

Greenhealth

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The Business Case for Greening the OR™

Healthy Food in Health Care

Practice Greenhealth
Launches New Web Site



Greenhealth

Greenhealth is published by Practice Greenhealth, the nation's leading membership and networking organization for institutions in the healthcare community that have made a commitment to sustainable, eco-friendly practices. Members include hospitals, healthcare systems, businesses, NGOs, and other stakeholders engaged in the greening of healthcare to improve the health of patients, staff and the environment.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CULTURE EATS STRATEGY FOR LUNCH

I am sure you have heard the saying “culture eats strategy for lunch” but I think there are many interpretations to what this saying means. Culture is most commonly defined as the behaviors and beliefs characteristics of a group of people. So an organization’s culture of behaviors and beliefs are what shape the decisions people make and results in organization achievements. There’s a lot of buzz about this right now in the business literature and lots of articles and blogs on the internet discussing what this means for businesses. Curt Coffman and co-author Marcus Buckingham have an interesting book, *First Break All the Rules*, on this you might want to check out. Anyway, what does this have to do with sustainability? What does this have to do with the work Practice Greenhealth is doing with our members?

The answer is rather simple. We can have all the greatest tools, resources and strategies that we provide to members, but if the culture of the organization does not embrace sustainability as part of the vision and mission of the organization – the strategies won’t be that effective. The tools and resources we provide will have some impact, but not the real impact that we, and you, our members, are looking for.

All of the latest research shows that culture is driven from the top down. For example, how employees and communities respond, depends on the “culture”-related messages leaders convey with their words and actions, impacting how strategy is implemented across an organization. So let’s think about sustainability in the words and actions of leaders in the health care sector. How can we help shift the culture so that our strategies are more effective?

Culture doesn’t change just because senior leadership says so. Changing culture is also about listening to and engaging people throughout the organization.

Four tips for getting started:

1. Look at the big picture and identify your institution’s greatest impacts

- Review your key business operations to understand the key environmental issues for your business and the opportunities and risks presented by these issues. Think broadly about what sustainability means to your facility – look beyond your four walls and up and down your full value chain.
- If possible, quantify your impacts and prioritize the areas where your impacts are the greatest. And while doing a complete life cycle assessment (LCA) is beyond the scope of many health care institutions, a back-of-the-envelope assessment can highlight the key areas to focus on.
- A key strategy for getting the most value out of green thinking is to give employees a base knowledge on environmental issues and their implications for the facility and how it impacts them and their families.

2. Involve staff on multiple levels, both at work and at home – Involve and engage with your Green Teams

- Green teams are a growing tool for more informal employee engagement to build awareness, educate employees on important issues, provide opportunities for cross-functional brainstorming and implement quick wins both at work and at home. Providing information and resources to employees for how to reduce their carbon footprint at work and at home demonstrates how important this culture shift is to the leadership of the organization.

Several hospitals within the Practice Greenhealth Environmental Leadership Circle provide great examples for employee engagement. They engage employees on multiple levels, ranging from providing them energy kits to reduce their personal carbon footprint at home, to offering incentives for biking to work, to encouraging them to innovate more and find ways to embed sustainability into product design, the supply chain and the sales process.

3. Integrate sustainability into operations and everyday decisions on products throughout their life cycle

- In addition to more informal programs, some leading hospitals are taking employee engagement to the next level by integrating sustainability into operations and everyday decisions on products throughout their life cycle, from product development to manufacturing to marketing to product use and ultimately end-of-life. Practice Greenhealth will soon be launching our Greening the Supply Chain™ Initiative which is designed to assist hospitals and businesses with additional tools and resources to facilitate this work.

4. Linking performance to sustainability metrics

- What better way to shift culture in an organization than to work with employees to link performance, work plans, job descriptions to sustainability metrics? Some Boards of Directors have started to include this metric in CEO performance reviews. This could also be disseminated across the organization.

I hope that that some of my observations and comments might lead to a spirited dialogue between me and our members. Please check out my blog on the new Practice Greenhealth website, www.practicegreenhealth.org, and let’s continue this conversation.

Anna Gilmore Hall
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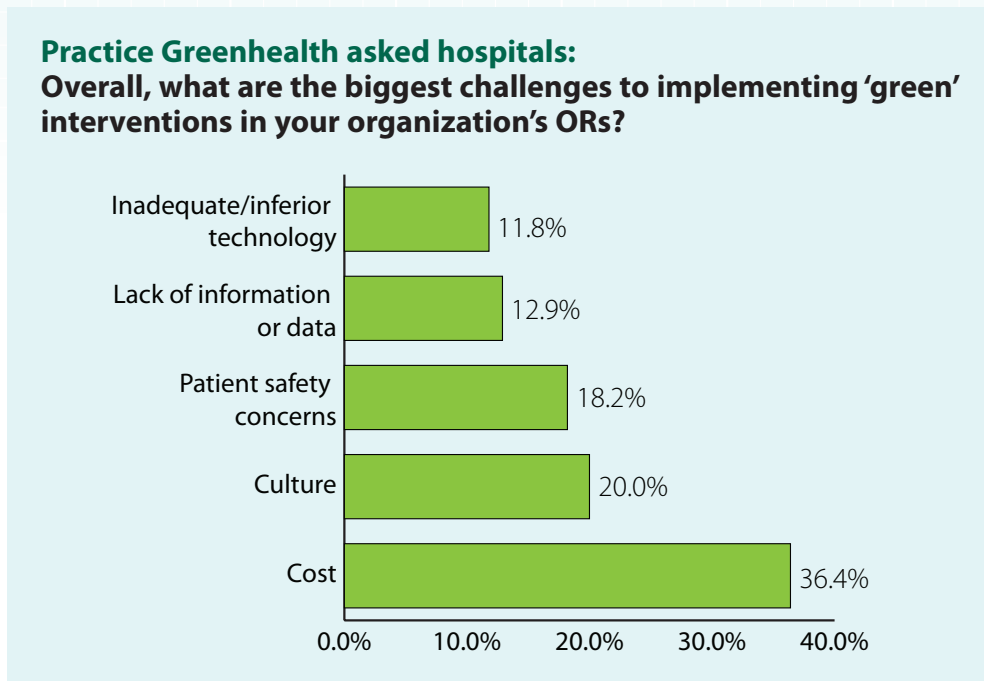
The Business Case for

WHY FOCUS ON THE OPERATING ROOM?

The operating room is critical to a hospital's success, and to its business model—bringing in between 40-60% of the organization's revenue^{1,2} and up to 60% of its operating margin in some instances.³ The OR is also a significant cost center. It is the leader in medical supply usage for the entire hospital,⁴ estimated to account for approximately 33 percent of all hospital supply costs,⁵ and has large cost requirements relative to energy use and waste management.

But hospitals across the country are demonstrating that there are ways to cut costs in the OR while reducing the environmental footprint of the department.

MetroWest Medical Center saved an estimated \$29,843 and was able to reduce its waste stream by 5,606 lbs of disposable blue wrap in 2010 as a result of transitioning 66% of its surgical instrumentation to reusable rigid sterilization containers in the OR. Bon Secours Good Samaritan Hospital, a 377-bed facility in Suffern, NY, installed a system for fluid management in the



operating room avoiding the creation of 261,999 lbs. of waste and saving \$86,460 in 2010.

Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) and its 163 member hospitals realized \$17.6 million in savings in 2010 by reprocessing medical devices and avoided placing 298 tons of waste into landfills.

Greening the OR™ is a new initiative – led by Practice Greenhealth – to coalesce and build the body of knowledge around environmental best practices in the OR that can also improve patient safety, worker health and the bottom line. A number of hospitals have made significant advancements in identifying green best practices in the OR, but until now, no one has stepped in to make those best practices accessible in one place, nor facilitate the kinds of dialogue needed to drive green innovation in the OR forward.

Practice Greenhealth asked hospitals: Overall, what are the biggest challenges to implementing 'green' interventions in your organization's ORs? The resulting data (see figure above) demonstrates the need to frame this issue for the sector and increase the published literature substantiating green best practices in the OR. While some green practices do require capital investments, many do not and can generate significant cost-savings. Tackling OR culture, while difficult, is possible when you have strong data to base decisions upon, peer hospitals who can model best practices, and leadership from within the OR. Patient safety must and will remain paramount in any discussion of alternate practices or products. This business case will lay out the rationale for the integration of green, sustainable best practices in the OR, and will demonstrate how OR departments at leading hospitals are beginning a new



Photo courtesy of SRI Surgical

dialogue with sustainability leaders, the supply chain and service providers about how to create collaborative solutions to today's sustainability challenges that can not only save critical healthcare dollars that can be reallocated into patient care, but can also improve patient and worker safety while being a better community steward.

Practice Greenhealth is using a dynamic, collaborative approach that brings together a variety of stakeholders to define a set of data-driven, science-based, best practices in the OR that reduce environmental impact, reduce cost, increase efficiency, and improve worker and patient safety or some combination of these. The Initiative is focused on engaging key stakeholder groups relevant to the OR to ensure that best practices are being discussed and vetted through the appropriate channels and driven by all available data.

The Initiative has the potential to significantly impact the supply chain – hospitals, health systems and group purchasing organizations are working with Practice Greenhealth to leverage the purchasing power of the healthcare sector to drive product and process innovation. The healthcare supply chain is also a

Deliver quality patient care utilizing practices and products that are safe for patients, workers and the environment while minimizing costs.

critical partner in the exploration of new and innovative ways to address old and unsustainable practices, products and services. Companies today are increasingly recognizing that green products make good business sense – for the long term, and are engaged and interested in strategic thinking and dialogue with healthcare customers about creating better solutions. Indeed, many of these companies have demonstrated their willingness to try innovative approaches to identifying synergies and even collaborations across company lines to meet the needs to hospital customers.

Those responsible for designing and constructing the hospitals of the future are also a key element in this conversation – as the green operating room of the future goes beyond product selection to think about integrated design teams, engineering, safer materials selection and technology integration.

Perceptions persist that green programs and products cost more despite comprehensive evidence to the contrary. Learn more about how environmental best practices in the OR are a mechanism to reduce cost while also engaging staff in a new dialogue about how to increase efficiencies at the organization.

How Can the Greening the OR™ Initiative Assist Your Facility?

The Greening the Operating Room™ Initiative is designed to let healthcare organizations play at the level they feel comfortable. Participation is free and

Greening the OR is a sector-wide initiative that will provide administrators and OR managers with the tools necessary to reduce environmental impact while driving down costs.

there are a myriad of resources — evolving every day — that can assist your facility in learning more about different best practices. The initiative is a dynamic learning community where you can hear about other hospitals' successes, strategize around barriers to implementation and engage the supplier community to create new solutions to today's issues.

The Initiative offers a number of resources and educational opportunities. Downloads and more information are available at www.greeningtheor.org

Greening the Operating Room Checklist

Want to get a sense of how far along your facility is in greening its operating rooms? This tool is designed to assist health care providers in assessing the status of environmental best practices in the OR. For organizations just beginning to identify sustainability programs in the operating room, this tool will illustrate where opportunities exist. For those further along, it can highlight products, processes and elements that may have been overlooked. Whether your organization is just beginning

its sustainability journey or is looking for ways to assess and measure progress, this tool was designed for you.

Use this checklist to do a self-audit. You may be surprised by how many best practices you already have in place or may encounter all kinds of new best practices to explore.

Sharing Calls

Want to learn more about a new program but don't see it on the webinar calendar or have a more immediate need for additional information? Hospitals formally participating in the initiative (and all Practice Greenhealth members) can request a sharing call. Staff will put out a call request inviting other hospitals to come and share their experience with that particular program. Calls are facilitated by Practice Greenhealth but are largely informal opportunities for sharing advice, resources and strategies.

Webinars

Practice Greenhealth began a Greening the OR™ webinar series in 2011. Webinars are free to all facilities formally participating in the initiative and to all Practice Greenhealth members. Each month, the series focuses on a different best practice and shares real-time

case studies from participating hospitals. Webinar calendar available at www.greeningtheor.org.

Implementation Modules

Practice Greenhealth is rolling out a series of implementation modules as part of the Greening the OR™ Initiative. These multi-step resource guides walk interested hospitals through the steps necessary to explore, build and implement different sustainable best practices in the OR. The first in this series includes modules for:

- Medical Device Reprocessing
- OR Kit Reformulation
- Moving (Back) to Reusables in the OR
- Regulated Medical Waste Segregation and Minimization in the OR
- Medical Plastic Recycling in the OR
- Rigid Sterilization Containers in the OR
- Fluid Management Systems in the OR

Case Studies

Practice Greenhealth is writing a series of case studies featuring organizations participating in the Greening the OR™ Initiative. Practice Greenhealth realizes the value of data-driven case studies that share the experiences and successes of other

healthcare organizations in implementing sustainable best practices. Learn how other hospitals have organized their implementation efforts or overcome key barriers. Practice Greenhealth also makes case studies from other sources available on its website to give participants the widest range of resources possible.

Currently the case studies include:

- Metro Health Hospital, Wyoming, MI: Medical Device Reprocessing
- University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview: OR Kit Reformulation
- The University of Maryland Medical Center, Baltimore, MD: Reusable Textiles in the OR
- Inova Fairfax Hospital: Regulated Medical Waste Reduction and Minimization)
- Spectrum Health, Grand Rapids, MI: Medical Plastics Recycling in the OR
- MetroWest Medical Center, Natick & Framingham, MA: Rigid Sterilization Containers for Surgical Instrumentation
- North Suburban Medical Center, Thornton, CO: Fluid Management in the OR
- Providence St. Peter Hospital, Olympia WA: Energy Efficiency in the OR—HVAC Setback Program

How to Participate

The Greening the OR™ Initiative is bringing together a cross-section of the healthcare sector to explore and demonstrate that ORs are identifying strategies to reduce their environmental impact while searching for ways to do it safely and cost-effectively. Learn how you can join the community.

Endorse the Initiative

Healthcare facilities and ambulatory surgery centers can participate in the initiative by filling out a simple commitment form.

There is no fee to participate. The commitment form provides a menu of options—offering facilities different ways to participate in the initiative. From sharing calls with other hospitals to the Greening the OR™ Webinar Series to opportunities to highlight your organization's successes at conferences and to the media—Practice Greenhealth is committed to building a vibrant learning community.

Learn more at: www.greeningtheor.org.

Sponsor the Initiative

This initiative is about reaching across company lines and innovating sustainable strategies to address today's OR challenges. Is your company ready to be part of the solution? Learn how you can get involved in Greening the OR™ activities by contacting:

Robert Jarboe, Executive Vice President, Business Development
bjarboe@practicegreenhealth.org • 502.727.8658

Practice Greenhealth is grateful for the support of a number of sponsors of the Greening the OR™ Initiative, including:

Founding Sponsors – Ascent (a Stryker Sustainability Solution), Cardinal Health, and HCA (Hospital Corporation of America)
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Greening the OR™ Calculators

Making the business case for a specific sustainable practice can be challenging if you don't know how to frame the data and make the cost-benefit analysis. Practice Greenhealth is working with hospitals and the healthcare supply chain to provide a series of calculators that will allow healthcare organizations to accurately estimate the kinds of financial savings and environmental benefits they can expect to realize.

Council for Environmentally Responsible Surgery (CERS)

Practice Greenhealth recognizes the critical role that physicians in the operating room can play in determining the success (or

failure) of new best practices. The Council is a new initiative aimed at engaging surgeons, other physicians who perform surgery and anesthesiologists to explore the needs of this community relative to substantiating and driving best practices. Learn more at www.greeningtheor.org.



Endnotes

- 1 McKesson Information Systems Inc. and the Healthcare Financial Management Association. Achieving Operating Room Efficiency Through Process Integration. Accessed on May 20, 2010 at: http://www.mckesson.com/static_files/McKesson.com/MPT/Documents/HFMAProcessIntegration.pdf
- 2 Randa, K., Heiser, R. and Gill, R. Strategic Investments in the Operating Room (OR): Information Technology (IT) to Generate Rapid ROI and Long-Term Competitive Advantage. HIMSS Website. Accessed on February 24, 2011. Available at: http://www.himss.org/content/files/SIS_Strategic_Investments_in_the_OR%20White%20Paper.pdf
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Farmer, A. and Merbler, K. Cost Accounting in the Operating Room. TriNet Healthcare Consultants Inc. Accessed on April 15, 2010 at: <http://www.trinethealth.com/Articles/Cost%20Accounting%20in%20the%20Operating%20Room.pdf>
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Practice Greenhealth and Citi Launch the Healthcare Renewable Energy Initiative

Practice Greenhealth, the nation's leading organization for healthcare institutions committed to implementing sustainable, eco-friendly practices, and Citi, a global leader in renewable energy, have announced a new pilot partnership effort: the Healthcare Renewable Energy Initiative.

The Healthcare Renewable Energy Initiative (HREI) is an offering of transparent and flexible financing options for health systems and hospitals seeking to reduce energy consumption and become more energy efficient. The HREI involves two phases:

1. An independent engineering firm will conduct a thorough analysis of the potential feasibility of renewable energy alternatives for the health system, based on an analysis of the physical plant and existing energy use patterns.
2. If the engineering assessment indicates potential feasibility, Citi will work with the hospital to assess, finance and implement the most cost-effective structure that enables the hospital to purchase green energy. In most cases, the most cost-effective structure to achieve these goals is a Power Purchase Agreement.


This initiative will be piloted in New Jersey and Massachusetts, where current state subsidies enable hospitals to utilize solar power to save money, hedge energy costs, and reduce their carbon footprint. Scalability to other states will continue to be assessed.

"The HREI brings together two established strengths of Citi—our not-for-profit healthcare financing business and our strong belief in sustainable business practices," said Andrew Pines, managing director, Healthcare Finance Group at Citi. "As a global corporate citizen, Citi views sustainability issues from both a risk and an opportunity perspective. We always look for opportunities to make sustainable investments and to develop products and services with a positive environmental and social impact."

"We know the healthcare sector is very interested in renewable energy, decreasing its environmental footprint, and re-modeling sustainability in their communities," said Anna Gilmore Hall, Executive Director of Practice Greenhealth. "This growing commitment will be enhanced by this partnership, which is yet another way Practice Greenhealth is helping our members meet their sustainability goals."



Citi and Practice Greenhealth believe that working to promote environmental and social sustainability is good business practice. The HREI is a superior alternative for hospitals because it provides reliable execution, low-cost financing, transparency and flexibility. The program combines tax credits, tax equity, and debt to result in the lowest overall cost of power. Healthcare systems may realize cost savings if the price of renewable energy is lower than the cost of electricity purchased off the grid.

More information available on-line at: www.practicegreenhealth.org/initiatives 

To reduce waste in your OR, something has to go...
we make sure that something doesn't go to the landfill.



GreenGown™

It's who we are, It's who we've always beenSM

"A major source of the waste produced in the OR is disposable surgical supplies."¹ These supplies include surgical gowns, drapes, towels, back table and Mayo stand covers, and basin sets. Unfortunately, "the majority of these supplies become regulated medical waste." Up to 70% of the medical waste created in your OR can be eliminated by utilizing reusable surgical products. Let us tell you more, visit our booth at CleanMed 2011.

¹ "Reducing Medical Waste" - *AORN Journal* Volume 91, Issue 6, Pages 711-721, June 2010 Julie Conrardy, RN, MSN, CNOR, Mary Hillanbrand, RN, MSN, CNOR, Sandra Myers, RN, MSN, CNOR, George F. Nussbaum, RN, EdM, PhD, CNOR

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