Healthy Food in Health Care Workgroup

Rhode Island

NEW ENGLAND TEAM

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CORE PARTNERS

Rhode Island Food Policy Council
Farm Fresh Rhode Island
Farm to Institution New England
Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance
Healthier Hospitals Initiative
HCWH Global Climate Initiative
Farm to School Network
Real Food Challenge

Healthy Food in Health Care Program

Healthy Food in Health Care (HFHC) is a national initiative of Health Care Without Harm (HCWH), developed in conjunction with its member organizations. We harness the purchasing power and expertise of the health care sector to advance the development of a sustainable food system. Founded in 2005, the program provides education, tools, resources, and support for facilities to implement programs that explicitly connect all aspects of the food system with health. We catalyze sustainable procurement efforts, create clinician advocates, and inspire health care institutions to become leaders in shaping a food system that supports prevention-based health care. The HFHC program also helps to coordinate the Healthier Food Challenge of the Healthier Hospitals Initiative (HHI), a national sustainability initiative for the healthcare sector.

Rhode Island Workgroup

This is one of 7 health care food service learning collaboratives underway in New England. Co-Chaired by Rhode Island Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E), this workgroup is composed of representatives from Rhode Island hospitals that are currently engaged in healthy food work and are considered leaders in the implementation of innovative healthy food and beverage strategies. Participating facilities utilize this forum to identify opportunities to mobilize the groups' collective power and social influence to improve environmental and population health, support the local economy, and achieve the goals of the Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge and the Healthier Hospitals Initiative Food Challenge.

Rhode Island Food Facts

- Obesity rates in Rhode Island grew from 18.5% in 2003 to 25.7% in 2013.
- The Rhode Island Food Policy Council convened to develop policies, and advocate for improvements to the local food system to increase and expand its capacity, viability and sustainability. Their Production workgroup focuses on increasing demand from the institutional sector.
- The Rhode Island greening apple was designated the official state fruit of in 1991. Developed in Rhode Island around 1796, the flesh of greening apples is yellow-green and crisp and keeps its sharp taste in cooking.
- The latest USDA data (2012) shows the number of farms, at 1,243, is up 2% from 2007. Land in farms, at 69,589 acres, is up 3 percent from 2007. The average farm size was 56 acres and the median farm size was 24

Return on Investment

As a result of the Affordable Care Act, ACO providers now have an incentive to promote population health. Activities of this work group aim to:

- Increase access to healthy food
- Create an environment of health for hospital staff and visitors
- Communicate demand to the supply chain to make healthy food affordable
- Reduce the overuse of antibiotics to impact the emergence of antibiotic resistant infections
- Reduce individual and community exposure to environmental toxins in our food system that promote chronic illness
- Promote disaster resilience by building a regional food system

As a result, your facility becomes a key player in prevention-based care. Healthier staff and community means lower health care costs



Resource Needs

As a leader in this work, the path to success needs to be paved by champions in the sector. Time, money and support are the 3 key resources of success. The following is necessary for us to support your internal efforts:

Food Service Director participation
Work group and sub-committee meetings are held on a quarterly basis and may require interim participation for follow up communication, information gathering, and shared strategies as agreed on by workgroup to move this work forward

Hospital Leadership Support
Regular touch-base meetings are suggested for participants to connect with hospital leadership on progress and potential needs. Support for compliance with contracted food service management companies or vendors

Budget Flexibility
Although many sustainability initiatives yield a cost savings there are times when product shifts or new purchasing pathways require an initial investment. Working with your team to determine a manageable margin during this transition period will assist in shifting the broader market. By showcasing this demand, you are playing a critical role in shifting the food system towards increased accessibility and lower costs for healthy foods like antibiotic free meats.

Getting Involved

FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS & PURCHASING AGENTS
Contact Us to participate in Work Group activities

CLINICIANS
Contact HCWH Senior Clinical Advisor to join the growing network of clinicians active in policy and supporting institutional change.

ADMINISTRATORS
Enroll in the Healthier Hospitals Initiative
www.healthierhospitals.org

Healthier Hospitals INITIATIVE

Learn More at:
healthyfoodinhealthcare.org