Policy recommendations

Transition to 100% clean, renewable energy
Invest in health care climate resilience

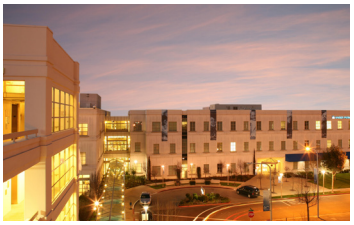
HEALTH CARE CLIMATE COUNCIL

Transition to 100% clean, renewable energy

The burning of fossil fuels is the primary source of toxic air pollution in the United States, affecting millions of Americans every year. It is also the primary driver of climate change. Along with 125 other health and medical organizations, the Health Care Climate Council has endorsed the **U.S. Call to Action on Climate, Health, and Equity**.[1] Among recommendations for responding to the climate-health emergency, the 10-point action agenda recommends policymakers **"transition rapidly away from the use of coal, oil, and natural gas to clean, safe, and renewable energy and energy efficiency."**

The Health Care Climate Council supports 100% clean, renewable energy

- Hospitals urge transitioning to 100% clean, renewable energy by 2050 to protect the health of our patients and the communities we serve while building hospital climate resilience.
- Distributed clean, renewable energy combined with energy storage can help hospitals remain operational during extreme weather events or periods of peak demand.
- Clean, renewable energy provides price predictability as well as competitive or cheaper prices than fossil fuels.
- Energy efficiency is an essential first step to accelerating the transition to clean energy and reducing health care costs. Every $1 a nonprofit health care organization saves on energy is equivalent to generating $20 in new revenue for hospitals.[2]



Kaiser Permanente Richmond Medical Center is the first hospital in California to implement a renewable energy-fueled microgrid, enabling the hospital to continue to operate critical systems even when the grid goes down, a capability more hospitals will need in the face of increasing climate-related threats..

Policy recommendations

To accelerate the transition to 100% clean, renewable energy by 2050, the Health Care Climate Council recommends:

- Incentives to encourage energy efficiency upgrades at existing health care facilities and for new hospitals to be built for maximum efficiency.
- Include hospital investments in clean, renewable energy as an IRS-reportable "community benefit."
- Investments in research and development for alternatives to natural gas for thermal energy.
- Support the development and deployment of energy storage technologies.

[1] For the complete set of recommendations visit climatehealthaction.org

[2] https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2018s-billion-dollar-disasters-context

Invest in health care climate resilience

The U.S. health care sector serves on the frontlines of climate change, bearing the costs of increasing illnesses, injuries, and disease and more frequent extreme weather events such as wildfires, floods, and storms. Among key policy recommendations for responding to the climate-health emergency, the **U.S. Call to Action on Climate, Health, and Equity** recommends policymakers **"allocate resources to enable the health sector to effectively protect health in the face of climate change."**

The Health Care Climate Council supports investments in climate resilience

- Over the past three years, the annual average of billion-dollar disasters has been more than double the long-term average.[3]
- During extreme events, the health and safety of patients and the entire community depends upon their local hospitals remaining operational, providing continuous high-quality care, and responding to the increased medical needs.
- Events over the past decade – such as Hurricane Katrina, Superstorm Sandy, and the Northern California Camp Fire – have demonstrated that many U.S. hospitals and communities are not prepared for the new weather extremes.
- FEMA estimates that extreme weather events can cost a hospital up to $2 billion in infrastructure damages.
- Investments in hospital and community preparedness and resilience can save lives and avoid billions of dollars in health care costs.

Cleveland Clinic's hospital in Weston, Fla., was designed to be resilient to stronger tropical storms due to climate change. Bullet resistant glass, able to withstand winds of 175 miles per hour, was used throughout the building facade.

Policy recommendations

To support resilient hospital infrastructure that is prepared for climate change, the Health Care Climate Council recommends:

- Investments in infrastructure that support emissions reductions while also improving hospital and community resilience, such as distributed renewable energy, microgrids, battery storage, and improvements in energy efficiency.
- Require hospital vulnerability assessments, emergency preparedness plans, and building codes be based on readily available region-specific climate projections.
- Investments in sustainable food, water, energy, and transportation systems to foster climate-resilient communities.

[3] https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2018s-billion-dollar-disasters-context

The **Health Care Climate Council** is a leadership body of 19 U.S. health systems committed to protecting their patients and employees from the health impacts of climate change and becoming anchors for resilient communities.

Health Care Without Harm seeks to transform health care worldwide so the sector reduces its environmental footprint and becomes a leader in the global movement for environmental health and justice.

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Health Care Without Harm