



**EMBARGOED**  
May 8, 2017, 10AM ET

**Contact:**  
Rose King, [rose@brinkcomm.com](mailto:rose@brinkcomm.com), 503 863 1363

## **Boston Hospitals Lead the Nation in Greenhouse Gas Reductions**

*33 Percent Reduction by 2020 Protects Health and Exceeds City, State Climate Goals*

(Boston, MA) – Boston-area hospitals advanced public health by cutting their energy greenhouse gas emissions by 29 percent between 2011 and 2015, and are on track to reduce 33 percent by 2020, [according to a new report released today by Health Care Without Harm](#). The report includes data from hospitals serving on the Boston Green Ribbon Commission’s Health Care Working Group. Their trajectory delivers a 47 percent reduction in greenhouse gases compared to “business as usual” by 2020.

“Boston hospitals are leading other sectors in the City, and pace-setting the entire health care industry, demonstrating they can provide exceptional patient care, protect public health and dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” said Gary Cohen, president and founder of Health Care Without Harm. “These are mission-driven, financially smart strategic commitments to deep energy efficiency and renewable energy,” said Paul Lipke, the organization’s Senior Advisor for Energy & Buildings, who managed the analysis.

With these reductions, Boston health care facilities are far exceeding mandated greenhouse gas reduction goals set by the City and Massachusetts, which aim for 25 percent by 2020, working towards 100 percent by 2050. The 47 percent reduction is equivalent to eliminating the annual greenhouse gas emissions of 42,220 passenger vehicles.

Twenty percent of the hospital sector greenhouse gas emission reductions come from significant investments in renewable energy. Partners HealthCare is purchasing low-impact hydropower, and will buy most of its electricity from a new wind turbine farm in New Hampshire, as it works to make its huge health care system net carbon positive for all energy by 2025. Boston Medical Center is slashing energy use and neutralizing its electricity emissions through a North Carolina solar energy farm, and expects all its energy to be climate neutral by 2018.

“At Boston Medical Center, we have a long history of caring for the community. It’s a natural extension of our work to seek big energy and greenhouse gas reductions. This lower energy use enabled us to add resilient power systems to ensure we can provide care during extreme weather events,” said Bob Biggio, Senior Vice President of Facilities & Support Services at Boston Medical Center. “We’re on track to reduce emissions by at least 50 percent by 2018, saving over \$8 million every year. These are resources that we invest directly back into high quality patient care and more green energy initiatives.”

The greenhouse gas reductions come while the hospitals are providing more patient care, doing more energy-intensive medical research, expanding facilities, and coping with hotter summers, all of which should have pushed energy use and emissions upward, according to Health Care Without Harm’s report, which analyzed more than 24,000 records covering 22 million square feet of hospitals.

“Climate change is one of the single largest threats to public health. That’s why Partners is committed to addressing both the causes and the impacts,” said John Messervy, Corporate Director of Design and Construction at Partners HealthCare Inc. “We have invested millions system-wide on energy – achieving a 35 percent reduction at Massachusetts General Hospital for example – all to save money and improve the health of the patients and communities we serve. Our plan to be net carbon positive by 2025 demonstrates leadership in the sector, the City and beyond.”

The report identifies areas where Boston hospitals made notable progress between 2011-2015 compared to business as usual in energy efficiency, conservation and greenhouse gas reductions, including:

- A reduction in total energy use of 9.4 percent
- A reduction in electricity use of 13.1 percent
- A reduction in natural gas of 26.1 percent
- Generated enough cost savings to cover health care for 1,357 Massachusetts Medicare enrollees

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a \$15 million cost savings is the equivalent of the hospitals finding \$300 million in new revenue every year.

“To achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, we need radical changes in how we power, heat and cool our buildings,” said John Cleveland, the Boston Green Ribbon Commission's Executive Director. “The remarkable achievements of Boston hospitals show this transformation is doable even now! Boston health care is setting the pace for our other sectors, other cities, and indeed the entire country. We hope others rise to this friendly challenge.”

The report can be found at: <https://noharm.org/boston>

### **About Health Care Without Harm**

Health Care Without Harm seeks to transform the health sector worldwide, without compromising patient safety or care, so that it becomes ecologically sustainable and a leading advocate for environmental health and justice. Health Care Without Harm’s initiatives in Boston include toxic reductions, green building, energy efficiency, and climate change.

### **About the Boston Green Ribbon Commission**

The Boston Green Ribbon Commission is a group of business, institutional and civic leaders in Boston supporting the implementation of the city’s Climate Action Plan. The plan includes strong recommendations on how Bostonians can increase efficiency, reduce emissions and prepare for extreme weather and higher sea levels. Many cities have produced similar plans, but few have enlisted the leadership of their local business community as effectively as Boston to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions 25 percent by 2020 and 100 percent by 2050.

Health Care Without Harm’s Boston Green Ribbon Commission work is supported by the Barr Foundation.

###