



Sustainability in the Health Care Industry

Sustainability focuses on conserving natural resources and minimizing the impact of human activities on the environment while improving long-term financial resilience. Accordingly, sustainability emphasizes opportunities related to energy (electricity, natural gas, gasoline, diesel), materials (purchasing, recycling), and water, but also presents a strategic opportunity for nearly every organization, especially in the health care industry.

The principles of sustainability directly align with the goals and mission of health care: to provide an environment dedicated to health and healing. Hospitals have an opportunity to look at their place in the ecology of the local community and take steps to act as a healing force. Research shows consistent, positive correlations between sustainability actions in a health care facility and patient outcomes. There are also opportunities to increase employee retention and

satisfaction through activities that empower and engage employees to support the organization’s sustainability efforts.

The financial opportunities in health care are also large. In 2012, the Commonwealth Fund reported that nationwide, hospitals could save \$5.4 billion in the next five years and \$15 billion in the next ten years by implementing just a few sustainability actions.

As a member of the industry’s leading organization focused on sustainability in health care, and with in-depth experience working with local health care organizations, Verdis Group is uniquely situated to help your organization identify and apply customized sustainability solutions that will drive you toward better patient and staff wellness, a healthier healing environment, and an improved bottom line.

“ As sustainability in the health care community continues to evolve and expectations rise, health care organizations are becoming more strategic in the implementation of environmentally friendly practices. It is no longer enough to highlight a specific singular effort. Today it is vital to demonstrate sustainability throughout everyday operations.

Practice Greenhealth

Sustainability Benchmark Report, 2012

Outcomes

Integrating sustainable solutions will result in:

- Healthier patients and more engaged employees
- Improved community relations and positive publicity
- A more resilient community and planet
- Increased financial sustainability
- Reduced operating and maintenance costs

At The Nebraska Medical Center:

- \$150,000 – 200,000 in cost savings
- Diverted 1.8 million pounds of recycling/year
- 16,000 pounds of blue wrap recycled in 18 months
- Nearly 1 out of 3 employees have taken the Pledge to Conserve Energy and Resources

“ Working with the Verdis team has been a valuable experience for us. Not only have they been a tremendous help in organizing our sustainability initiative, they have helped us lead a change in culture which has been truly amazing. They have been, and continue to be, an outstanding partner.

Donald E. Futrell, CHFM

Former Executive Director, Facilities Management and Planning
The Nebraska Medical Center





Many solutions that are good for individual health are also good for the planet's health. We recognize that healthy communities and a healthy environment are critical to the health and wellness of every person. We aspire to provide health care services in a manner that protects and enhances the environment and the health of communities now and for future generations.

Kaiser Permanente

Environmental Stewardship Statement

Our Approach

data collection + benchmarking

We firmly believe you cannot manage what you do not measure. Therefore, we begin our work by collecting data to establish a benchmark of current operations. This starting point allows us to establish specific, measurable, and achievable goals for your organization. Verdis is experienced using a variety of benchmarking tools such as the Green Guide for Health Care, EPA's Energy Star, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, and the Campus Carbon Calculator.

static + dynamic

We are adept at identifying static opportunities to increase sustainability such as a lighting retrofit. But our ability to also identify dynamic opportunities to engage and empower people allow our sustainable solutions to have the largest impact. For example, Verdis successfully coordinated with UNMC facilities staff to engage employees across campus in an energy curtailment effort that reduced peak electricity demand by nearly 20 percent during the record heat of 2012, saving tens of thousands of dollars for UNMC.

verdis group tools

We offer a few exceptional and proprietary tools that can play key roles in the process. The first is a web-based Dashboard that allows anyone to quickly see your progress. It's an easy-to-understand measurement mechanism tailored to your goals. The second is a web- and email-based Pledge Tool that incorporates research-based engagement techniques that are a key ingredient to the culture change of your organization.

energy + sustainability master plan

Developing a custom sustainability plan for your organization will ensure that your sustainability initiatives align with your organizational mission and strategy. It must be reasonable and attainable yet aggressive and innovative. When it's all said and done, you will have a clear and concise vision for where you're going, know how to get there, an ability to track your progress so you know when you get there, and several tools to engage the organization including employees, staff, administration, patients, and visitors.

The main outcome is a Master Plan that provides a strategic roadmap to make your organization more profitable, a more desirable place to work, and a bit kinder to the planet.

the
triple
bottom
line



We wanted to take an organized, well-thought-out approach to improving sustainability, and Verdis Group fit the bill perfectly. They brought multiple disciplines together to create our plan, implement action steps, and change the way our entire organization thinks on an individual level about the wise use of precious resources.

Dennis Pate

Executive Director and CEO

Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium

