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Evolving the Green Guide for Health Care™

The broader green building movement has developed a powerful vision of *regenerative buildings*—buildings that move beyond “reducing harm” to achieve zero net energy, water balance, and zero waste. Recently, a US healthcare system announced it would become “carbon-neutral” by 2015, a major milestone in this energy intensive sector. **As sustainable healthcare design enters its second decade, the time has arrived to develop a sustainability toolkit that recognizes both the unique challenges and the opportunities inherent in the healthcare industry’s approach to sustainability—to bridge healthcare’s core mission of healing with the evolving body of restorative, regenerative and resilient design thinking.** Across the US, green hospitals are implementing restorative community strategies as part of their sustainability initiatives –partnering to develop staff housing near their facilities, restoring degraded sites and returning them to their communities, developing exercise trails and successfully advocating for expanded public transportation systems. Recent extreme weather incidents are signaling that our health care infrastructure lacks resilience, revealing vulnerability. Sustainable design strategies linked to increased ‘resilience’ - whether to flooding, storm incidents, or grid disruptions- are capturing the interest of healthcare organizations across the country.

These important trends signal a clear need for a next generation *Green Guide* tool that provides guidance to achieving “no harm” and beyond, recognizes continuous improvement, consolidates both design/construction and operations, and can capture and measure the broad array of community and health benefits these organizations are realizing. The *Green Guide* is responding to this need by initiating its next generation of tool development. As with the initial *Green Guide* development, the goal is to leverage systemic change with a continued focus on achieving high performance healing environments. Following up on a nine-month strategic visioning process, the next generation *Green Guide for Health Care* establishes a vision of a regenerative, restorative and resilient health care industry by 2050. This is defined as moving beyond a focus on reducing environmental and health burdens to promoting a holistic approach to appropriate levels of regeneration, restoration and resilience on three scales: occupant, community, and global—through design, construction and operations. These objectives of continuous improvement towards a regenerative goal are far-reaching and bold, consistent with the resourcefulness and vision of the *Green Guide for Health Care*.

The next generation toolkit consists of a phased development process using a suitable web-enabled platform that supports a learning community. The decision was made to develop the tool as a series of modules, prioritizing the issues of climate change impacts and resilience. Development of the first module(s), the **Climate Footprint Reduction and Resilience Tool(s)**, will commence in the fall of 2009, with an initial estimated release date by late 2010.

Welcome: New Green Guide Registrants and Version 2 Registered Projects! Currently, the *Green Guide for Health Care* has over 27,000 registered individual users and 196 registered projects, with 9 new facilities registering between February and July 2009. GGHC registered projects now represent more than 41 million square feet of new health care building construction and renovations. We welcome *Texas Veterans Land Board (Tyler TX)*, *PeaceHealth- St. Joseph Hospital (Bellingham WA)*, *Perham Memorial Hospital and Home (Perham MN)*, *Veterans Hospital (Miami FL)*, and *Dammam International Specialty Hospital (Saudi Arabia)* to the *Green Guide* community!

Register your project with the Green Guide for Health Care. *Green Guide* website registrants can register projects at no charge by logging onto www.gghc.org and following the prompts on the [Project](#) web page. Project registration is fast and easy, can be anonymous, and grants up to 14 project team members. Access to GGHC online tools such as checklists and a peer-to-peer Forum is open only to *Green Guide* registered project teams.

Call for 2010 Webinars! Have a health care greening case study, innovative methods, or tools to share? Conduct a webinar. For details, click here <http://www.practicegreenhealth.org/tools/webinars/>.

Conferences and Workshops. At the CleanMed 2009 Conference (May 2009, Chicago, IL), the *Green Guide* presented a standing-room only workshop on *Designing the Regenerative Hospital*. A similar workshop is planned at the Center for Health Design conference (Nov 2009, Orlando, FL). Attendance is limited to the first 100 registrants! Details are available at www.hcd09.org.

Please direct all GGHC inquiries to info@gghc.org

Resources

1. Webinars: Join us for our monthly Design and Construction webinars! All 90-min sessions begin at 1pm Eastern Time.

Friday, September 11
[Resilient Flooring](#)

Friday, October 9 [Case Studies of Campus Infrastructure](#)

Friday, November 13
[Daylighting the Contemporary Hospital](#)

Friday, December 11
[Integrative Design for Innovative Results](#)

Note: For American Institute of Architects (AIA) continuing education credits are available. Visit www.practicegreenhealth.org/webinars for more information re: fees.

2. Sustainable Healthcare Architecture, co-authored by Robin Guenther, FAIA, and Gail Vittori, LEED-AP can be purchased at Amazon.com. This 429-page book on green building in health care, published in 2008, provides valuable guidance and case studies.

3. Download FREE, digital copies of Green Guide Version 2.2 and the Revised Operations section at www.gghc.org

4. Support the Green Guide for Health Care. Visit the [Supporters](#) section of the *Green Guide* website to find out if you can be a Sponsor, Partner, or Endorser. All donations to the *Green Guide* are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

The 2009 GGHC core project team includes the Co-Coordinators Robin Guenther, Gail Vittori, and Walt Vernon, and Senior Director Kumkum M. Dilwali.