

Environmental Sustainability

1. Introduction

Through the adoption of this policy, the Health Organizations – Vancouver Coastal Health, Providence Health Care, and the Provincial Health Services Authority – renew their commitment to sustainability as a common priority.

The Health Organizations are mindful of the importance of developing a triple-bottom-line approach to sustainability, one that balances ecological, societal and economic imperatives and recognizes the link between a healthy environment and a healthy population. As such, the Health Organizations recognize a duty to minimize their environmental impact.

1.1. Purpose

This policy provides the framework within which supporting protocols and procedures may be developed.

1.2. Scope

This is a joint policy between Providence Health Care (PHC), Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and applies to all employees, physicians, volunteers, students, contractors and all others who carry out business for these Health Organizations.

2. Policy

2.1. Environmental Leadership

The Health Organizations will act as a leader with respect to environmental stewardship while engaging the healthcare community in a collaborative approach towards sustainability.

2.2. Sustainable Operations

The Health Organizations will work to develop and adopt sustainable best practices and processes in all operations and departments. This includes identifying ways to minimize the consumption of non-renewable energy, water and solid/organic/ hazardous waste products.

The Health Organizations will achieve the legislated greenhouse gas reduction targets contained in relevant provincial legislation (Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act as amended).

2.3. Sustainable Facilities

Facilities Management will incorporate environmentally-sound techniques (energy and water conservation, space utilization management) in their decision-making processes.

Financial investments will balance quality, cost and sustainability. In addition, the long-term life cycle costs of capital will be assessed.

2.4. Sustainable Partnerships

Progressive partnerships will be sought with health organizations, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations and businesses to expand capacity and integrate sustainability into healthcare operations, initiatives and programs.

Partnerships will be strengthened through a commitment to open and transparent decision-making processes that balance economic, social and ecological imperatives.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Executive Leadership

- Leading organizational commitment to [environmental sustainability](#).
- Incorporating environmentally sound factors in decision-making processes, while supporting sustainability through appropriate budget and needs-based planning.

3.2. Facilities Management (Department of Energy and Environmental Sustainability)

- Promoting and developing a sustainability strategy – including Strategic Energy Management Plans – to include measurable targets and action plans.
- Facilitating changes in the organizations' operations to enhance sustainability.
- Providing expertise and evidence-based advice on best practices in sustainability to the organizations.
- Engaging with staff to help foster sustainable behaviours across the organizations.
- Promoting sustainability initiatives such as reducing individual use of materials, conservation of energy and water, recycling of waste and increase the use of alternative transportation.
- Aligning energy conservation targets to sustainability initiatives.

3.3. Employees

- Incorporating sustainable policies and procedures into their individual workplaces and decision-making processes.
- Identifying, role modeling and promoting ways of implementing sustainable workplace activities, programs and practices.

4. Compliance

The Health Organizations will monitor and measure their environmental sustainability efforts and will participate in annual government-wide reporting programs

5. Supporting Documents

5.1. Related Policies

- Occupational Health and Safety policies and procedures
- Waste Management policies and procedures
- [Environmental Sustainability](#) (Fraser Health Authority)

5.2. Guidelines/Procedures/Forms

- [WHMIS Standard 2015](#)

6. Definitions

“**Environmental Sustainability**” is defined as improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems (Brundtland Report, 1987). Within the context of the healthcare system, environmental sustainability means incorporating ecological, social and economic criteria into decision-making processes.

7. References

Regulatory

1. BC Energy Plan (2009). Retrieved from: <http://www.energyplan.gov.bc.ca>
2. Bill 17 – Clean Energy Act (2010). Retrieved from: http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th2nd/1st_read/gov17-1.htm
3. Bill 44 – Green House Gas Reduction Targets Act. Retrieved from: http://www.leg.bc.ca/38th3rd/1st_read/gov44-1.htm

Health Authority-Related

4. Health Authority Carbon Neutral Action Reports (CNAR). Retrieved from: http://www.livesmartbc.ca/government/health_authorities.html
5. Health Authority Strategic Energy Management Plan (SEMP)
6. Health Authority Energy Management Assessment (EMA)
7. Vancouver Coastal Health Strategic Framework

External

8. Provincial Health Services Authority Environmental Sustainability Web Resources. Retrieved from <http://www.phsa.ca/AboutPHSA/Environmental-Sustainability/Resources/default.htm>