



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

## Global Health and Safety Initiative

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### From the Executive Director's Desk

Health care is a \$2.5 trillion industry representing approximately 17% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP), making it one of the few sectors of the economy that is growing. For several years polls have shown that the majority of American's are satisfied with the quality of care they receive (e.g. 77% [CBS/ NY Times Poll, June 2009](#) and 86% [Robert Wood Johnson Poll, July 2009](#)) but concerns about costs, coverage, the uninsured, and other health care issues are growing and there is much disagreement over the fix to address these issues. (See for example the above two polls and this [article from FOXNews.com](#)).

Given this context and a myriad of other issues and opportunities, it is no wonder that it is proving so difficult to obtain agreement on a health care reform proposal within Congress, the Administration and the public. As you know the health care debate and legislation has been extended from its original timeframe and will be taken up again when Congress returns to session in September. This means that health reform discussions, especially about cost, coverage and how to pay for it, will likely dominate political and policy discussions in September.

Therefore we are postponing our GHSI Summit, originally planned for mid-September in Washington, DC, until early next year when we believe we can obtain fuller receptivity to our Agenda and message. We greatly appreciate the interest and commitments we received from leading healthcare Presidents, CEOs and executives around the country to speak and attend, and apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you. We look forward to your participation at our rescheduled Summit.

In the meantime, we plan to continue to meet and engage with health system, association, Congressional and Administration leaders about our safety and sustainability Agenda. Many of you have been working with us, our non-profit and health system partners on reviewing GHSI's draft Agenda. This Agenda is powerful - bringing together the best knowledge of safety and sustainability interventions, evidence of the resulting outcome improvements and cost savings and examples of hospitals and health systems that made such positive improvements - providing a convincing case for change and practical roadmap for the healthcare sector.

As our nation considers health care reform I hope we realize that with the right choices significant improvements and cost savings in patient, workplace, environmental and community health and safety are possible. Individual hospitals and health systems around the country have demonstrated that such positive changes can be done, are effective and save money. We need now to provide the support to help the majority of our nation's hospitals make the same improvements. If we as a society embrace safety and sustainability we can move to true health, not just healthcare, reform. This is the choice we have.

Bob Eisenman, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Global Health and Safety Initiative

## GHSI Summit Postponed - Rescheduled for Early Next Year

The GHSI Summit, which was to take place on September 16 and 17, 2009 has been postponed and will be rescheduled for early next year - probably February or early March 2010. The principle reason for rescheduling is that health reform legislation has changed from its original timeframe and is now likely to be the consuming policy issue in Washington DC in mid-September. This would make it difficult for GHSI's safety and sustainability message to receive the attention it deserves and would likely lessen its impact. We look forward to an even stronger and more dynamic Summit in 2010. Look for updates in the coming months.

## Upcoming Events

More information about these and other events can be found on the [Events Page](#) of our website. To tell us about an event, please contact GHSI staff at [info AT globalhealthsafety.org](mailto:info@globalhealthsafety.org).

- ▶ **HEALTHCARE DESIGN.09:** Attend the largest, most comprehensive HEALTHCARE DESIGN Conference ever. Don't miss out on over 60 educational sessions and 11 state of the art facility tours at HEALTHCARE DESIGN.09, in Orlando, Florida. From October 31-November 3, HEALTHCARE DESIGN.09 immerses you in a 4-day, solution-focused experience aimed at delivering successful outcomes for healthcare facilities now and into the future. Register today at [www.hcd09.com](http://www.hcd09.com).
- ▶ **GHSI Strategic Update Calls:** The purpose of these calls is to keep the greater GHSI community up to date on current activities, and to discuss topical events. Discussion topics, registration and call-in details will be posted to the [Events page of the GHSI website](#) approximately one month in advance of each call. Future calls are currently scheduled for:

- Tuesday, November 10, 10am Pacific / noon Central / 1pm Eastern
- Tuesday, February 9, 10am Pacific / noon Central / 1pm Eastern

We hope that you can join us.

- ▶ **TEDMED 2009:** Set for October 27 through 30, the fifth in a series created by Marc Hodosh and Richard Saul Wurman, [TEDMED](#) celebrates conversations that demonstrate the intersection and connections between all things medical and healthcare related: from personal health to public health, devices to design and Hollywood to the hospital. Together, this encompasses more than twenty percent of our GNP in America while touching everyone's life around the globe. TEDMED 2009 will be held at the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego, California.
- ▶ **APHA Annual Meeting & Exposition:** The American Public Health Association's (APHA) 137th Annual Meeting and Exposition, "Water and Public Health," is set for November 7-11, 2009, in Philadelphia, PA. [Registration is now open](#). APHA's Annual Meeting and Exposition is the oldest and largest gathering of public health professionals in the world, attracting more than 13,000 national and international physicians, administrators, nurses, educators, researchers, epidemiologists, and related health specialists. APHA's meeting program addresses current and emerging health science, policy, and practice issues in an effort to prevent disease and promote health.
- ▶ **Greenbuild 2009:** [Greenbuild](#) will be in Phoenix, Arizona, November 11-13, 2009. The world's largest conference and expo dedicated to green building, Greenbuild hosts thousands of building professionals from all over the world for three days of educational sessions, renowned speakers, green building tours, special seminars, and networking events. [Registration is open](#); register by September 7 to take advantage of early registration discounts.

## What's New?

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

- ▶ **What's All the Buzz About EDAC?:** The Evidence-Based Design Accreditation and Certification (EDAC) program is steadily gaining interest among the health care design industry. Read about how EDAC is changing the field of healthcare design in these recently published articles:
  - ["Is EDAC the next LEED?,"](#) Architect Magazine
  - ["Proof positive. CHD rolls out evidence-based design accreditation and certification,"](#) Health Facilities Management

Learn more about [EDAC](#). Are you attending HEALTHCARE DESIGN.09? [Apply](#) to take the EDAC exam at HCD.09 dfsdf.

- ▶ **Healthcare Reform Needs Better Choices: Report:** According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers Health Research Institute Report, telemedicine, workplace clinics and finding ways to help people stay healthier may have a greater impact than insuring everyone. "Cranking up supply to increase access is likely not the answer. The

United States now spends more than any nation on healthcare and has a record number of clinicians in the workforce," the company said in a statement. [Read the Reuters article.](#)

- ▶ **Health Sector Can Lead the Fight Against Climate Change:** The World Health Organization and Health Care Without Harm released a discussion draft report, *Healthy Hospitals, Healthy Planet, Healthy People - Addressing Climate Change in Health Care Settings*. The report focuses on how the health sector can play a leadership role in reducing the magnitude and consequences of global warming by reducing its climate footprint, and provides examples from around the world of hospitals taking measures to reduce their climate footprint while improving public health. It outlines seven steps health care systems can take to move toward climate friendly health care and it identifies a series of opportunities at the global, national and local levels. [Read the press release](#) and [download the report](#).

## Workgroups

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. The materials subcommittee of the Built Environment workgroup will provide information and tools, such as the Pharos database tool, to help systems procure building products that are healthier for patients, staff and the community.

## 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 GHSI Executive Director, Bob Eisenman, Ph.D., at 510-418-6197 or [beisenman AT globalhealthsafety.org](mailto:beisenman@globalhealthsafety.org).

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

To read prior issues of the GHSI Online Newsletter, go to the [GHSI press room](#).

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