



PRACTICE  
Greenhealth

## Creating Effective Green Teams in Health Care



**H**OSPITALS  
*for a*  
HEALTHY  
ENVIRONMENT™



**GREEN GUIDE**  
*for Health Care*™ **GGHC**

# Environmental Stewardship: A Cultural Shift

- Commitment from the top-down *and* bottom-up
- Key ingredients:
  - Leadership
  - Coordination
  - Communication
  - Education
  - Accountability



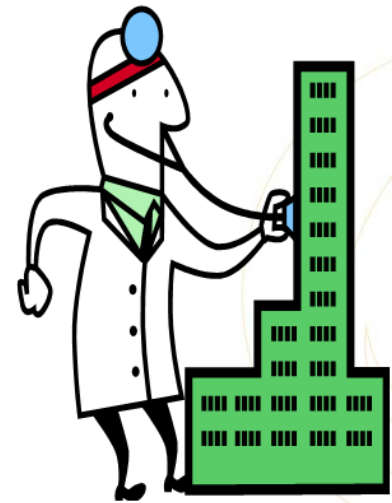
# Making the Case for a Green Team

- Mission in Action
- Employee & Staff satisfaction
- Cost savings and Positive Return on Investment
- Community Benefit Reporting
- Regulatory Compliance
- Reduced Risk & Liability
- Public Image Enhancement
- Improved Quality and Safety
- Environmental Goal Achievement



# A Prescription for Change

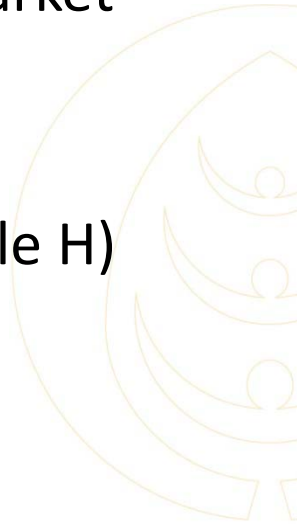
1. Establish Leadership Advocacy
2. Create a green team & mission
3. Perform a Needs Assessment
4. Conduct Dynamic & Productive Meetings
5. Prioritize and Maintain Momentum
6. Create and Monitor Measurable Goals
7. Evaluate Your Team's Effectiveness
8. Communicate, Educate and Celebrate!
9. Be Ready for Barriers and Challenges



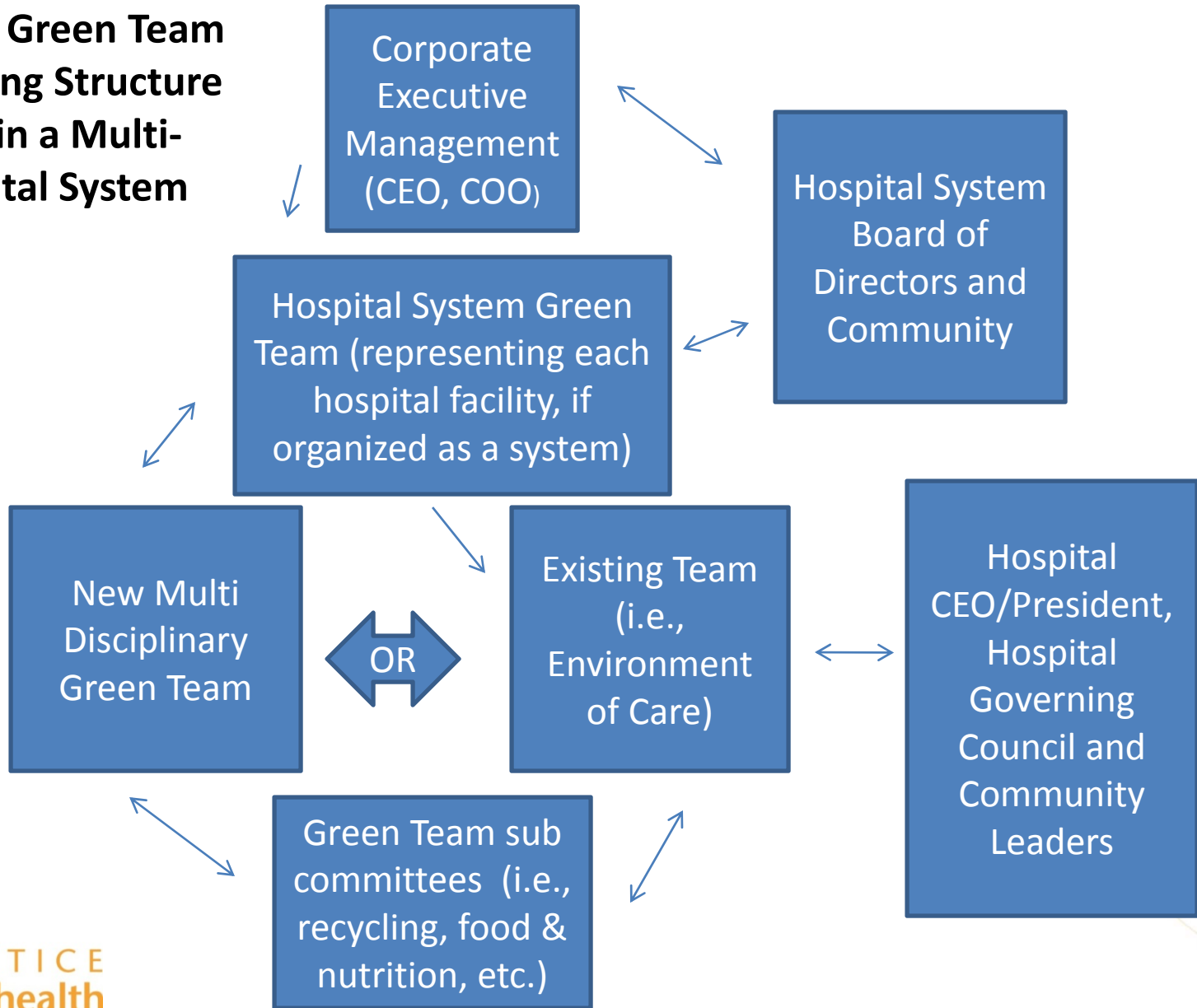
# Establish Leadership Advocacy

Sit down with leadership and **make a business case** for establishing a culture of Sustainability:

- Mission in Action - Stewardship
  - Cost savings through conservation and reduced risk
- Marketing advantage in a competitive health care market
  - Increase staff recruitment and retention
  - Regulatory compliance and worker safety
- Community Benefit Reporting (IRS Form 990, Schedule H)



# Sample Green Team Reporting Structure Within a Multi-Hospital System



# Define Your Team's Identity and Intention

- An **active EOC team** already in place?
- **Multi Disciplinary Expertise** at the table:
  - Nursing, Physician Champion, Public Relations, Facilities, Environmental Services, Infection Control, Materials Management, Pharmacy, Food & Nutrition, Construction, Ethics, Mission & Spiritual Care
- **Accountability** is key - senior management and board of directors, governing council, or system green council
- Sample mission: **“To reduce the environmental impact of hospital operations”**



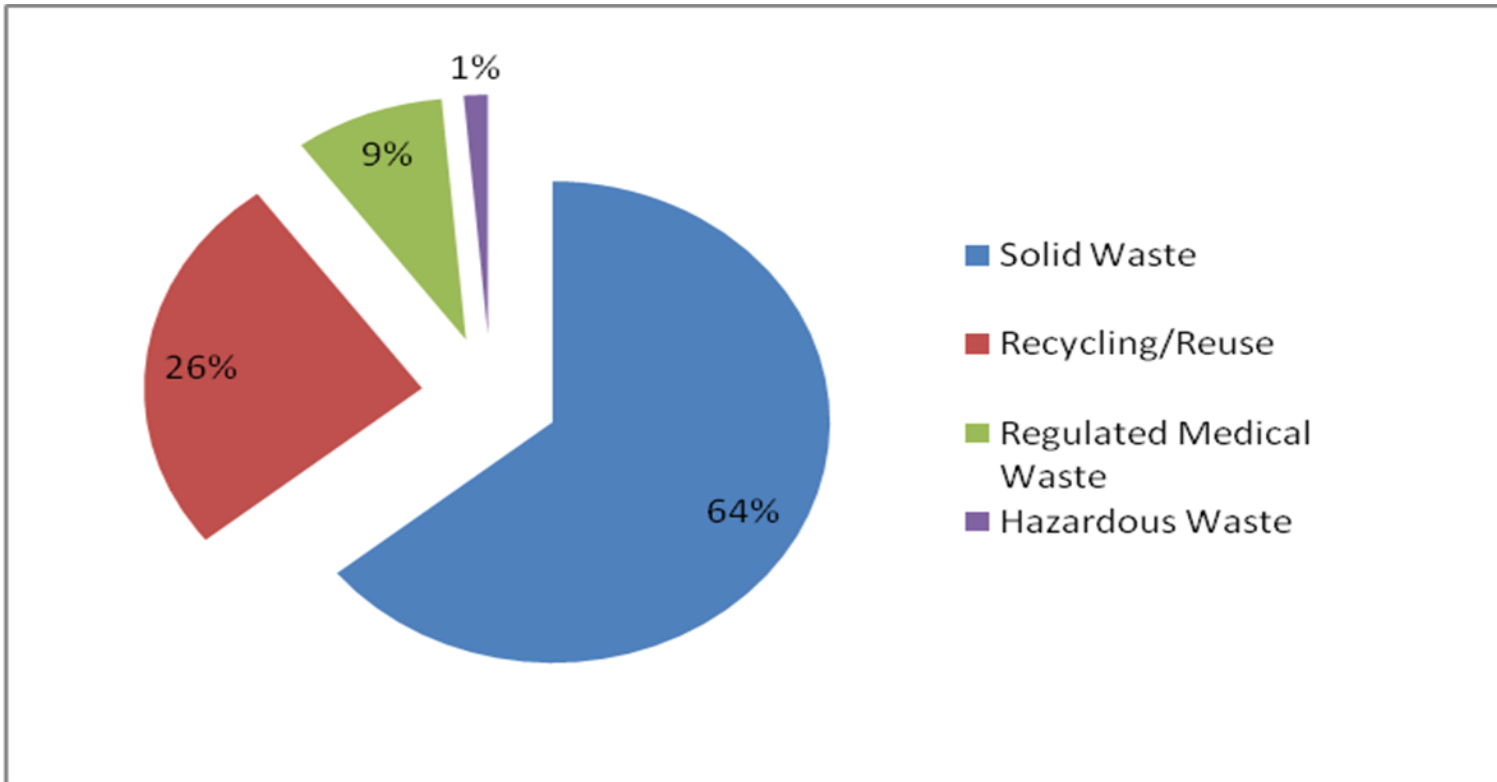
# Perform a Needs Assessment

- Gather baseline data of waste streams
  - Regulated Medical Waste (RMW) & Non-RMW
  - Recyclables (paper, cardboard, commingled, light bulbs, batteries, chemicals, electronics)
  - Hazardous & Solid Waste
  - Construction and Demolition Debris
  - Donated Supplies
- Use Practice Greenhealth Eco-Checklist tool





# Do you know you know your waste stream picture?



# Prioritize and Maintain Momentum

## Choose Areas of Focus and Build on Successes!

- Red bag waste minimization through random auditing and enhanced training
- Reusable Sharps to reduce waste and needle stick injuries
- Integrated pest management
- OR Fluid Management Systems
- Single-Use Device Reprocessing
- Food Composting/Regional Food Sourcing
- Containerization of sterile instruments – eliminate blue wrap
- Waste minimization through recycling & reuse
- Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP)
- HIPAA/Confidential paper management – recycle vs. shredding
- OR Fluid Management Systems



# Create and Monitor Measurable Goals

- **Measurable** – define the goal in terms of ‘how much’ and ‘by when’
- **Accountable** – define ‘who’ on the team and within the organization is responsible for managing and reporting on the goal
- **Strategic** – define tactics or action plan updates on how the goal is to be accomplished and provide regularly schedule updates reported at green team meetings and to leadership



# Environmental Goal Setting

## SAMPLE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS:

- Increase annual recycling rate from XX% to XX%, with a stretch goal of XX%
- Increase savings from single-use device reprocessing by XX\$'s per year
- Convert to Non-DEHP tubing and solutions bags in NICU
- Convert to reusable sharps containers and save XX tons of solid waste from going to landfill annually
- Reduce disposable food service ware by XX%
- Trial Green Cleansers in Food & Nutrition kitchens
- Endorse Health Care Without Harm's *Healthy Food Pledge*
- Achieve Practice Greenhealth's annual award recognition



# Establish New Policies & Programs

- Make the changes “stick”
- The backbone for systemic change
  - Environmentally Preferable Purchasing
  - Environmental Commitment Statement
  - Mercury Elimination
  - Healthy Food Pledge
  - Strategically located recycling containers
  - Water and Energy Conservation campaigns



# Evaluate Your Team's Effectiveness

- Are we meeting or exceeding our goals?
- Is hospital or system leadership plugged in and supportive?
- Is the team meeting regularly and is it well-attended?
- Are you reporting relevant data to the team regularly (i.e. waste stream data monthly)
- Conduct a survey to assess awareness and feedback
- Conduct annual eco-assessments to assess progress and opportunities



# Communicate, Educate & Celebrate!

## Tell Your Story of Environmental Commitment!

- PR directed Communication & Education Plan
- Create a buzz and tap into staff passion
- Differentiate your hospital as an environmental leader
- Press Release/coverage
- Marketing Strategy

### Audience:

Senior Management, Church Sponsors, Board of Directors, Community, Staff, Patients & Visitors



# Be Ready for Barriers & Challenges

- Expect resistance – habits are hard to change
- Myth: Greening costs \$
- Focus on incremental change
- Don't make *the perfect* the enemy of *the better*
- Consider hiring a Sustainability Manager
- Consider subcommittees for specific projects
- Report and celebrate successes to promote ongoing leadership and staff enthusiasm





# Awards Recognition!

- 2009 Awards Season – 1<sup>st</sup> QTR
- Applications available at [www.practicegreenhealth.org](http://www.practicegreenhealth.org)
- Environmental Excellence Awards:
  - Partner Recognition
  - Partner for Change
  - Making Medicine Mercury Free
  - System for Change
  - Champion for Change
  - Environmental Leadership Circle
- SAVE THE DATE\*\* Clean Med Conference – May 18-20, 2009,  
[www.cleanmed.org](http://www.cleanmed.org)



# Health Care Green Team Resources

- Practice Greenhealth – [www.practicegreenhealth.org](http://www.practicegreenhealth.org)
- Health Care Without Harm – [www.noharm.org](http://www.noharm.org)
- American Nurses Association - <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/OccupationalandEnvironmental.aspx>
- Environmental Health News – [www.EnvironmentalHealthNews.org](http://www.EnvironmentalHealthNews.org)
- International Council of Nurses - [www.icn.ch](http://www.icn.ch)
- Sustainable Hospitals – [www.sustainablehospitals.org](http://www.sustainablehospitals.org)
- Green Guide for Health Care – [www.gghc.org](http://www.gghc.org)
- The Luminary Project: [www.theluminaryproject.org](http://www.theluminaryproject.org)

