



Green Guide for Health Care Newsletter

October 2006

Green Guide Tips

Simple "How-To's" for Using the Guide

How To Make the Business Case for Green Building in Healthcare

Several articles and white papers published over the past year have made the business case for green building in healthcare on both a strategic level and by highlighting specific projects. All of the articles listed below agree that an effective business case for healthcare facilities must recognize the importance of aligning health care's mission of healing with the bottom line.

Making the Case to Healthcare Executives

- "The Business Case for Green Buildings" excerpts the proceedings from a panel at Clean Med 06. A few key talking points from the article are listed below. (*Clean Design* magazine, June 2006, <http://www.healthcaredesignmagazine.com/CleanDesign.htm>)
 - The business case in health care cannot rely only on energy savings, because a typical hospital's energy budget is less than 1% of its total operating budget. A strong argument will equate operational savings to added revenue stream: e.g., \$100,000 savings in energy equates to "x" number of MRI's or additional physicians on staff.
 - Hospital executives have begun to respond to proof that a green building design will help them retain staff (particularly nurses), improve worker safety, and improve outcomes for patients.
 - Healthcare facilities have begun to capitalize on the advantages of sharing their successes with their community to differentiate themselves from their competition and to target philanthropic support.
- A teleconference held in February 2006 establishes the complexity of a healthcare facility's bottom line. Because all healthcare facilities are in the business of providing health, they make decisions all the time that may not improve their financial bottom line, but are considered essential to their work and improve their overall status in their community. ("Making the Business Case for Green Health Care Facilities," Hospitals for a Healthy Environment Green Building Teleconference Series, February 2006, <http://www.h2e-online.org/teleconferences/molydesc.cfm?Date=2006-02-03&teleconfid=237>)
- "The Dollars and Sense of Greening Healthcare" reviews both traditional business case successes (i.e., lowering operations costs) and health care specific business case topics, such as the connection between human health and green building. The article also provides a variety of case study examples from across the country. (*Green @ Work* e-magazine, February 2006, <http://www.greenatworkmag.com>)

Case Studies

- Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas (DCMCCT) in Austin, Texas, is partnering with the local utility, Austin Energy, to build a gas-fired combined heat and power plant on-site that will provide energy, steam and cold water for air conditioning to the hospital. Austin Energy is building the plant in exchange for a long-term energy contract with DCMCCT, freeing up \$6.8 million in the construction budget that had been earmarked for a central plant to be re-invested in green strategies such as increased energy efficiency and healthy finish materials. ("Brownfields Bloom: Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas," *Healthcare Design* magazine, March 2006, <http://www.healthcaredesignmagazine.com>)
- Kaiser Permanente, the largest nonprofit health plan in the U.S., has distinguished itself as a leader in its market, in part, through leadership in reducing the use of toxic chemicals in its facilities. Kaiser anticipates spending \$21 billion through 2012 on capital expenditures. Its powerful buying power has allowed it to work with manufacturers to move the marketplace in the direction of less toxic building materials. ("Better Living and Bigger Profits Through Safer, Greener Chemistry," *Sustainable Business.com* e-magazine, September 13, 2006, <http://sustainablebusiness.com>)
- The Patrick H. Dollard Discovery Health Center (LEED® Certified) is a physical demonstration of the Center for Discovery's mission to provide a healing environment for their disabled clients, many of whom are victims of environmental toxins. The project's primary goal was to eliminate all known or suspected toxic chemicals from building materials. The financial incentive provided by NYSERDA for coupling radiant slab heating and ground source heat pumps also grew out of the Center's mission and delivery of care, which specified radiant heating to enhance the occupants' thermal comfort. ("Anything is Possible: the Center for Discovery Believes in the Impossible – for its Clients and Health-Care Facility," *eco-structure* magazine, July/August 2006, <http://www.eco-structure.com>)
- Providence Newberg Medical Center published a press release to mark the day they were certified as the first hospital to achieve LEED® Gold Certification. The press release emphasizes Providence health system's leadership role as an organization committed to providing a healthy, healing environment to their patients, staff and visitors. Local and state energy incentive packages will shorten the payback period associated with the green design to 14 months. Providence plans to reinvest the 26% annual energy design savings in patient care and the community. ("Providence Newberg Gets Green – And Gold! New Medical Center is 'Greenest' Hospital in the Nation," http://www.providence.org/yamhill/news_events/n_greenest_080806.htm)

The CEO's Perspective

A series of white papers sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation entitled "Designing the 21st Century Hospital: Environmental Leadership for Healthier Patients and Facilities" was released in late September by the Center for Health Design and Health Care Without Harm. One paper in the series, "Values-Driven Design and Construction: Enriching Community Benefits through Green Hospitals," reviews the motivating factors behind early adopter hospitals' decision to construct and operate environmentally friendly facilities.

Significantly, the paper finds that healthcare institutions that decide to construct a green building are largely motivated by the strong correlation between green building principles and their mission to provide healing and community stewardship. Traditional green building business case arguments – such as energy and water savings – played a role in assessing the project's level of success, but the purpose for constructing and operating a green building remained the realization that leading healthcare institutions have an obligation to provide a healthy, healing environment for their patients and staff, not just a building.

Download a PDF of the white papers at our website for no charge: www.gghc.org.

News

1. Join us on Friday, November 3 from 1-2:30 ET for the next H2E (Hospitals for a Healthy Environment) Green Building teleconference: [Building Materials & Human Health! Effective November 2006, all H2E teleconferences will become an H2E Subscriber Benefit.](#) For an annual \$199 subscription fee, H2E Subscribers will have access to 26 teleconferences (including green building topics), the ability to apply for H2E awards, and staff technical assistance. Visit <http://h2e-online.org/subscribe/index.htm> for more information.
2. On November 5, "Designing the 21st Century Hospital: First Do No Harm", a workshop at **Healthcare Design 06** in Chicago, Illinois, will present five groundbreaking white papers. See the "Green Guide Tips" article for more information. Register at: www.healthcaredesignmagazine.com/Conference.htm.
3. Two half-day trainings "Using LEED for New Construction on Healthcare Projects" will be offered at the US Green Building Council's **Greenbuild** conference: Tuesday, November 14 and Friday, November 17. Register at: www.greenbuildexpo.org.
4. **Wall Street Journal** article from **October 4** highlights the **Green Guide for Health Care!** Several *Green Guide* Pilot projects are listed as examples of the healthcare industry's push to provide healthy, healing environments for patients and staff. *Green Guide* Pilots cited in the article: Kaiser Permanente Modesto Medical Center, Gabrielle Women's and Children's Pavilion – Hackensack University Medical Center, Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas. For more information, visit: <http://www.wallstreetjournal.com>.
5. **New report finds that common substances in hospitals can cause asthma**, including cleaning chemicals, fumes from building materials and latex gloves. The first-of-its-kind report, released by Health Care Without Harm, presents rigorously researched information about asthma triggers and asthmagens found in health care settings, and shows how to reduce problematic exposures. For more information, visit: <http://www.noharm.org>.
6. **Register a project with the Green Guide for Health Care!** *Green Guide* website registrants can register projects at no charge by logging into the website and following the prompts on the **Pilot** web page. Project registration is fast and easy and grants the project coordinator access to online tools such as checklists and a list-serve open only to *Green Guide* projects.
7. **Support the Green Guide for Health Care!** Visit the **Supporters** section of the *Green Guide* website for information on how to support our work. All donations to the *Green Guide* are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.
8. **The Green Guide welcomes our new Endorser:** Panel Source International.