

CASE STUDY



GREEN AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The Green Ambassador Program trains and certifies Inova employees in sustainability, specifically initiatives and activities which reduce environmental impact and promote health and well-being for patients, employees and the larger community. The goal of the program is to develop a culture of sustainability throughout the organization and incorporate sustainability into everyday decisions and practices which impact operational outcome measures. The program is comprised of an education and certification program (a one-day training session, live/archived webinars), a set of standards and measures, a suite of tools and resources, a marketing and communications plan, and a survey which evaluates and informs the program moving forward.

The Green Ambassador program is open to all Inova employees. Selected applicants attend a one-day training session in which they receive sustainability and environmental health education and learn about the program. Ambassadors are then asked to select an activity of interest and commit to participating in the activity within three months, and support sustainability initiatives by serving as a representative and resource to all employees. The activities and resulting certifications lie on a graduated continuum:

1.0 - Green. Activities which reduce environmental impact (recycling, energy, water and waste reduction).

2.0 - Wellness. Activities which promote health (gardening in the organic hospital garden, attending cooking classes, participating in exercise events, recruit others).

3.0 - Sustainability and Wellness. Activities which influence key stakeholders (formal presentation, organizing health fairs, Earth Day events).

Inova Health System

Inova is a not-for-profit health care provider based in Northern Virginia that serves more than two million people per year from throughout the Washington, D.C. metro area and beyond. Inova consists of five hospitals with more than 1,700 licensed beds and 16,000 employees. Inova encompasses the full array of health services, including the area's only Level 1 Trauma Center and Level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Inova is also home to nationally and internationally recognized Inova Heart and Vascular Institute (IHVI), Inova Translational Medicine Institute (ITMI) on genomics, Inova Neuroscience Institute and Inova Children's Hospital. Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education and research.



The Green Ambassador Program was initially kicked off with monthly events hosted at each hospital, and is supported with ongoing education, communication and marketing strategies. The program has also been incorporated into the employee handbook.

Program Goals

- Reach 75 percent of employee population with the Green Ambassador program information during launch week.
- Onboard five percent of employee population to new Green Ambassadors within first three months of launch.
- Seventy-five percent of new Green Ambassadors take action within first three months of registration.
- Measure increase in the program awareness:
 - **Benchmark:** Measure employee awareness prior to launch.
 - **Assess:** Measure percent increase in employee awareness three months post-launch, baseline sustainability education, identify area of interest per Ambassador.

Others:

1. Increase in awareness (via survey)
2. Number of ambassadors
3. Webinar/event attendance
4. Collective sustainability impact via sustainability dashboard

What's Next

Inova is tying the Green Ambassador Program to its employee wellness program by way of employee benefits. In April 2015, Inova hosted a webinar for employees, "Our Environment, Our Health" which described how employees could earn credits toward reducing their insurance premiums by participating in wellness activities.

Measurable Outcomes

Insurance premium costs; number of people engaged; impact (waste reduction, sustainability dashboard).

“ More employees know about the connection between health and the environment along side how much energy and water we use than ever before. ”

- Seema Wadhwa
AVP Sustainability and Wellness
Inova Health System