



August 2010

Maryland H2E News Roundup



Environmental Excellence in Health Care
A Showcase of Best Practices

**Environmental Excellence in Health Care:
A Showcase of Best Practices**

November 18, 2010

Join regional and national health care professionals, environmental industry experts, and educators for this learning and networking event designed to showcase the best practices of hospitals as they journey to more sustainable environments for hospital staff, patients, and communities. Topics may include an array of environmental best practices for purchase of goods and services, procedures in the operating room, design and construction of buildings, purchase and usage of energy, management of hazardous pharmaceutical waste, and procurement and service of sustainable food.

Physician Plenary Panel:

- **Cynthia F. Bearer, M.D., Ph.D.**, Chief, Division of Neonatology, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics
- **Noe Woods, MD**, Assistant Professor, Division of Gynecologic Specialties, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Magee Women's Hospital of UPMC
- **Martin Makary MD, MPH**, Associate Professor of Surgery and Health Policy, Johns Hopkins University

FEE: \$55 PER PERSON

30 Continuing Nursing Education: 5.25 Contact Hours available

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

To register, submit an abstract or apply as an exhibitor, go to:

<http://nursing.umaryland.edu/events/environmental/november/index.htm>

Union Hospital of Cecil County Wins Maryland Green Registry Leadership Awards

From

http://www.mde.maryland.gov/assets/other/Union_Hospital.pdf:

The Maryland Green Registry Leadership Awards recognize organizations that have shown a strong commitment to the implementation of sustainable practices, the demonstration of measurable results, and the continuous improvement of environmental performance.



Union Hospital's green team organizing recycling efforts at a hospital golf tournament.

Read here how Union Hospital achieved their environmental successes and continue to move their organization forward along the path to sustainability.

What innovation or set of results are you most proud of?

Union Hospital is most proud of the progress that we have made to adopt sustainable agricultural practices into our food service department. We have signed the Healthy Food in Health Care pledge and adopted a climate change strategy through our commitment to the Balanced Menu Challenge, both administered by Health Care Without Harm.

How do you involve employees in your environmental programs and projects and keep them motivated?

For the past two years, we have developed Earth Day activities to communicate and engage all employees, as well as the community. The Union Hospital Green Health Initiative committee communicates to staff, visitors, and the community through bulletin boards within the hospital, and recognition on the Hospital internet site. The Green Health Initiative was also invited to speak at the last Board of Directors meeting to involve all partners in our environmental stewardship. We also have employees volunteer for our green team which has worked out well, as they are fully engaged with our mission.

(Cont. on page 5)

Best Practices for a Sustainable Operating Room

By Joan Plisko, Technical Director of MD H2E

From the August edition of Ascent's newsletter, *The Reprocessing Report*



Hospitals across the country are transitioning their every day practices to a set of more sustainable ones. From the basement to the boardroom to the operating room, hospital staff and management are working to identify and implement opportunities that improve patient, staff, and community health, maintain environmental compliance, enhance corporate social responsibility, improve operational efficiencies, while also saving money.

These efforts should include taking a look at environmental best practices in and around the operating room. One organization in Maryland is helping hospitals do just that. Maryland Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (MD H2E), a grant-funded technical assistance and networking initiative promoting sustainability in healthcare, works closely with Maryland hospitals and health care facilities as well as local, regional, and national vendors to define and initiate sustainability programs in the hospital and in the operating room. MD H2E's approach takes a look at local factors, such as services available in the region and provides the benefit of being plugged in to a national body of knowledge. One of MD H2E goals is to move the marketplace to meet the needs of greening efforts. For example, when facilities wanted to recycle blue wrap and there was no local recycler for the material, MD H2E partnered with a local recycler to pilot a program that assisted three hospitals in collecting, storing, and recycling the material.



According to a report published by McKesson Information Solutions, in collaboration with the Healthcare Financial Management Association, the operating room generates 42 percent of patient related revenue. Since operating rooms are highly visible and highly advertised components of a hospital, they are a great place for implementing process improvements that enhance efficiency, health and safety, and save money.

(Cont. on page 3)

NY Times Article Highlights Effort to Cut Medical Waste

It's no secret that the healthcare industry throws away billions of pounds of trash every year. And much of the waste a hospital generates – 20 to 30 percent – is from the operating room. The big problem is that much of the equipment in the operating room gets thrown out after one use, or even if it was simply taken out of the packaging and thus no longer sterile. These Single Use Devices (SUDs) are a departure from the old days of reusable glass and metal tools. But companies are starting to offer reprocessing of SUDs, which must meet the same stringent regulations that original-device makers do, and in some cases follow even more stringent ones. Read this New York Times article from July 5th for more information, plus quotes from Cecilia DeLoach Lynn, director of sustainability education at Practice Greenhealth, and Dr. Martin A. Makary, the gastrointestinal surgeon who is leading the way at Johns Hopkins to reduce the OR's impact.

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/06/health/06/waste.html?_r=2&hp

Healthcare Leading the Way in Energy Efficiency Pursuit

In a recent survey conducted by Johnson Controls, almost two-thirds (62 percent) of healthcare respondents answered that "They plan to make capital investments in energy efficiency over the next 12 months." This exceeds the percentage of respondents from other sectors by a 12-15 percent margin. 58 percent of healthcare respondents said that energy practices were extremely important to their organization, as opposed to 52 percent of non-healthcare sectors.

When it comes to energy efficiency, however, healthcare—responsible for 8 percent of the U.S. carbon footprint—is not without its obstacles: "The top two barriers reported by facility leaders in healthcare were capital constraint and concerns about return on investment."

For more information, go to <http://www.environmentalleader.com/2010/07/13/two-thirds-of-healthcare-orgs-planning-efficiency-investments/>

Best Practices for a Sustainable Operating Room (Cont. from page 2)

Just as you would develop a plan and set of sustainable programs for an entire hospital, it's important to develop a plan and set of sustainable programs for the operating room. Having a solid team that includes physician and nurse champions is paramount for long term success. Champions can help "sell" ideas to other surgeons and professionals who work in and around the operating room. Conducting a baseline assessment is also important so progress can be tracked, documented and promoted. The list of environmental best practices for the operating room includes, but is not limited to the following.

Prevention and reduction of the toxicity and quantity of resources used:

- Reducing waste associated with custom packs by eliminating unused or redundant products;
- Reducing regulated medical waste through enhanced education and improved segregation practices;
- Reducing the toxicity and volume of fluids discarded as regulated medical waste by assessing use of toxic solidifiers and draining fluids to the sewer instead of discarding them as regulated medical waste;
- Reducing the toxicity of cleaning products by using viable less toxic products;
- Reducing the amount of blue wrap waste by converting to reusable hard cases;
- Reducing the power used and heat produced by inefficient lighting by conducting an audit of the lighting system;
- Reducing the total energy utilized in the operating room by reducing air exchange rates during unoccupied hours;
- Reducing the toxicity and volume of waste anesthetic gasses released and vented to the environment through the use of recovery systems.



Reuse, reprocessing, and remanufacturing of items:

- Reusing items through local, regional, and global donations programs;
- Reusing gowns, table covers, linens, basins and other material reesterilization;
- Reprocessing and remanufacturing of single-use devices and instruments through third-party reprocessing companies;
- Reprocessing of open and unused supplies.

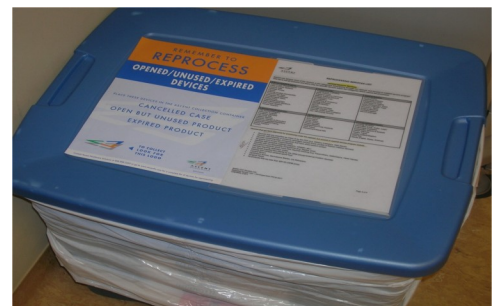


Recycling of materials

- Recycling blue wrap;
- Recycling plastics, including sterile water and saline bottles.

Disposal in the most environmentally-sound way possible

- Disposing of regulated medical waste, including waste fluids in a way that minimizes the environmental and health impacts;
- Disposing of solid waste (i.e., trash) in a way that minimizes the environmental and health impacts;
- Disposing of hazardous waste, including waste anesthetic gasses, in a way that minimizes the environmental and health impacts.



Selecting the most appropriate set of programs for a facility is a complex task and depends on a variety of factors. It is vital to move forward with programs required by law. Selecting programs that both save money and reduce the greatest risks to patients, employees, and community members is also critical. From an organizational perspective, highly visible programs or ones that are fairly straightforward with few barriers are a good choice. If data exists to support the program it will be easier to implement. Always look for partners, such as vendors, to assist you and remember you can take small steps toward long term projects!

NURSING UPDATE

Amanda Choflet, RN, BSN, OCN

Nurse Manager, Greenebaum Cancer Center, BMT/Stem Cell Transplant

Amanda Choflet first became involved the issue of yellow chemotherapy buckets after being asked if there was any rules requiring their use. Amanda got in touch with the Oncology Nursing Society, which had no specific recommendations for their use. She says, "[The yellow bucket] adds a component to the waste stream that is unnecessary. Our hospital incinerates all biohazardous waste, and we realized that the yellow buckets were ending up with all of our other biohazard waste. We were finding that people weren't using the black buckets the way they were supposed to, because they thought that everything in the yellow buckets was considered environmentally toxic, and that's not the case. There's trace amounts of chemotherapy that can be safely disposed of as regular biohazardous waste. If you can remove the yellow buckets and instead streamline all of your waste into flexible containers, then we can actually save a ton of money with our practices. And then eliminate the yellow buckets from our waste stream entirely." This practice change is eliminating about 10,000 pounds of plastic from the incinerator each year, and saves roughly \$40,700 each year on the purchase of yellow chemotherapy buckets plus the estimated \$2,600 on the disposal of yellow buckets including their contents.

Denise Choiniere, RN, MS

Sustainability Manager

University of Maryland Medical Center



I started making change at UMMC for personal reasons. The hospital had so much opportunity for change in terms of conservation of energy and reduction of waste—things that I did at home that I thought could be done at work. I realized there is a better way of doing things—a way to do

business that reduces harm to patients and staff. For example, it doesn't make sense to clean cancer patients rooms with carcinogens. Making change takes time, commitment, and getting the right people on your team. It takes a village of individuals. At UMMC, the greening of our hospital has been a grassroots movement of individuals. People thank me for the work I do; they say "it's about time." My job takes perseverance, personal commitment, flexibility and knowing your audience.

Lifesaving Drugs, Deadly Consequences

Carol Smith / InvestigateWest / July 9th / Sue Crump braced as the chemo drugs dripped into her body. She knew treatment would be rough. She had seen its signature countless times in the ravaged bodies and hopeful faces of cancer patients in hospitals where she had spent 23 years mixing chemo as a pharmacist.

At the same time, though, she wondered whether those same drugs – experienced as a form of "secondhand chemo" while she mixed the drugs as a pharmacist at Swedish Medical Center and elsewhere – may have caused her cancer to begin with.

Chemo is poison, by design. It's descended from deadly mustard gas first used against soldiers in World War I.

Crump knew she had her own war on her hands. She wanted to live long enough to see her 21-year-old daughter, Chelsea, graduate college.

And she wanted something else: She wanted young pharmacists and nurses to pay attention to her story. Crump, who died of pancreatic cancer in September at age 55, was one of thousands of health-care workers who on the job was chronically exposed to chemotherapy agents for years before there were even voluntary safety guidelines in place.



(Cont. on page 6)

Sinai Hospital Donates Thousands of Fluorescent Lamps for Local Reuse

From Lifebridge Health:

As an part of the ongoing Freedom to be Green program, Sinai Hospital of Baltimore has replaced nearly all fluorescent lights in non-clinical areas with super energy-efficient LED lamps.

On June 22, Sinai donated approximately 4,000 of the outgoing fluorescent lamps and 2,000 ballasts to **The Loading Dock**, a Baltimore-based non-profit organization. This was the hospital's first donation to the local charity. Most of the remaining lamps were redistributed internally to other LifeBridge properties for reuse.

The Loading Dock, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization which aims to positively impact local communities and the environment by collecting used building materials and redistributing them to local individuals, small businesses and non-profits for a nominal annual membership fee. Since 1984, The Loading Dock has aided low-income housing and community projects with over 16 million dollars in materials and rescued more than 33,000 tons of reusable products from landfills.

Sinai looks forward to working with The Loading Dock and other community partners in the future in support of our local community and a cleaner environment.



A mechanic inserts a new LED lamp into an existing fixture in a storage area

Union Hospital of Cecil County Wins Maryland Green Registry Leadership Awards (Cont. from page 1)

How do you measure and ensure continuous improvement in environmental performance? What have you learned from this process?

When we initiated our green team, we established benchmarks for current year statistics. We will utilize these benchmarks to measure our success with programs such as our single stream recycling imitative and medical waste reduction strategies. To ensure continuous improvement we have developed a scorecard which outlines each initiative which we score by labeling "not yet implemented," "good progress," "near completion," or "fully implemented". We utilize this scorecard to communicate our progress with staff and the community. We have learned that it was important to prioritize projects and maintain a record to coordinate several initiatives running at the same time.

What is the first step you would recommend that someone take when starting to green their organization?

We would strongly recommend calling in the experts to begin the process of implementing a green team. At our institution, we utilize Maryland Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (MD2HE). They were invaluable in providing us information and getting us started in the right direction. We would also recommend working with the local municipal recycling center. Tanya Adam, Recycling Coordinator with Cecil County Recycling and Environmental programs through the Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Management Division, has been extremely helpful and supportive with all of our recycling efforts. Through the development of our environmentally preferred purchasing policy, we have developed new relationships with vendors which were instrumental in establishing good environmental practices.

What future innovations would you like to see in your industry and what is your vision for your organization?

We would like to see continued development with the patient care centered healthcare buildings, which are environmentally friendly and focused on high quality patient care. As an institution, we have heightened our responsibility for the entire cycle of providing care, from developing and implementing environmentally preferred purchasing policies, integrated pest management programs, single stream recycling, and other environmentally preferred methods to our commitment reduce, reuse, and recycle.

For more information on environmental best practices at Union Hospital of Cecil County, visit the Maryland Green Registry website at www.green.maryland.gov/registry and click on List of Maryland Green Registry Members to view member profiles.

Lifesaving Drugs, Deadly Consequences (Cont. from page 4)

Now some of those workers are being diagnosed with cancers that occupational-health specialists say could be linked to exposure to those same powerful drugs that have saved hundreds of thousands of patient lives.

An InvestigateWest investigation has found that the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) does not regulate exposure to these toxins in the workplace, despite multiple studies documenting ongoing contamination and exposures.

Studies as far back as the 1970s have linked increased rates of certain cancers to nurses and physicians. Occupational-health experts believe that's because when nurses, pharmacists, technicians and, increasingly, even veterinarians mix and deliver the drugs, accidental spills, sprays and punctures put them in close, frequent contact with hazardous drugs.

A just-completed study from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) – 10 years in the making and the largest to date – confirms that chemo continues to contaminate the work spaces where it's used and in some cases is still being found in the urine of those who handle it, despite knowledge of safety precautions.

Read the rest of the article at:

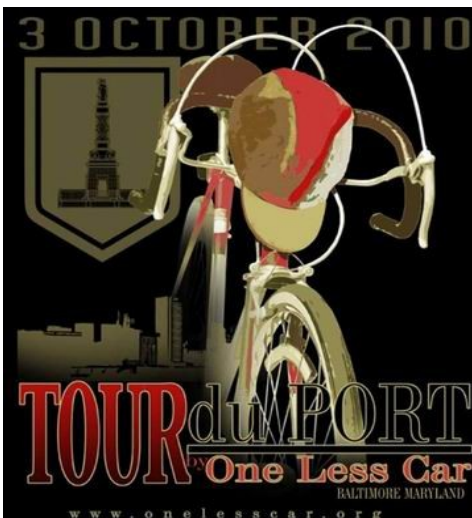
<http://invw.org/chemo-main>



MD H2E Partners with ONE LESS CAR

We invite you to attend the October 3rd Tour du Port, Baltimore's premiere bicycling event! Thousands of riders attend the Tour each year to get a bicyclist's view of more than 12 historic neighborhoods, scenic waterfront areas and beautiful parks. It is a view that one cannot experience from the seat of a car.

The distance is up to you – choose from 12, 26, 40, 50, or 63 mile routes. This is the 17th Annual Tour du Port developed by One Less Car, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles and a healthy environment in Maryland.



This year, Maryland Hospitals for a Healthy Environment and One Less Car have partnered with each other to emphasize the importance of healthy lifestyles that encourage physical activity and the conservation of our natural resources. One Less Car contributed to the passage of six smart, clean and green bicycle, pedestrian and public transit bills this year that will become law on October 1st. These new laws benefit public health, the health of our communities and the environmental health of our entire planet. The goal is for each hospital to have 30 or more employees riding at the Tour du Port by registering at www.onelesscar.org. Please specify your employer under organization. If 30 people attend from your hospital your organization's logo will be placed on the Tour du Port website and t-shirt as an event sponsor!

Sustainable Foods Update

Sec. of Agriculture visits Johns Hopkins Hospital for Farmers' Market Week

The Secretary of Agriculture in Maryland, Buddy Hance, visited the Farmers' Market at Johns Hopkins Hospital on July 29th to kick-off [Farmers' Market Week](#), August 1-7. Read more in the [Press Release by the MD Dept. of Agriculture](#).



Secretary of Agriculture Buddy Hance, 4th from right, joins market co-coordinators and others at Johns Hopkins Hospital

Sinai Hospital Purchasing from Baltimore Urban Farm

July 15th — Sinai Hospital received its first delivery of food from one of Baltimore's 1st urban farms, [Real Food Farm](#). The farm trains youth at risk & provides food to surrounding residents in low income communities.. Read more: [Sinai's Blog](#), [Real Food Farm](#)



Asst. Director of Food & Nutrition at Sinai Hospital Matt Sercombe with Real Food Farmer Tyler Brown.

Farmers' Markets now at 12 MD Healthcare Facilities

These facilities now host farmers' markets:

- Anne Arundel Medical Center (new)
- Calvert Memorial Hospital (new)
- Civista Medical Center
- Greater Baltimore Medical Center (new)
- Holy Cross Hospital
- Howard County General Hospital (new)
- Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
- Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Kaiser Permanente, Baltimore City
- University of Maryland Medical Center
- Washington County Hospital
- Western MD Regional Medical Center (new)

List of farmers' markets in MD:

www.marylandsbest.net.

Hospitals Represented at Governor's Buy Local Cookout

Union Hospital, University of MD Medical Center, Washington County Hospital & MD H2E were represented at the Governor's Cookout on July 15th to launch the Buy Local Challenge, engaging Marylanders in purchasing local food from July 17-25. Recipes submitted by Chef John Cullen at Union Hospital and Chef Joseph Fleischman at Washington County Hospital are in the [2010 MD Buy Local Cookout Recipes](#).



Brenda O'Connor and Holly Emmons, Union Hospital; Governor Martin O'Malley; Denise Choiniere, U MD Medical Center.

MD H2E Receives USDA Grant



USDA awarded \$100,620 to MD H2E at the University of Maryland School of Nursing to support increased purchasing of local, sustainable meat and other proteins by MD & DC hospitals and other institutions, and to formalize the Food Leadership Council to facilitate this. Collaborators include MD Dept. of Agriculture, Future Harvest - Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, Southern MD Agricultural Development Commission, MD Organic Food and Farming Association, University of MD Extension & others. See [Press Release](#).

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Free Lecture, Movie Series on Food

University of MD Baltimore, Sep 2010 — Apr 2011

"The Hungry Mind" is an eight month initiative focused on food, food sustainability, food politics, nutrition and the environments that support food production. Coordinated by the Wellness Hub of the University of Maryland and co-sponsored by MD H2E, it features approximately twenty informative and entertaining lectures, movies and activities. Sponsorship is also available. For the full schedule & for sponsorship information, visit: www.mdh2e.org and click on "Upcoming Events."

MD H2E Summer Events Recap

It's been a busy summer here at MD H2E. Here are some of events we've put together:

Sustainability in Healthcare: A Networking Event

On July 1st, MD H2E, with Triumvirate Environmental, put on a happy hour networking event at Nick's Fish House on the water in south Baltimore. It was a beautiful early summer evening. There was no formal agenda, just a chance for hospitals and vendors to meet, eat, and have a drink. Here at MD H2E we enjoyed not only seeing hospitals connect with each other and with vendors, but vendors allying with each other as well. We will be hosting another Networking event in September so keep your eyes open for more info!

Sustainability in Healthcare: A Roundtable Conversation

At the Maryland Hospital Association on July 22nd, MD H2E held a roundtable conversation with hospital employees and vendors. In a departure from the usual lecture and PowerPoint, we asked a few questions and let the participants lead the conversation. Hospitals got a chance to ask each other brass tacks questions, including Styrofoam elimination, promoting green team activities and green cleaning products. MD H2E got excellent feedback on the event: one attendee said, "The content was on point – the great thing was that you had many contributors. I think everyone spoke. And it was quality info." Thanks to everyone who came, we look forward to doing it again!

What is Maryland H2E?

Maryland H2E is a technical assistance and networking initiative that promotes environmental sustainability in healthcare. Participants include hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and other ancillary health care providers in MD.



Our staff now includes:

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- ◆ Louise Mitchell, PT, Sustainable Foods Coordinator, limitc001@son.umaryland.edu
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- ◆ Denise Choiniere, RN, MSN, Nursing Coordinator, dchoiniere@umm.edu
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- ◆ Molly Englund, Communications Coordinator, englund@son.umaryland.edu
410-706-1849

Practice Greenhealth Webinars



August 06, 1 pm (Eastern)
New Member Welcome to Practice Greenhealth

August 25, 1 pm (Eastern)
Introduction to Greenhealth Tracker

To Register and Purchase Webinars, go to:
www.practicegreenhealth.org/tools/webinars/

Access to Practice Greenhealth webinars is a fee-based service, and is one of many member benefits. You can learn more about the fees and benefits of membership by going to our website. See:

www.practicegreenhealth.org/community/membership/