Safe Haven in the Storm: Healthcare’s Healing Mission in the Era of Climate Crisis

Gary Cohen | November 19, 2019

The 10 Most Obese Countries on Earth
According to the World Health Organization | % Obesity rate

Annual global deaths (millions)


Indoor air pollution
Outdoor air pollution
HIV/AIDS
Tuberculosis
Malaria

HEALTH CARE WITHOUT HARM
The severity and costs of extreme weather events are accelerating.
Our global civilization has never faced a public health threat at this level.

Greenhouse gas emissions, global

Climate change and our health If the U.S. health care sector were ranked as a nation, it would be the world’s 13th-largest emitter of greenhouse gases.
Toxic chemical exposure in health care

What does the Hippocratic Oath mean at this time of crisis?

As the only sector with healing as its mission, health care has an opportunity to use its ethical, economic, and political influence to create ecologically sustainable, equitable, and healthy communities.

HEALTH CARE WITHOUT HARM

Mandate that health departments develop climate and health resilience & adaptation plans

Fund energy efficiency & resilience at hospitals

Integrate climate change into public health practice, systems and policies

Green building design

Climate and health adaptation plans

Resilient hospital infrastructure

Public health campaigns

Clean back-up power

Incentives for energy efficiency

Clean air in emergency preparedness & response

Climate preparedness for public health

Cost savings | ROI

353 Practice Greenhealth members reported more than $826 million in savings from sustainability initiatives in 2017.

Member facilities can save more than $1 million annually through initiatives like these.
### Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Aurora Health</td>
<td>100% renewable electricity by 2030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston Medical Center</td>
<td>25% by 2020, 100% by 2050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleveland Clinic</td>
<td>Carbon neutral by 2027</td>
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<td>Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health</td>
<td>25% by 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dignity Health</td>
<td>40% by 2020</td>
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<td>Gunderson Health</td>
<td>Energy independence - 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kaiser Permanente</td>
<td>Carbon net positive by 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Sloan-Kettering</td>
<td>50% by 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montefiore Health System</td>
<td>50% by 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>NYU Langone</td>
<td>50% by 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio State Wexner Medical Center</td>
<td>Carbon neutral by 2050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners HealthCare</td>
<td>25% by 2020, 100% by 2050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providence Health</td>
<td>30% by 2025, 100% by 2040</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rochester Regional Health</td>
<td>100% renewable electricity by 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sutter Health</td>
<td>50% by 2025, 80% by 2030</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of California Health</td>
<td>Carbon neutral by 2025</td>
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Climate change participants are committed to reducing their aggregate greenhouse gas emissions by more than 34 MILLION METRIC TONS OF CO2e per year. This is equivalent to:

- 9 years of carbon emissions from 9 coal-fired power plants
- Installing and running 7,000 wind turbines for a year
- Emissions reduction from installing and running 7,000 wind turbines for a year
- Saving $3.2 (USD) billion in health costs related to air pollution (*)

The Health Care Climate Challenge currently has 200 PARTICIPANTS representing the interests of more than 18,000 HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CENTERS in 31 COUNTRIES.

Climate change participants also report saving $394 (USD) Million through energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.

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### Anchors in Resilient Communities (ARC)

A multi-stakeholder initiative that addresses the social determinants of health by leveraging the assets and capacities of Bay Area anchor institutions and community-based partners, with a focus on expanding community wealth and ownership, improving health outcomes, and strengthening the capacity of communities of color and low and moderate-income residents to be resilient in the face of climate and economic disruption.
Localizing the Food Economy
Procurement and Investment: A Powerful Combination

1) Aggregate demand for healthy food products
2) Increase community access to healthy foods
3) Create jobs for community residents
4) Increase markets for local producers

Production:
Farms, ranches, and fishing boats

Processing:
Processing plants, slaughterhouses, and dairies

Aggregation & Distribution:
Warehouses, trucks and other infrastructure

Retail/Institutional Markets
Food Services:
Mobile food vendors and commercial kitchens

Train and mobilize health leaders as climate messengers

US Call to Action on Climate, Health, and Equity: A Policy Action Agenda

Health Care’s Trusted Voice

September 20, 2019

Dear Teachers,

Please inform your students from regularly scheduled school activities on Sept. 20, 2019, for the Global Climate Strike. Think about this as a wake-up call for the world and the future.

As health and medical professionals, we know climate change is a global crisis that is already causing widespread harm to people’s health and well-being. An expert has stated that climate change is the largest health threat we face in our lifetime. The evidence is clear and the consequences of climate change are immense: mortality, morbidity and social determinants of health.

In fact, it’s deadly. In fact, it’s deadly. It’s time to take action. To address this crisis, we need to mitigate climate change, but we also need to adapt to its impacts. We need to continue to advocate for a healthy, just, and equitable future for all people.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
The Global Detox: Greatest health opportunity of the 21st century

Transitions us from fossil fuels to a low carbon economy
Fuels clean energy/green chemistry revolution, creates millions of jobs
Reduces health impacts from fossil fuels/toxic chemicals
Lowers healthcare costs
Helps solve the climate crisis

You are the Climate Messengers

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