection in our system,” Grummel says. The BCHLS group offers healthcare and patient linens that ensure patient comfort and modesty. Linens are available for people young and old, and BCHLS account managers work with their customer facilities to address needs or concerns. The company also processes scrubs and is able to handle customer-owned goods; however, those are not considered part of the BCHLS pool and are handled separately.

“Our supply of surgical operating room linen, this part of our business is near and dear to our hearts,” Ash explains. “Regrettably, hospitals in Ontario have been gradually moving towards disposable paper products in the operating room. These products generate a tremendous amount of clean and soiled waste that goes directly into landfills,” she continues. Clearly, for BCHLS endeavours to be a responsible corporate citizen by serving the communities and also by being friendly to the environment. “Promoting use of reusable products is always part of what we do. Luckily, the trend seems to be going back to green.”

Ash says that BCHLS also considers innovation a huge part of the growth process for the company. The “Feels Like Home” linen line provided by BCHLS is truly, like its name suggests, “designed to make residents feel like home.”

The company is excited about the trend towards using microfibre cloths and products in cleaning, and Ash says that for BCHLS “microfibre technology is slowly replacing typical string mops and rags used in facilities.” These products complement the company's line of dust control products like wet mops, dust mops and terry rags.

An active approach

No matter what the product or service, “BCHLS' management team will take a comprehensive approach in examining your entire laundry/linen chain to identify ways of improving your service and product quality while significantly reducing your total linen system costs.”

Grummel echoes this promise. He says that the company's long- and short-term goals centre around innovation and staying integrated with GTA hospitals to offer premium lines with their cost needs in mind. “As we develop our growth market, we're very much behind with the innovation in product lines, and bringing education and information into hospitals on the transfer of viruses, but also how to reduce costs.” BCHLS has a huge educational program for new and existing customers and brings this into hospitals, once again demonstrating commitment to the market, which is pretty much dominated by BCHLS.

“Our focus has been the GTA,” Grummel says, adding “but our business building was built with the understanding that there will be potential growth in the [geographical] range of 250 to 300 kilometres.” The hospitals BCHLS intends to bring in as customers are all located in this range, many of them not realizing that linen service is much more efficient and ultimately safer. “Most of our member hospitals are opening primary care facilities and other services, so we’ll look to accommodate those expansion strategies,” Grummel explains, saying that as BCHLS’ member hospitals expand, the company will expand.

“Booth pretty much has 85 per cent of the market, although there are other companies who do the same thing. We won’t consider those a lot of competition, because those smaller ones will do healthcare but also restaurants and hotels. Our competitive advantage is that we specialize in healthcare. We are the largest healthcare laundry facility in North America. We are very state of the art, and are the safest laundries in North America,” adds Ash proudly.

Grummel and Ash say that BCHLS has positioned itself as an industry leader, as “North America’s premier innovative laundry service provider.” With their goals in check, and their services unsurpassed since 1968, there is no doubt they will lead the market for years to come.

www.bchls.ca