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Healthier Hospitals Initiative

Improving sustainability and safety in healthcare.

For many communities, the hospital is a trusted place where people go to restore their health, allowing them to return home and continue to heal. The community should also trust that we as healthcare leaders will always do the right thing when it comes to its health inside and outside our facilities.

Because our hospitals are huge consumers of energy and create a great deal of waste, we should do everything we can to ensure our impact on the environment doesn't make our own communities less healthy. When it created its vision statement, MedStar Health had the community's health inside and outside of the hospital in mind. The statement reads we will be *"the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health."* If we tell people we are the trusted leader, there is a lot of accountability that comes with this. And part of that trust is how we impact the community environmentally.

With that in mind, MedStar Health, along with Advocate Health Care, Catholic Healthcare West, Hospital Corporation of America Inc., Kaiser Permanente and Partners Healthcare in 2010 founded the Healthier Hospitals Initiative (HHI). It was created on the principle that hospitals have a responsibility to minimize the

adverse environmental impacts of their operations on patients, staff and the natural environment. Sustainability initiatives implemented throughout the healthcare sector and its supply chain will create a new framework for safer healthcare delivery in this decade.

The Need for Sustainability

Recent studies have shown a strong link between environment and health. In our society, chemicals are pervasive, and our reliance on fossil-fuel-based transportation and energy consumption contributes to chronic diseases that require lifetime treatments and further escalate healthcare costs. Managing chronic diseases in the United States consumes approximately 75 percent of all healthcare expenditures, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The healthcare sector has a large environmental footprint: Hospitals are the second most energy-intensive buildings in the United States, using 836 trillion Btus (British thermal units) of energy annually and generating significant greenhouse gas emissions, according to HHI. Health facilities are also significant water consumers and create 6,600 tons of waste per day, according to Hospitals for a

Healthier Environment, which is a national movement for environmental sustainability in healthcare that was jointly founded by the American Hospital Association, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Health Care Without Harm and the American Nurses Association. Thus, healthcare operations impact the health of the very communities they are designed to serve.

Healthier Hospitals Agenda

Healthier Hospitals Initiative, which is committed to improving sustainability and safety across the healthcare sector, has created the Healthier Hospitals Agenda to chart a path to a healthier, more sustainable and cost-effective healthcare system. A distinguishing feature of HHI is CEO-level commitment to the initiative. By leveraging the influence and visibility of these individual healthcare leaders, positive changes will be timely, meaningful and have a reach well beyond the healthcare field. If environmental sustainability doesn't come with a commitment from the highest level of the organization, it won't be a priority because you might say "I can always put it off for another day." I instill in MedStar Health's 26,000 associates that our sustainability efforts won't change the world overnight, but we can improve and make a start tomorrow. The only way to make that happen is to have a commitment from the highest level.

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The Healthier Hospitals Agenda is based on the premise that a coordinated, sectorwide approach to how we design, build and operate hospitals can improve patient outcomes and workplace safety, prevent illnesses, create extraordinary environmental benefits and save billions of dollars. The Agenda uses

evidence-based design and research data on environmental sustainability and community health to delineate a prioritized road map; it is a method for moving from good ideas implemented by individual facilities to a comprehensive system and sectorwide adoption of sustainable practices and cost reduction.

The Healthier Hospitals Agenda can help guide healthcare to a safer and more sustainable future—one that includes lower healthcare costs, new jobs and significant improvements in environmental health and disease prevention. By investing in innovation to provide solutions and in research where an approach is not yet substantiated, we hope healthcare leaders will join a growing social movement for change and contribute toward healthier hospitals and a healthier society.

The Healthier Hospitals Agenda provides recommendations in three areas: improve environmental health and patient safety, reduce healthcare's use of natural resources and generation of waste, and institutionalize sustainability and safety.

The first recommendation includes designing and operating healthier and safer facilities for patients and employees, purchasing safer and more-sustainable products and materials, supporting the use of safer chemicals and green chemistry, and promoting nutritious, sustainable food choices.

The second recommendation includes reducing the consumption of energy and supporting the transition to renewable energy resources, conserving water, minimizing waste and emissions, and decreasing or eliminating incineration. In addition, pharmaceutical waste and transportation strategies will be addressed.

The third recommendation includes making sustainability and safety a strategic imperative, promoting environmental health literacy internally and through community programs, investing in sustainability research

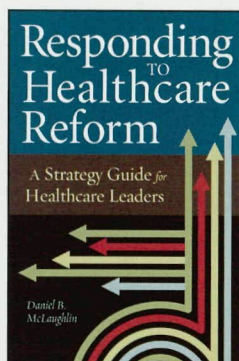
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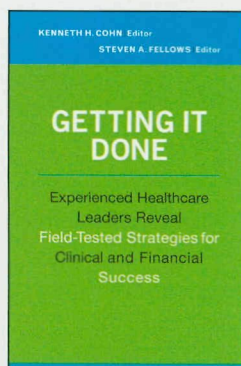
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and innovation, and engaging in public policy to promote sustainability and safety.

Be Square, Be Green

MedStar Health has undertaken many environmental sustainability initiatives at its nine hospitals and other facilities. One initiative, the Be Square, Be Green program, falls directly in line with HHI's second recommendation to minimize waste.

Be Square, Be Green is used at Franklin Square Hospital Center, a 380-bed, full-service, acute and sub-acute-care community teaching hospital in Baltimore. The initiative developed a multifaceted approach to waste separation and sustainability.

Under the program, the hospital's on-site waste incinerator was decommissioned and removed and replaced with an autoclave sterilization system for regulated medical waste (RMW). A comprehensive waste separation program was instituted to reduce the amounts of RMW that are processed at the facility.

In Be Square, Be Green's two-year existence, Franklin Square Hospital has produced 500,000 fewer pounds of red bag RMW and increased its recycling output by more than 35,000 pounds.

This waste-culture transformation would not have been possible without the hospital's engaged and

active employees, who have adopted and embraced a culture of sustainability and responsibility that has changed how waste is separated and disposed of.

MedStar Health, HHI and its partner hospitals aim to continue to build upon their cultures of sustainability and to make their organizations and the healthcare field a greener, healthier place for employees, patients and visitors. ▲

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