











Facility Partners: Develop Your Program

This document is on line at <http://www.h2e-online.org/partners/10step-hcfp.htm>

10 Steps to a Successful H2E Partner Program

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STEP 1: FORM A TEAM

The most successful programs establish a team approach to overall environmental improvement. From senior leadership to front-line staff, all departments and employees have an important voice in researching, piloting, implementing, educating, monitoring, maintaining and reporting on sustainable programs. The size of the hospital or system may impact committee structure, but no facility is too small or too large to need an environmental team.

Your team could be part of an existing committee such as an Environment of Care or Safety Committee, or it can be a newly established "Green Team." Membership should include administration, support services, facilities management, patient care services, clinical leadership, environmental health and safety, environmental services, infection control, laboratories, engineering, public affairs, purchasing and employee health, just to name a few.

While a team approach is essential, your program will need one person to take a leadership role, chairing the committee and taking charge of promoting and supporting your environmental initiatives. This person (most likely you!) could be in EH&S, safety, administration, purchasing or facilities - more important than the department is the



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individual's commitment and the direct line of communication to at least one senior level staff person, to ensure support and administrative commitment.

In addition to the Green Team or work done in an existing committee, the value of a senior level Environmental Leadership Council cannot be undervalued. This committee should include senior management, and can meet occasionally to review or approve specific actions taken by the environmental team.

STEP 2: SUBSCRIBE TO H2E

An H2E subscription provides the support and resources you need to achieve your goals. Benefits include:

Teleconferences. H2E hosts twenty-four, 60-90 minute teleconferences each year on topics covering a full range of environmental initiatives, including pharmaceutical management, energy and water efficiency, hazardous waste compliance, and green building design and construction. H2E's teleconferences bring experts and success stories directly to the workplace!

Technical Assistance. Take advantage of H2E's Technical Assistance hotline and a comprehensive introductory call to review and set goals or to help you get started with H2E's tools and resources. If we don't know the answer, we can direct you to someone who does.

For Health Care Facilities: A Waste Priority Planner. This tool walks you through the process of identifying and analyzing your waste stream volumes and costs, and enables you to set targeted objectives for reduction and cost savings. Basic benchmarks for different waste streams are highlighted based on the nation's best performing hospitals.

H2E Awards and Recognition. A subscription enables your organization to apply for H2E's Awards and Recognition program. Highlighting environmental achievements internally is an integral component of long-term sustainability, and winning a national award builds commitment and pride among staff and management. Other steps in this document will discuss the importance of getting positive media to highlight your programs.

Finally, H2E subscriptions help underwrite H2E's continuing development of new materials and services for you and other Partners to use as part of your continuous quality improvement efforts in the environmental arena.

STEP 3: ASSESS YOUR FACILITY

You can't manage what you don't know you have. To get started, H2E recommends identifying current policies and practices. We often hear from facilities that are just getting started that they don't really know how much waste they generate, how much they are



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spending on waste management, who is responsible for which environmental program, or what the biggest opportunities are for either a quick fix or for significant environmental improvement. The [H2E Self-Assessment Guide](#) is a great tool to help you identify both short and long-term goals.

Gather information for the assessment from a variety of sources including purchasing, environmental services, engineering, safety, infection control, pharmacy and laboratories. Review environment of care policies, worker safety policies, and other in-house documents to identify areas requiring focus and expansion, and to find the justification for expanding environmental work to meet existing goals. Some facilities work with consultants or vendors to assist in this process – as your GPO and current vendors if they have (or provide) these services on contract or visit the [H2E Product and Service Directory](#) for a list of service providers.

STEP 4: ESTABLISH BASELINE DATA

You've now assessed your programs and policies and have a better understanding of your operations. Collecting waste data provides the necessary and critical data to prioritize your actions.

How many pounds of trash, regulated medical waste (RMW), recyclables, hazardous materials, residual chemotherapy, universal wastes and other materials are going out your back door? In order to track progress and cost savings, or apply for any of the H2E Awards, you will need to gather this baseline data to find out what materials are going out your back door and how much money is going with them! This process is illuminating and helps focus your initiatives. For example, RMW is five to ten times more expensive than trash. If you have opportunities to reduce your RMW, your facility will save money.

As part of the subscription package, H2E Partners will receive a Waste Priority Planner, which will assist with the data collection process and offer benchmarks for different waste streams. The process for gathering baseline data is also reviewed in the Introduction to H2E and Data Collection Teleconference. ([link to teleconference calendar](#))

STEP 5: SET WASTE, MERCURY AND TOXICITY REDUCTION GOALS

Set specific annual goals to improve, track and report on your environmental improvements. You can incorporate these goals directly into existing projects. For example your goals for H2E and JCAHO Performance Improvement Indicators can be the same, or you can use H2E goals to meet established worker safety goals by replacing toxic materials with safer alternatives.

The best goals are specific, so you can measure your success in meeting them. For example instead of "Increase paper recycling", set a goal of "Increase paper recycling by 20% (by



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weight) by end of 2006.” Short term goals can help focus your action plans while long term goals create a vision for changing the culture of an institution. It takes commitment and time.

Check out H2E's Sample Goals for H2E Partners

Identify a reasonable number of goals that you can actually accomplish. For new programs, identify those goals that have the potential to reduce costs and thereby increase management buy-in to the program. Red bag reduction is a prime example since it can save literally hundreds of thousands of dollars. Always take the time to measure and report on your successes in reaching your targets

Consider developing a formal institutional mission statement or policy that describes your general commitment to environmental improvement or specifically to the H2E program--it can be used to help establish a course of action. It should be approved by senior leadership and shared far and wide within your facility. [See sample environmental mission statements/policies.](#)

STEP 6: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

After you have established a committee, gathered and presented baseline data, set goals and documented all these steps through committee minutes, it is time to move on to planning specific activities to support your goals. Key elements to the success of environmental initiatives are education, cost-effectiveness and simplicity.

Action plans include development and implementation of policy, planning and comprehensive education programs, purchase of necessary supplies or equipment, and continuous tracking of performance indicators. All of the action plans should be carefully related to your goals.

H2E has lots of resources to help you get the work done. H2E's [Ten Step Guides](#) and several other key resources are summarized in the [Partner Toolbox \(link here\)](#). Other resources are available by checking out horizontal navigation bar on the front page of the [H2E website](#).

Sharing information is the cornerstone of H2E's programs—so no one has to reinvent the wheel. The H2E Listserv, Stat Green Newsletter and H2E teleconferences provide forums to share ideas, brainstorm, learn from experts and be part of a community of individuals working together to collectively transform the health care system.

STEP 7: KICK-OFF THE PROGRAM

Consider kicking-off your program and the presentation of your Environmental Mission Statement developed in Step 5 with an “event.” Start with a memo of support to all staff from



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the senior team leadership including the CEO, Medical Affairs, Patient Care Services and other senior staff. [Sample Kick off Memo](#) Clearly state the mission of the program, how you are partnering with H2E and the goals that have been set for the program's first year.

The Public Affairs office can help promote your program to internal publications (newsletter and website) and external local media. Provide presentations to department directors and senior leadership, at grand rounds, to nursing leadership and the Board of Directors. You may also wish to hold a ceremony including leadership and support staff (since they are the ones that will be instrumental in implementing many of these programs). The more you can do to promote the program, the more awareness and support will build among the constituencies whom you will need to meet your goals!

Check out H2E's [Sample Press Release](#).

STEP 8: EDUCATE EMPLOYEES

Education and training programs are THE KEY to continued success!!!

Kick-off education should be for all staff, all shifts, all departments - recognizing that even those not directly involved should know about the initiative. Reinforce awareness with posters, community events, staff newsletters, even contests!

Required education begins with New Employee Orientation and continues with annual and regular educational opportunities. Every employee must be included – from volunteers, to house staff to traveling nurses. In fact, consider including specific language in job descriptions requiring every employee to be in compliance with your institution's environmental policies, particularly where compliance and safety issues are at stake.

Ongoing education includes regular presentations to department directors, departmental staff meetings, and required annual training for compliance and beyond programs. Don't forget about newsletters, posters, posted memos and emails to all staff. Print out H2E's monthly Stat Green Newsletter and post throughout the organization. Urge staffers to participate in H2E's monthly teleconference series – you can even host a brown bag lunch in a conference room and discuss the presentations after they finish.

Create programs that are easy for staff to participate and make signage and instructions are clear! Minimize the number of containers, but color-code them and provide adequate signage.

When making changes and reporting on progress, take every opportunity to inform and educate employees and administrators about all aspects of the program.

STEP 9: TRACK, MEASURE, AND RECORD PROGRESS



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As with any other program, select key indicators to track progress, and make modifications as necessary. Monitor changes regularly and reeducate along the way when your data reveals departments or other areas are lagging. As with Joint Commission, provide regular updates at committee meetings, track and report your indicators regularly, and document in meeting minutes.

STEP 10: CELEBRATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Promote your progress internally -- congratulate employees and build enthusiasm for continued success in your newsletters, website, and in press releases. Hold an internal awards event where you give “prizes” for waste reduction achievements and reward the clever innovations staff have developed to help meet your goals. Share results externally in an annual report or in a local paper so the community can be proud and supportive of your facility.

If you have an H2E Subscription, your facility can also receive national recognition from H2E for your accomplishments, through the [H2E Recognition and Awards program](#). Becoming an award recipient can help your facility maintain momentum, enhance program awareness, get press coverage, and sustain upper management support.

We look forward to working with you. Collectively, we can change the way we provide care, raise awareness surrounding health care environmental issues, improve efficiency, reduce cost, improve safety and get recognition for this huge feat! And we can do it, one program at a time, one department at a time, one step at a time.