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The sustainability landscape is
GETTING GREENER

What you need to know about changing healthcare regulations

IN THE MONTHS AHEAD, NEW ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS are expected to impact many organizations, including hospitals and health systems. For example, in March, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission announced new climate reporting standards requiring many publicly traded companies to disclose Scope 1 and 2 emissions, if deemed material. While California is the first state to implement climate disclosure laws, other states are expected to follow suit. And The Joint Commission has implemented a voluntary Sustainable Healthcare Certification (SHC) program for U.S. hospitals, reflecting the importance it places on reducing environmental impacts generated by America's healthcare system.

The good news for our members is that taking concrete action on sustainability initiatives can bring many other benefits to hospitals, health systems and potentially to the communities they serve. Reducing emissions reduces energy costs, and many sustainability initiatives contribute to building a resilient healthcare system, which is increasingly important as natural disasters become more frequent.

"Hospitals are in varying stages of their focus on these initiatives. Regardless of where they are in their sustainability journey, HealthTrust is a trusted partner to help them navigate their options. A number of the solutions we offer will help them meet sustainability regulations,

Photo: Getty Images/Sakorn Sukkasemsakorn

provide resiliency in the event they need it, and, in some instances, save money," explains **Nikko Giovino**, AVP, Strategic Sourcing Commercial Products, Energy & Facilities at HealthTrust.

MEMBERS INFORMING DECISIONS

HealthTrust's Commercial Products team continues to grow its sustainability offerings in response to members' needs. The work of the HealthTrust Energy team goes beyond sourcing energy (electricity and natural gas) to also advising on energy efficiency initiatives and helping members to identify incentives and rebates for capital projects. Members have access to HealthTrust's contracted suppliers that offer equipment such as LED lighting, solar panels and energy efficient boilers/chillers, as well as a national agreement with Bernard ProStar, a turnkey energy infrastructure provider that designs and builds high-efficiency systems.

In 2023, HealthTrust created an Energy Sustainability Committee. The committee comprises 18 member hospitals/health systems with subject matter experts who help guide the expansion of HealthTrust's sustainability offerings. This includes vetting additional products and services and making recommendations about whether or not those solutions should be added to the HealthTrust contract portfolio, making them available to the broader membership. "It's an avenue for us to understand the opportunities for environmental contracting solutions—everything from emission reduction resources and services for creating efficiencies, to tangible products such as LED lighting or low VOC paints, to technology tools, software and platforms for tracking and reporting progress on their initiatives," adds Giovino.

The committee also serves as a forum to enable members to share best practices and discuss pertinent regulatory news related to sustainability in healthcare. Recently, the Energy Sustainability Committee identified related software and platforms as a priority to help members prepare for the upcoming regulations mentioned previously.

THE 411 ON SUSTAINABILITY SOFTWARE

Sustainability software enables hospitals and health systems to collect, measure, analyze and report on environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance and impact. It can also help save money, for example, by reducing manual data entry costs or by identifying overcharges from energy or waste management providers. "There are real cost savings often uncovered by using the

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> – Nikko Giovino

software that can well exceed a member's investment in the technology," Giovino explains.

For members at varying stages of their sustainability journey, we are often asked where they should start. "Before tackling large, expensive projects, such as installing a microgrid or battery storage, we suggest using the sustainability software to understand their baseline emissions or to assess if their building's heating and cooling systems are performing optimally," says **Lucinda Madura**, Director, Strategic Sourcing Commercial Products, Facilities at HealthTrust.

The software can offer insights into how retro-commissioning or more regular maintenance can improve the efficiency of existing equipment such as boilers and generators. Scenario planning—a powerful feature of many sustainability platforms—can determine ROI timelines on capital projects and help members determine possible pathways to achieving net zero carbon emissions.

"It can help them determine if a solution implemented in their facility is going to make an impact and evaluate if the investment is worth it. It's a way to assess whether the money will be well-spent and effectively move them toward meeting their goals," Giovino adds.

CHOICE OF 3 CONTRACTED SOLUTIONS

HealthTrust currently has contracts with three sustainability platforms: nZero, SitelogIQ and Key Green Solutions. Each automates data collection and includes a dashboard that helps identify key metrics, such as total carbon emissions, energy use and water consumption. A trend indicator uses historical data as a baseline to identify trends over time. Each platform can also report Scope 1 and 2 emissions and conduct scenario planning.

Madura recommends keeping your sustainability goals in mind when evaluating software. Each platform has unique attributes that make it a better option depending on your areas of focus and where your organization is on its sustainability journey. "Key Green has a module focusing specifically on waste, whereas SitelogIQ focuses more on retro-commissioning. nZero is really strong around goal setting and what-if scenarios," she explains.

GET TRACKING

Each option is comparably priced. Madura recommends doing a demo with at least two of the suppliers, keeping in mind the onboarding, set-up time and work required for each before choosing one.

HealthTrust's Member Portal holds information on all three sustainability software options. "It shows what each dashboard would look like if you selected that supplier. It highlights similar, as well as unique, attributes across the three suppliers in addition to their pricing structures," says Madura.

"As members use the software we have on contract, they're going to find many opportunities for savings," adds Giovino. "And when it comes to sustainability, it moves their organization toward achieving its goals and helps position them to be ready to respond to regulatory pressures around the environment." Members are encouraged to visit the HealthTrust Knowledge Library (hpginsights.com) as a resource for many product, category and evidence-related insights. ●

Visit the HealthTrust Member Portal to compare features among the on-contract sustainability software suppliers:

Key Green Solutions – Contract #105835

nZero – Contract #106753

SitelogIQ – Contract #106913

FOR MORE INFORMATION on **sustainability software suppliers, contact your Account Manager or email the HealthTrust Commercial Services team at commercial@healthtrustpg.com**