



# Purchasing



## INTENT

Hospitals and health systems purchase a broad diversity of products ranging from chemicals, electronics and plastics, to energy, pharmaceuticals and food. Creating and implementing green and ethical purchasing policies can play a central role in implementing many of the goals of the Green and Healthy Hospitals Agenda<sup>1</sup>.

Healthcare purchasing results in a significant environmental impact. The NHS in England, for example, calculates that it spends 20 billion a year on goods and services, which translates into a carbon footprint of 11 million tons - 60% of the NHS's total carbon footprint<sup>2</sup>.

## FIRST STEPS

- Review facility procurement practices, and patronize local vendors who carry third party certified sustainable products and follow sustainable and ethical practices whenever possible<sup>1</sup>.
- Implement a sustainable purchasing agenda that considers the environmental and human rights impact of all aspects of purchasing, from production to packaging to ultimate disposal<sup>1</sup>.
- Develop coordination between hospitals to increase buying power for [environmentally preferable purchasing](#)<sup>1</sup>.
- Advocate for Extended Producer Responsibility, and for products to be designed so they generate less waste, last longer, are less disposable, use less hazardous raw materials and include less packaging<sup>1</sup>.
- Require suppliers to disclose chemical ingredients and safety testing data for product purchases and give preference to suppliers and products meeting these specifications<sup>3</sup>.
- Limit hospital/health system purchases to products meeting these specifications<sup>1</sup>.
- Utilize purchasing power to obtain environmentally responsible and ethically produced products at cost competitive prices and work with manufacturers and suppliers to innovate and expand the availability of these products<sup>1</sup>.
- Make sure all contracts meet socially-responsible business principles: Follow the guidelines on ethical procurement for health from the [Ethical Trading Initiative](#) and the [British Medical Association](#).

## CITED SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup>“Green guide for health care: best practices for creating high performance healing environments.” Austin, Center for Maximum Potential for Building Systems, 2007.

<sup>2</sup>“Global Healthcare Building Construction: Market Snapshot to 2014.” World Market Intelligence. 2010.

<sup>3</sup>“Carbon neutral - sense and sensibility.” The University of Sydney, Centre for Integrated Sustainability Analysis. UNEP