



# Advancing Sustainability in Healthcare Procurement

---

Juan Escalante, Assistant Administrator, Harborview Medical Center  
Tara Biss, Value Analysis Portfolio Manager, UW Medicine  
August 2024

UW Medicine

# AGENDA

---

- Importance of sustainability
- Industry drivers
- UW Medicine initiatives and accomplishments
- Single Use Device Reprocessing program implementation and growth
- Supply Chain sustainability initiatives: Environmentally Preferred Products (EPP)

# UW Medicine

## Overview\*

7 entities

3 hospitals (4 sites)

1,651 licensed beds

35,000 employees

61,323 admissions

208,672 ED visits

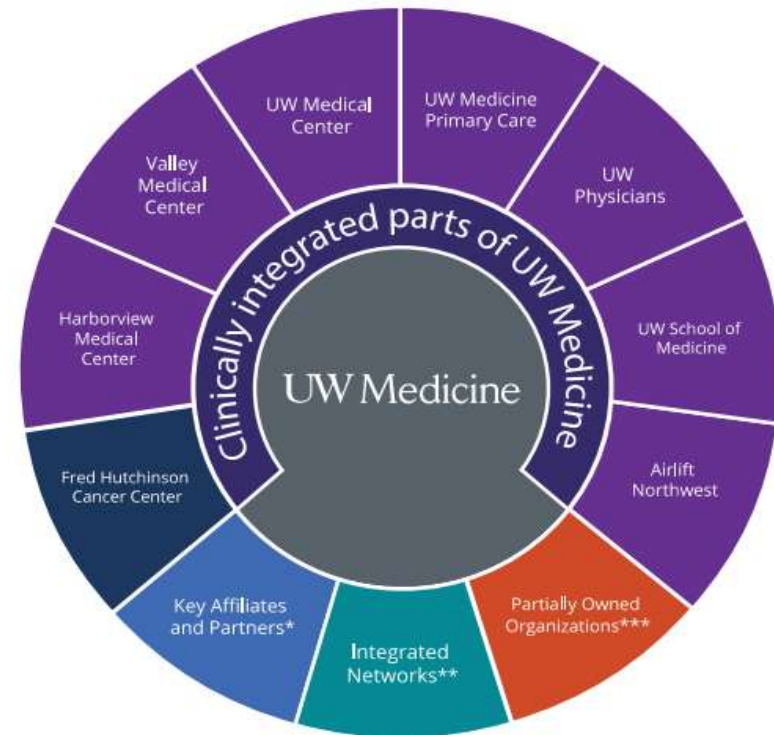
60,668 OR procedures

6,316 births

1,867,244 ambulatory visits

\$836 Million in uncompensated care

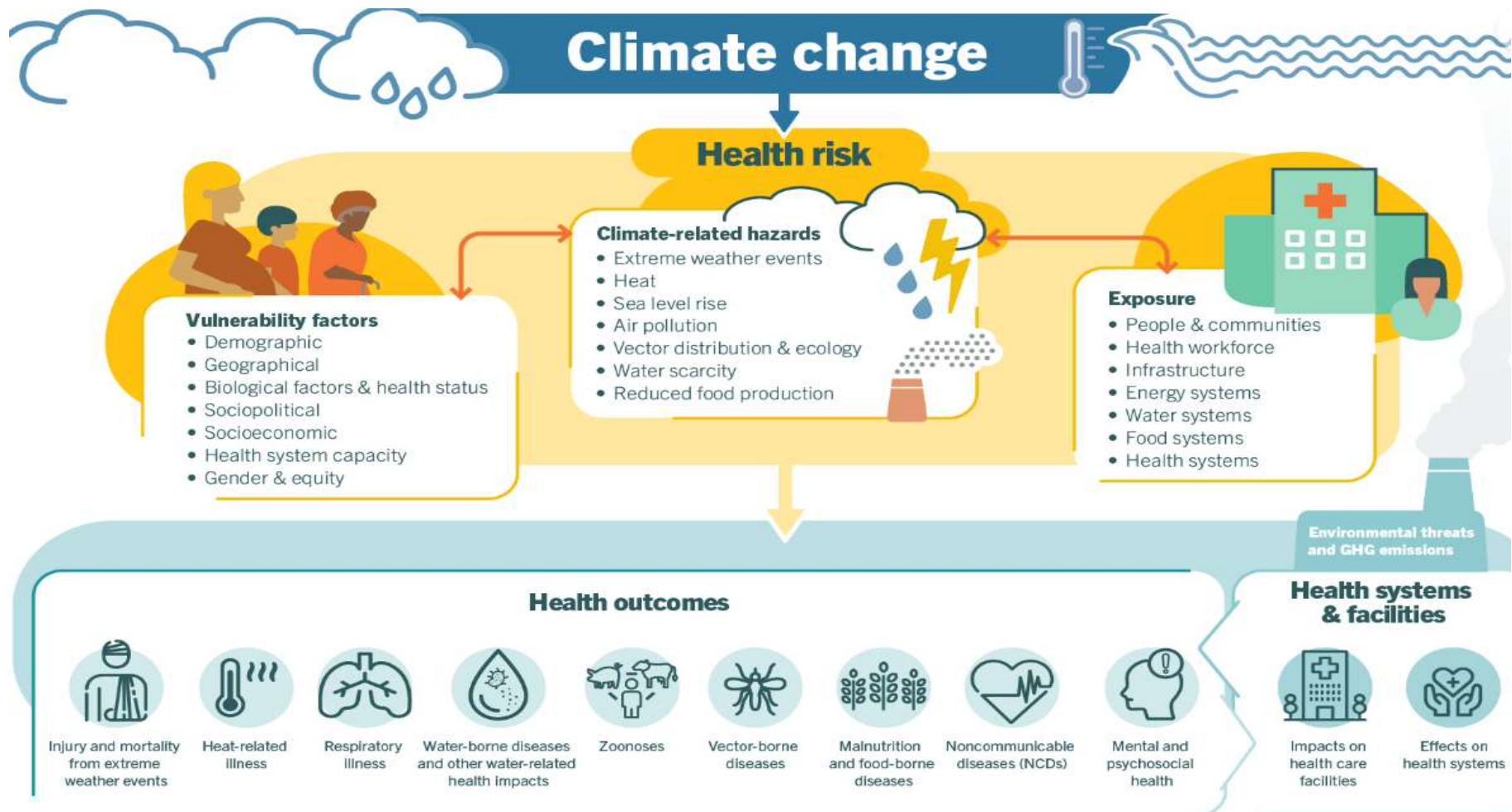
\$1.3 Billion in annual Supply Chain spend



\*2023 Statistics  
CONFIDENTIAL - DO NOT DISTRIBUTE

UW Medicine

# Importance of Sustainability in Healthcare



Source: World Health Organization [Climate change \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int)

# Additional Benefits

**Public Health**  
Improve air and water quality,  
reduce chemical burden,  
lessen spread of illnesses



# Current Challenges and Opportunities



## Challenges Faced by Hospitals in Achieving Sustainability Goals

- Governance
- Conflicting priorities
- Resources: Financial and Staffing
- Change management

## Opportunities for Improvement

- Committee creation
- Pathways to decision making
- Building a culture of sustainability
- Accountability for leaders

# Industry Drivers of Sustainability

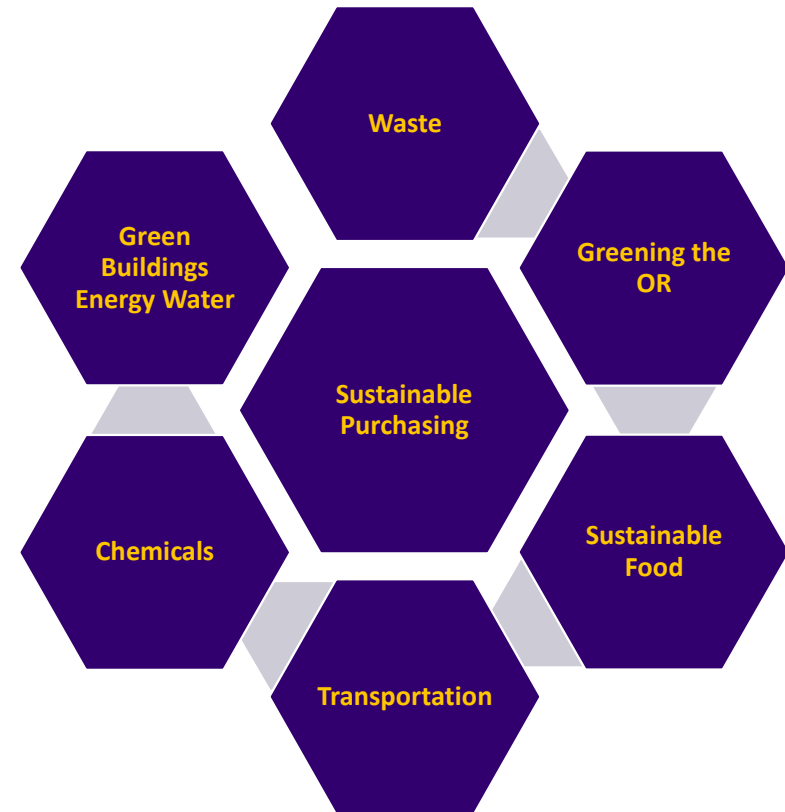




# Sustainability at UW Medicine

## Our Responsibilities:

- Anticipate, plan for and mitigate the risks of climate change
- Identify and care for patients most at-risk from climate events and work to reduce health disparities
- Reduce the environmental harm from our healthcare operations





# UW Medicine Accomplishments



Signed the HHS White House Health Sector Climate Pledge



Launched public facing sustainability web site with the UWM commitment statement



Completed GHG Inventory for Scope 1, 2, and 3 with University of WA



Submitted Survey on Climate Change for the Medicaid Quality Incentive Program



Participated in School of Medicine Climate Change in Clinical Practice Symposium



Recent Awards: Stryker Sustainability Solutions Healthy Hospital Platinum and Gold Awards, Practice Greenhealth Awards (HMC), Husky Sustainability Award (HMC)

# BLUE WRAP

---

- Started August 2022
- Baled onsite
- Recycled at Denton Plastics in Portland, OR
- Only blue wrap
  - Table cover wrap, gown wrap, etc. are a different materials

**Diverted ~ 4 tons in 1 year!**



# Nitrous Oxide GHG Emissions

Nationally, Hospitals are Taking Steps to Reduce Emissions from Anesthetic Gases

## UW Medicine - A System Approach

### Montlake

- Anesthesiologists led efforts to reduce the clinical use of N2O

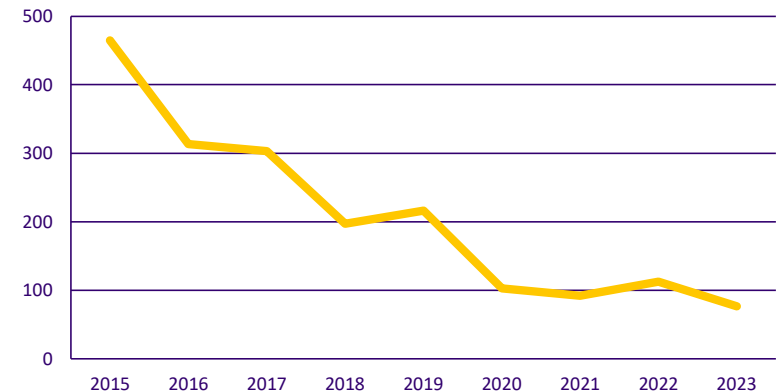
### Harborview

- Initiated a project to decommission central supply of N2O

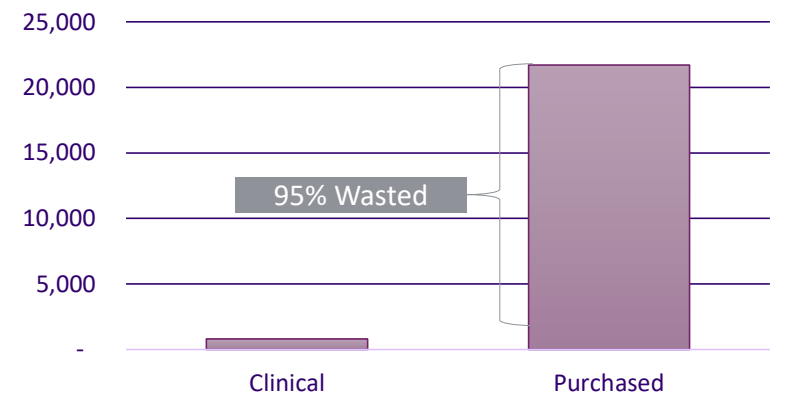
### UWMC

- Apply lessons learned from HMC to evaluate decommissioning at Northwest and Montlake

Clinical Nitrous Use UWMC Montlake (lb)



2022 Clinical Nitrous Use v Purchased HMC (lb)



UW Medicine

# SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS

- Solar panels and renewable energy
- MHA Capstone sponsorship
- Green Building Standards
  - Water
  - Energy
  - Materials
- Circular economy and product reuse
- Transportation planning
- Nutrition Wellness
  - Food Scarcity and Access
  - Local Sourcing
  - Antibiotic Free Proteins
- Single Use Device reprocessing
- Materials with recycle Content
- Life Cycle assessments



# Economic Benefits of Sustainability



Use of reusable sharps containers saves **\$230,000** annually.



UW Medicine save more than **\$200,000** per year by diverting compost and recycling out of the landfill.



Updates to fluid management systems and OR kit reformation led to **\$265,000** in savings.

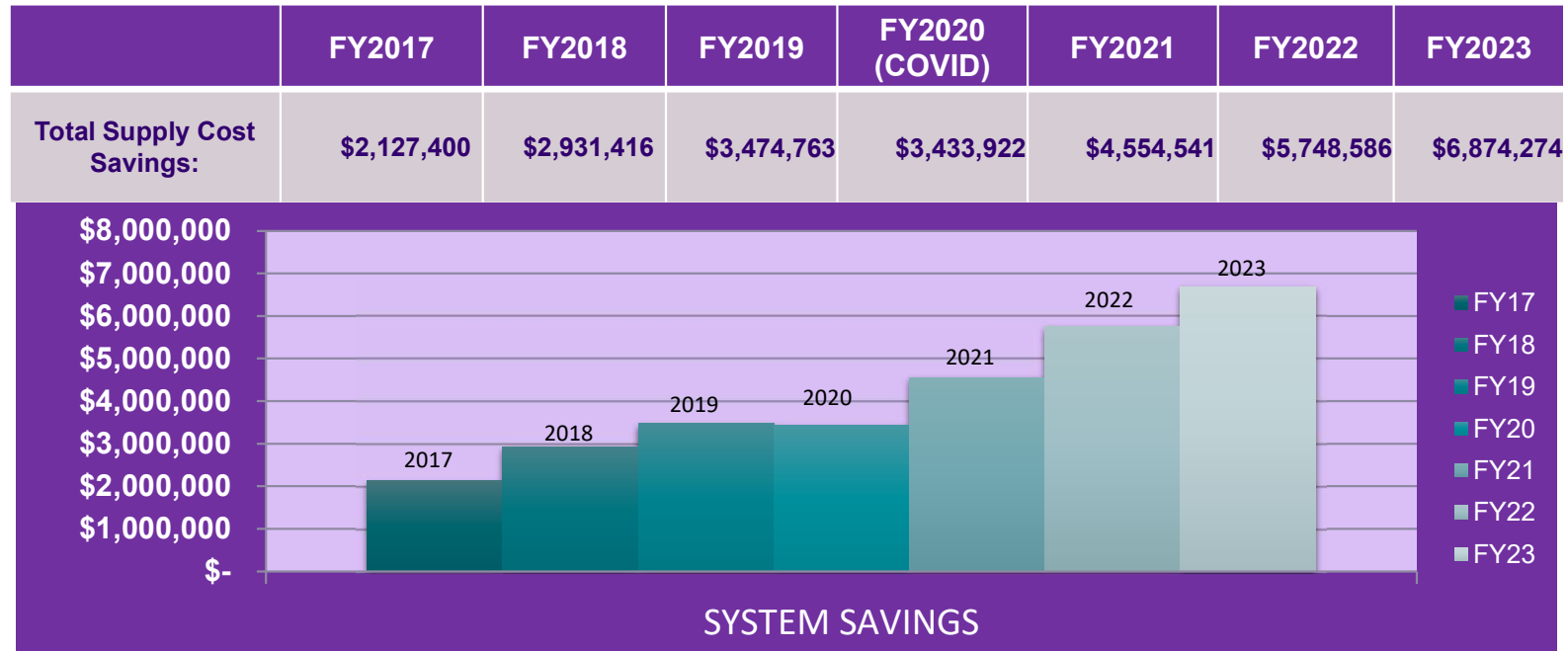


Standardized Facial Protection reducing SKU counts. Cost Savings: **\$300,000+**



The UWM Supply Chain single use device reprocessing program has saved over **\$27 million**.

# UW Medicine Single Use Device Reprocessing Program Growth



- **450k+** Pounds of waste diverted from landfills
- **869** Trees planted on behalf of UW Medicine
- **\$42,000** worth of precious metal recycled



# Changing the Climate around SUD Reprocessing



*How do we get buy-in to participate in a single use device reprocessing program?*

1. Trust: Partner with a vendor who can ensure quality and provide clinical support
2. Engage: Work to find clinical and business leaders who will support the program
3. Manage: Work to identify push-back early and take action to alleviate concerns
4. Communicate: Celebrate milestones and statistics





# Choosing the Best Reprocessing Partner

## Top 3 Most Important Factors

1. **Quality Products and Packaging:** Individual item testing and quality control to ensure device functionality and compliance to FDA specs to meet or exceed the OEM standards. Is the packaging equivalent to the OEM?
2. **Product Availability/Fill Rate:** Is buy-back solely based on your own facility's collections, or is there surplus available? Can the vendor fill 100% of your volume, or provide a specific guaranteed percentage based on individual item usage stats?
3. **Customer Service:** Is there trained and dedicated staff to provide ongoing education, clinical support and concern mitigation, risk management (combat anti-reprocessing tactics), report trends and stats, manage collections, and more.

# Implementing a Successful Reprocessing Program



## Gather supporters and clinical sponsors:

Cardiology/EP lab provider  
General Surgery provider  
Business Managers  
Bio-med  
Infection Prevention  
Contracting  
Supply Chain ops and logistics  
Value Analysis  
Nursing leader



## Create a Reprocessing Task Force:

Schedule routine meetings to assess opportunities and assign clear specific action items for operationalizing a product or category of products. Identify who will:

- Coordinate product evaluations and approvals
- Assess contract constraints
- Assess full financial impact
- Update/add item to database (Tip: share with OEM#)
- Coordinate with distributor if applicable
- Communicate through committees or clinical departments as needed
- Update/add labels, bins, preference cards, other ops and logistics

# UW Medicine Supply Chain Initiatives



How can we increase our purchases of environmentally friendly products? Pay attention to supplier's Environmentally Preferred attributes.

- Survey suppliers on their manufacturing processes and incorporate specific criteria into product selections. **Beware of Greenwashing.** <https://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/GreenPurchasingGuide.pdf>
- Create a Policy and Procedure to ensure that Strategic Sourcing and Procurement consider environmental impact before awarding contracts and moving forward with product approvals and purchases.
- Partner with GPO to identify opportunities to improve our Environmentally Preferred Purchasing (EPP)
- **2024 Success Story:** Standardized Facial Protection to the manufacturer with the highest amount of EP attributes, 15 of 23. Reduced SKU count from 39 to 13 by removing various color and brand options (eliminated pink, purple, green). Cost Savings: \$300,000+
- **2024 In Progress:** Converting away from single use Foam positioners to reusable Gel, focus on head donut positioners first, then heel protection, ulnar protection and some large foam positioners. *Harborview has already converted.*

# Beware of Greenwashing



**Greenwashing:** The act of providing the public or investors with misleading or outright false information about the environmental impact of a company's products and operations.

- A plastic package containing a new shower curtain is labeled “recyclable.” It is not clear whether the package or the shower curtain is recyclable. In either case, the label is deceptive if any part of the package or its contents, other than minor components, cannot be recycled.
- An area rug is labeled “50% more recycled content than before.” In fact, the manufacturer increased the recycled content to 3% from 2%. Although technically true, the message conveys the false impression that the rug contains a significant amount of recycled fiber.
- A trash bag is labeled “recyclable.” Trash bags are not ordinarily separated from other trash at the landfill or incinerator, so they are highly unlikely to be used again for any purpose. The claim is deceptive because it asserts an environmental benefit where no meaningful benefit exists.

# Conclusion

---

- Sustainability is everyone's responsibility
- Importance of Purchasing for Sustainability Programs and initiatives
- Be mindful of greenwashing
- We are in this together



---

# QUESTIONS?

