



*Improving patient, workplace,  
and environmental health and  
safety in healthcare*

## Global Health and Safety Initiative

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### Contents

- ▶ Celebrating GHSI's First Anniversary
- ▶ Thanks #1: Our Co-Founding Health Systems
- ▶ Thanks #2: Our Foundation Supporters
- ▶ Thanks #3: Our Co-Founding NGO Partners
- ▶ Thanks #4: Our GHSI Workgroups
- ▶ Upcoming Events
- ▶ What's New?
- ▶ Have Questions?

### Celebrating GHSI's First Anniversary

The Global Health and Safety Initiative (GHSI) was launched at a meeting in Oakland one year ago. Since then, many of you receiving this e-newsletter have been working with us to establish an agenda for safer, healthier and more environmentally-sustainable health care facilities.

With your help, GHSI is building a learning community to leverage the expertise of its partners to support evidence-based improvements at the intersection of patient safety, worker safety and environmental sustainability. Our partnerships are expansive, offering myriad resources and expertise within health systems, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), group purchasing organizations, government agencies, universities, and architectural and engineering firms.

Thanks to all of you who have so generously committed your time, energy and money to make GHSI a reality. As we enter our second year, the need for a safer, healthier and more environmentally-sustainable approach to providing healthcare services keeps growing, and we are moving forward to meet that challenge.

If you are interested in joining GHSI, please give us a call at 510-418-6197, email us at [info AT globalhealthsafety.org](mailto:info@globalhealthsafety.org) or visit our [website](http://www.globalhealthsafety.org) for more information.

### Thanks #1: Our Co-Founding Health Systems

The following health systems have understood the need for a strong change agenda within the healthcare sector, and have provided the vision, energy and financial resources that will support the expansion of GHSI over the next three years:

- ▶ [Ascension Health](#)
- ▶ [Catholic Healthcare West](#)
- ▶ [Hospital Sisters Health System](#)
- ▶ [Kaiser Permanente](#)
- ▶ [MedStar Health](#)
- ▶ [Partners HealthCare](#)
- ▶ [St. Joseph Health System of Orange](#)

## Thanks #2: Our Foundation Supporters

We are very grateful to the following foundations, which are providing their generous support - over \$1 million dollars to date - to the development and expansion of GHSI resources, research projects, and organizing efforts, either directly to the GHSI or our partnering organizations:

- ▶ [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)
- ▶ [Annenberg Foundation](#)
- ▶ [U.S. Green Building Council](#)

## Thanks #3: Our Co-Founding NGO Partners

In addition to our co-founding health system partners, GHSI would not be possible without the excellent support and expertise of many NGO partners who are working to green the healthcare sector and improve safety and sustainability. While we thank all of these NGOs, our biggest thanks go to these three co-founding NGO partners:

- ▶ **Center for Health Design**: Through research, education, advocacy and technical assistance, CHD supports healthcare and design professionals in their quest to improve the quality of healthcare through evidence-based building design.
- ▶ **Health Care Without Harm** is an international coalition of over 475 organizations in more than 50 countries, working to transform the health care sector so it is no longer a source of harm to people and the environment.
- ▶ **Practice Greenhealth** is the leading membership and networking organization for healthcare institutions committed to sustainable, environmentally sound practices.

## Thanks #4: Our GHSI Workgroups

Much of the progress of the GHSI has been due to the diligent efforts of the five workgroups into which the bulk of work is divided. The workgroups are the Research Collaborative, Sustainable Operations, Healthy Purchasing, Built Environment, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Public Policy.

Interested in joining the GHSI and participating in one or more of these workgroups? Please

contact GHSI staff at [info AT globalhealthsafety.org](mailto:info@globalhealthsafety.org), and we'll put you in touch with the appropriate workgroup leader to get you started.

- ▶ The focus of the **Research Collaborative** is to help provide funding and facilitate research that links better building designs, greener and safer materials and products and improved approaches to operations that will reduce the hazards associated with negative health affects.
- ▶ The **Sustainable Operations** workgroup strategy focuses on the acceleration of best practices for operations among the GHSI partners and the entire healthcare sector, including Environmental Services, Hazardous Materials, Safety, Dietary/Food Services, and Risk Management.
- ▶ The **Healthy Purchasing** workgroup will use the collective purchasing power of participating hospital systems and their Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs) to transform the market for healthcare products and technologies that meet the goals of patient and workplace safety and environmental sustainability, including identifying priority products and developing a database of environmentally preferable product specifications.
- ▶ The **Built Environment** workgroup will provide access to an array of "best practices" to implement strategies that augment patient safety and workplace safety. These strategies also will maximize the sector's environmental performance while reducing healthcare's eco-footprint and contributing to the health and safety of patients and workers.
- ▶ Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the concept of leveraging assets in ways that promote economic, social and environmental health. The **CSR and Public Policy** workgroup provides an avenue to advance CSR concepts by integrating safety and sustainability into members' business strategies and operations. The public policy component of this workgroup's efforts will focus on collective strategies for pursuing responsible public policy that supports safety and sustainability in health care, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## Upcoming Events

In each newsletter, we will highlight some of the many GHSI-related events taking place around the country or on the internet. More information about these and other events can be found on the events page of our [website](#). To tell us about or register for an event, please contact GHSI staff at [info AT globalhealthsafety.org](mailto:info@globalhealthsafety.org).

- ▶ **The Corporate Citizenship Assessment Tool:** Hosted by the GHSI's Corporate Social Responsibility/Public Policy Work Group on December 11 at 1 pm PST/4 pm EST, this session will introduce participants to the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship's Assessment Tool. Developed as an online platform for member organizations to assess their strengths and gaps in corporate citizenship management, the tool has been used by over 70 companies since it was first launched in March 2007. It provides a quick and practical way to assess an organization's current state of corporate citizenship management in four distinct dimensions of corporate citizenship - governance, community support, operations, and products & services. It is easy to use and provides a quick real-time snapshot of how well corporate citizenship is integrated into a company's management systems and practices. While designed as a "generic" tool to be used by any organization - regardless of the sector, type of ownership, or size, it can be customized to more closely reflect the CSR management issues of a particular sector, such as healthcare. For details and to register, please visit the [Registration](#) page.

## What's New?

Here are a few of the latest developments from GHSI's workgroups and NGO partners:

- ▶ **The Ripple Database for Better Built Environment Design:** GHSI members now have access to an [open-source searchable database](#) on innovative design recommendations that include 170+ Kaiser Permanente innovations, as well as design recommendations from the Center for Health Design's Pebble Projects and hospital projects that have incorporated the Green Guide to Healthcare in their design and construction.
- ▶ **Eco-Health Footprint Toolkit for Health Care :** GHSI is laying the groundwork for the development of an Eco-Health Footprint Toolkit for healthcare that will enable hospitals to easily evaluate their energy and carbon impacts, as well as other key environmental indicators such as waste, water, and toxic chemicals. The Initiative has put out a Request for Proposal to find a partner organization to spearhead the effort of collecting the existing tools for health care systems and create new tools where there are gaps. Please contact GHSI staff Michelle Lapinski at [info AT globalhealthsafety.org](mailto:info AT globalhealthsafety.org) if you have footprinting efforts underway at your organization or are interested in participating in the development and testing of this tool.
- ▶ **Healthier Purchasing With the New Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy ("EPP"):** In its first year of operation, GHSI was able to do what has not been done in any other industry: bringing together all of the healthcare sector's major group purchasing organizations (GPOs) to participate in a purchasing strategy discussion. As a result of GHSI's efforts, six of the largest GPOs (Premier, Novation, Consorta, MedAssets, Broadlane, and Amerinet) signed onto an EPP policy statement that begins to coordinate the collective purchasing power of the healthcare sector and drive a sustainability agenda. The Healthy Purchasing strategy includes a shared web-based resource tool with model environmentally preferable specifications; case studies and product information to drive collective purchasing decisions by GHSI systems; and a priority list of products that will accelerate the introduction of safer products in the healthcare market at cost competitive prices. For more information, go to the Healthy Purchasing workgroup's page on our [GHSI website](#).

## Have Questions?

Visit our [GHSI website](#) for frequent program updates and information about upcoming meetings and events. If you have direct questions about becoming a member of GHSI, please contact the GHSI Executive Director, Bob Eisenman, Ph.D., at 510-418-6197 or [beisenman AT globalhealthsafety.org](mailto:beisenman AT globalhealthsafety.org).

Thank you for your help. Working together through GHSI, we can end transform the health care industry and improve patient, worker, workplace and environmental safety.

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