

Sustainability in healthcare update

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November 2016

The Department of Health and Human Services produces the quarterly sustainability updates to inform health services on sustainability initiatives being implemented across the health care sector, as well as key sustainability issues of interest. We welcome items of interest from health services.

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Premiers Sustainability Awards 2016

Congratulations to Melbourne Health, that won the 2016 Premier’s Sustainability Award – health category, and to the finalists, Western Health and the Vinyl Council of Australia.

Melbourne Health won for their Reducing Waste One Dialysis Patient at a Time initiative, which champions a range of waste reduction initiatives to significantly decrease the amount of clinical waste their kidney treatment service produces each year.

Western Health was a finalist in recognition of their *Environmental Management Roadmap 2015–2020*, which develops strategic environmental leadership which is supported by 50 local sustainability action plans in departments and clinical areas across the group.

The Vinyl Council of Australia was recognised as a finalist for their From Local to Global: PVC Recycling Program – a product stewardship program which provides a solution to landfill for PVC medical waste and now works with 34 Victorian hospitals, boosting annual PVC recovery.



Premiers Sustainability Awards 2016: Helen Millicer, Vinyl Council of Australia; Catherine O’Shea and Dr Forbes McGain, Western Health; Tiernan Humphrys, Department of Health and Human Services; Monika Page, Melbourne Health.

Further information on this year’s winners and finalists is available on the [Premier’s Sustainability Awards 2016](http://www.premiersustainabilityawards.vic.gov.au) website
<<http://www.sustainabilityawards.vic.gov.au>>.

Environmental data management system update

The Environmental data management system (EDMS) is live in all health services. Measurement devices for waste, transport, paper, medical gases and refrigerants have been set-up for all health services.

Health Purchasing Victoria is collating 2015–16 paper and waste data for upload into the system. Transport, medical gases and refrigerants data can be uploaded manually by health services.

The department will be issuing a user experience survey to all registered EDMS users to gain feedback on the system. All users are encouraged to respond.

Health services are reminded that the reports available in EDMS can be used for both public reporting requirements and for reporting internally to Executive and Boards. All health services are encouraged to complete the key activities checklist to ensure your health service gets the most out of the system.

The department is aiming to deliver training in Gippsland, Hume and Barwon areas before the end of 2016 and in Grampians and Loddon Mallee areas in early 2017.

For further information contact

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Chemical free cleaning case study

Monash Health has introduced chemical-free cleaning across its entire health service, which has more than 40 sites. Monash Health received the Premier's Sustainability Award – health category (2015) for this innovative project.

The department's Sustainability Unit spoke to Elizabeth Gillespie from the Monash Health Infection Control and Epidemiology Unit and prepared a case study that is available on the [health](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/planning-infrastructure/sustainability/resources/case-studies-on-sustainability) website <<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/planning-infrastructure/sustainability/resources/case-studies-on-sustainability>>.

Changes to managing e-waste in Victoria

E-waste, as a waste stream is growing up to three times faster than general municipal waste in Australia. It covers a range of items, including televisions, computers, mobile phones, kitchen appliances, white goods and potentially some medical equipment. One definition of e-waste is any product that has a power cord or uses batteries.

The Victorian Government has committed to ban e-waste from landfill in Victoria, which is expected to commence from mid to late 2018. The department and Health Purchasing Victoria is working with Sustainability Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to better understand the implications of such a ban on the health care sector.

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Mandatory energy efficiency requirements

Health services are reminded that as part of the Victorian Government commitment to improving its sustainability, all public sector entities are required to implement by 31 December 2016:

- replacement of existing halogen or incandescent lighting with Light Emitting Diode (LED) technologies
- configuration of all inactive computers and monitors to enter a hibernation mode, sleep mode or be automatically shut down to ensure they are not consuming energy when not in use.

The department will be surveying health services in early 2017 to seek confirmation that the requirements have been implemented, or processes put in place to ensure halogen and incandescent lights are replaced with LEDs when they need replacing.

For further information contact

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Australian phase down of hydrofluorocarbons from 2018

On 15 October 2016 the Kigali Agreement was signed which puts in place a legally binding requirement for countries to phase out hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

This complements the Australian Government phase down of the bulk import of HFCs from 2018. HFCs are used in around 45 million pieces of air-conditioning equipment across Australia.

Hydrofluorocarbons included in the Australian government phase down

HFC-23	HFC-32	HFC-41	HFC-125	HFC-134	HFC-245fa
HFC-134a	HFC-143	HFC-143a	HFC-152	HFC-152a	HFC-365mfc
HFC-227ea	HFC-236cb	HFC-236ea	HFC-236fa	HFC-245ca	HFC-43-10mee

The HFC phase-down only applies to bulk imports of gas, such as in cylinders, and will not apply to gas imported in pre-charged equipment such as air-conditioners or refrigerators. It does not apply to used or recycled HFCs.

Further information about [Domestic HFC phase-down](#) is available on the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy website <<http://www.environment.gov.au/protection/ozone/legislation/opsggm-review/hfc-phase-out-faqs>>.

For further information contact tiernan.humphrys@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Public reporting requirements

All health services are reminded that it is a requirement under the Policy and funding guidelines to have current and active environmental management plans and to publicly report on environmental performance data by the end of each calendar year.

For further information contact sarah.bending@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Environmental performance of the health system 2015–16

The department's annual environmental sustainability report was released as part of the 2015–16 annual report. Some key success stories, which could not have been achieved without health services' hard work, include reductions in:

- energy use across all metrics (bed-day, separation and floor area)
- energy costs across the portfolio by \$3m from \$82.3m to \$79.3m
- total water use by some 27 million litres

- release of reported pollutants to the atmosphere by 16 per cent, or some 26 tonnes.

The use of copy paper across health services grew by 31,513 reams, or 15.75 million sheets of paper. This equates to an increase of 6 per cent per health service staff member, to 3,760 sheets of paper per year. The department is keen to hear from health services which have implemented paper reduction initiatives, so learnings can be shared across the health system.

For further information contact sarah.bending@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Sustainability unit news

Tiernan Humphrys, Manager Environmental Sustainability, was awarded a scholarship to attend the inaugural Yale Sustainability Leadership Forum from 21–23 September at Yale University, Connecticut.

The key learnings from the forum were that:

- local action is integral to driving change
- new actors (such as religious institutions) have become an important force in tackling climate change
- the role of business has moved from being part of the problem to part of the solution
- access to finance is key to spurring innovation and change
- consistent and focused reporting metrics are needed to account for sustainability in broader reporting frameworks and that reporting needs to be led by materiality.

While in the United States, Tiernan also met with Partners HealthCare, the largest healthcare provider in Massachusetts.

Partners HealthCare has a strong focus on removing chemicals from their organisation and services, has installed a number of one megawatt solar arrays, is committed to all new major projects to be built to a high sustainability standard (LEED Gold) and is undertaking climate vulnerability assessments for a number of its hospitals.

The learnings will be built into the Sustainability Unit's ongoing work to improve the sustainability of the Victorian public healthcare system.

For further information contact

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Further information

Visit the [sustainability in healthcare](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sustainability) website <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sustainability>>.

To join the Sustainability in Healthcare online forum (open to Victorian public health service staff) email sarah.bending@dhhs.vic.gov.au or sustainability@dhhs.vic.gov.au

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Available at www.health.vic.gov.au/sustainability