Health Care Without Harm

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Healthy Food in Health Care Program

National Initiative of Health Care Without Harm that leverages the massive purchasing power and health authority of the healthcare sector to support healthy, sustainable food systems.

• Definition of healthy food:
  • Nutritious, whole foods and beverages
  • Environmentally sound
  • Economically viable
  • Socially responsible

As places of healing, health care facilities have a natural incentive to provide food that’s healthy for people and the environment in which we live.

www.healthyfoodinhealthcare.org
Not All Apples Are CreatedEqual
Environmental Nutrition Redefines What Constitutes Healthy Food

TRADITIONAL NUTRITION
Focuses on biochemical components of food and individual food consumption

Asks:
- How much Vitamin C?
- How many calories?
- How much fiber?

ENVIRONMENTAL NUTRITION
Accounts for social, political, economic, and environmental factors related to the food system as a whole

Also asks:
- Was it grown with harmful pesticides or synthetic fertilizers?
- What labor standards were used?
- Were toxic chemicals used in packaging?
Externalities of the Industrialized Food System
Health and Environmental Costs

- Chronic diseases (cancer, diabetes, obesity)
- Antibiotic resistance & food-borne pathogens
- Pesticide exposure (cancer, reproductive, neuro-developmental, and endocrine impacts)
- Asthma and respiratory illness
- Food injustice (hunger, food deserts)
- Local economic decline
- Labor issues
- Water and air quality
- Energy use and GHG emissions
- Loss of crop and biological diversity
- Soil erosion

Institutes of Medicine, 2012
Exploring the Health and Environmental Costs of Food
HEALTH CARE FOOD PURCHASING POWER

Hospitals and health care systems can use their substantial buying power to help build a healthier food system.

MAKING THE HEALTHY CHOICE THE EASY CHOICE

Purchasing fresh food from local producers

Farm Fresh Healthcare Project: ten family farmers have sold nearly 84,000 pounds of local and organic produce to six San Francisco Bay Area hospitals.

HEALTH IMPACTS

- environmental quality
- local/rural economy
- social & economic health outcomes

Purchasing sustainably-grown produce

Kaiser Permanente: 590 tons of the fruits and vegetables served on patient menus are sustainably produced and/or locally grown — that’s nearly 50% of fresh produce purchased annually.

HEALTH IMPACTS

- farm workers’ exposure to harmful pesticides
- water pollution & soil contamination

Purchasing meat and poultry raised without antibiotics

Overlake Hospital, WA & Fletcher Allen Health Care, VT: over 65% of the beef, poultry and pork products served are produced without the routine use of antibiotics.

HEALTH IMPACTS

- efficacy of antibiotics in human medicine
- healthier, more sustainable meat production practices

Purchasing hormone-free dairy

Emory Healthcare, GA: all milk and yogurt sold in cafeterias is free of recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone.

HEALTH IMPACTS

- udder infections & other health issues in cows
- antibiotics use in dairy cows to combat health problems

https://noharm-uscanada.org/kp.org/green
@HCWithoutHarm @KPShare
Model Hospital: Univ. of Vermont Medical Center
MAKING THE HEALTHY CHOICE THE EASY CHOICE

Serving healthy inpatient meals that meet nutritional standards

*Health Care Without Harm:* over 1,000 hospitals are committed to purchasing and serving more fresh, healthy food.

Implementing Balanced Menus

*Less Meat, Better Meat:* hundreds of hospitals are reducing the amount of meat they purchase and serve and buying more sustainably produced meat.

Offering vending machine healthy picks

*Kaiser Permanente:* more than 1,000 vending machines restocked so 75% of food and beverages meet Healthy Pick’s criteria for being lower in fat, calories, sodium, and sugar.

Serving healthier cafeteria and cafe options

*Partnership for a Healthier America’s Hospital Healthier Food Initiative:* more than 700 hospitals committed to healthy food practices that improve the nutrition of patient meals and cafeteria options.

Reducing or eliminating sugar-sweetened beverages

*Vanguard Health’s* four, Chicago-area hospitals phased out all sugar-sweetened beverages from their facilities, in the implementation of Cook County’s “Rethink Your Drink” program.

HEALTHIER HOSPITAL FOOD SERVICE

Every day, health care food service staff have an opportunity to encourage healthy habits and sustainable food choices.

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HOSPITALS AS ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS
IMPROVING COMMUNITY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS

- by modeling good nutrition and improving environmental health inside and outside their facilities
- by collaborating with community-based programs to support a healthy, regional food system and increased access to healthy food

MAKING THE HEALTHY CHOICE THE EASY CHOICE

Hosting hospital-based farmers markets
Kaiser Permanente: founded one of the first hospital-based farmers market in 2003 and now hosts more than 50 farmers markets.

Reducing waste & donating unused food to the hungry
University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics: reduced food waste by 40% in 2013 by eliminating less-popular menu items and cutting surplus servings. The hospital donated more food to organizations that feed the hungry and composted 77 tons of food.

Educating patients about healthy grocery shopping and meal preparation
Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia: teamed up with the foodservices company Aramark to launch Home Plate, an innovative research study designed to combat childhood obesity, which teaches low-income parents the skills to cook healthy meals at home.

Supporting health professionals to be effective public policy advocates
Health Care Without Harm’s Food Matters program: engages over 4,000 doctors, nurses, and dietitians across the country to become leaders and advocates for a more sustainable food system.

Writing healthy food “prescriptions”
Fresh Prescription, City of Detroit & the Ecology Center: An expanding network of health care sites across the city are connecting chronic disease patients, at risk pediatric patients and food insecure families with local healthy food resources by writing prescriptions for fresh, local fruits and vegetables.

https://noharm-uscanada.org/kp.org/green  @HCWithoutHarm @KPSHare
Model Hospital: St. Joe’s, Michigan
Health Care Food Revolution

Hospitals across the nation are revolutionizing their menus serving more sustainable, more local, and healthier options.

HFHC Engaged Hospitals
25 hospitals

- **northwest**: Sustainable meat, local food, onsite farmers markets and CSAs
- **california**: Supporting family owned farms, less meat/better meat, hospital leadership
- **southwest**: Hospital gardens, local food
- **midwest**: Hospital owned and operated farms, local food, sustainable meat
- **mid-Atlantic/southeast**: Less meat/better meat, onsite farmers markets
- **northeast**: Local food, healthy beverages, sustainable seafood

- 83 hospitals
- 126 hospitals
- 154 hospitals
- 28 hospitals
- 133 hospitals
- 103 hospitals
Community Health, Wealth, Connection and Capacity: Localizing the Food Economy

Figure 2. Circle of food system connections.
Adapted from the C. S. Mott Group at Michigan State University.