

Transformational sustainability process in a Children's hospital for chronic diseases (FKG)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Lancet commission and the WHO have characterised Climate Change (CC) as the biggest global health care challenge and threat of our century. Meanwhile several countries have declared a climate emergency with pressing imminent actions to stay well below 2°C temperature increase, to avoid a point of no return - ideally at about 1,5° C.

ISSUES

Would the healthcare sector worldwide be a country it would be the 5th biggest carbon emitter. The next 5 to 10 years are crucial to significantly reduce our CO₂ emissions, to preserve our CO₂ budget and slow down the 9 active climate tipping points. The new IPCC report highlights that we need imminent actions to avoid the point of no return of our survival on our planet. If we continue with the current way, we will reach 3°C temperature increase that will result in a climate breakdown and an uninhabitable earth that with all means have to be avoided..



VISION, STRATEGY AND ACTIONS

We started with a top-down approach through the Medical Director (MD) of the hospital, involved all departments and staff but also patients. Leading by example is one of the key messages. Education and awareness are central topics so that patients and staff get a 75-minutes lecture on "CC and Health" by the MD. To visualise the various efforts, we have mounted a "green board" in the hospital depicting publications, facts, and projects to inform staff and patients. We continuously reduce the CO₂ emission of the hospital by cutting our energy consumption, introducing recycling, increasing awareness through teaching, ongoing education, webinars, publications and conferences, minimising food waste, introducing a meat-free day, initiating CO₂ conscious conference and travel guidelines. In collaboration with other colleagues, we developed and published a zero-emission hospital framework to enable other hospitals to engage in a change management process

... to become sustainable and carbon neutral.

CHALLENGES

Hospitals worldwide need to engage in an ongoing transformational process of various areas to become carbon neutral and decrease their environmental footprint. As nurses and doctors are at the forefront of healthcare delivery they should engage as main drivers in the various efforts. We, FKG, apply a behavioural transformational change management tool kit as well as the reiterated PDCA (Plan, do, change, act) cycle. Major action areas are sustainable changes in procurement, energy efficiency, consumption, food, nutrition, recycling, heating, water consumption, education, transportation, reduction of single use plastics, food ban of endangered species (e.g. tuna), medication and pharmaceuticals, local food procurement, use of reusable boxes, water fountains and reusable bottles, green energy (PV), sustainable travelling, awareness, information and education, use of environmentally friendly detergents, bio-diversity gardening, green spaces, and green leadership.

vegan & vegetarian
food

