

How to decarbonise your healthcare clinic



The healthcare sector contributes 7% of Australia's carbon footprint. Healthcare clinics are part of this footprint. Here's how to make efficient changes to reduce your footprint!



First steps

1. Repower

Do an [energy audit](#), reduce your energy use and switch to a renewable electricity provider.

2. Waste not

Supply appropriate bins in convenient areas of the clinic for recycling and composting, and train the team to use them properly. Your local council can offer good advice for your specific clinic.

3. Spread the word

Let your staff and clients know what you're doing and why.



Shop smarter

1. Reduce your use

Where possible, reduce the amount of materials that you're purchasing.

2. Reuse, recycle, compost

Where possible, replace any single use and plastic items with reusable alternatives first, then recyclable or compostable items.

3. Ask your suppliers for better options

Tell your suppliers you prefer products which use [less plastic](#), which have higher percentages of recycled materials, and are local. This helps to send a market signal.



Activate your staff

- Appoint a champion. If you have a passionate and educated staff member in your team, [give them time in their role to implement](#), monitor and drive [sustainability and quality improvement initiatives](#)
- Explain the [benefits of sustainability](#) to your staff to help encourage behaviour change:
 - It will improve the long-term health outcomes for all staff and patients
 - It will help save the clinic money
 - Once the new processes are set up, it won't take up extra time
- Explain how many [health care facilities are starting to become more sustainable](#)
- [Consult staff and introduce procedural change, highlight the simplicity and benefits of each change.](#)
For example:
 - turning off electronic equipment overnight
 - turning lights off when not in the room
 - not printing unless necessary
- Encourage staff and patients to use lower emission forms of transport like public transport, cycling and car-pooling, and make sure supporting infrastructure is available (e.g. bike racks)



What you can do to support learning and industry progress

- **Complete a health care sustainability education program and encourage staff to do the same.**
- **Join relevant sustainability groups for support and ideas such as through your professional association or [Global Green and Healthy Hospitals](#) network, [Climate and Health Alliance](#) or your professional association**
- **Communicate with your health clinic's professional governing body and ask what they are doing to support your profession to decarbonise.**
- **Celebrate successes! Emphasise that what you are achieving is creating a healthier community for your patients. This improves your reputation and trust with the community. You can inspire and motivate systemic change if others see your success! You can share your work on:**
 - Social media
 - Local news publications
 - Company websites
 - A GGHH case study (email gghh@caha.org.au for more info!)

What you can do next



- **Monitor your efforts. Keep track of how much money you save, and how many items you've avoided using through your efforts, like:**
 - Costs of gas, electricity, waste pick ups
 - Quantity of waste (in bags, bins, kilograms, etc)



- **With your savings, consider investing in larger sustainability initiatives. For example:**
 - If you need to replace an old appliance, buy a high energy and water efficiency star model from a company dedicated to reducing its own footprint.
 - If you own the building, **[install energy saving infrastructure](#)** like insulation, double glazing or solar panels.