Menu of Change
HEALTHY FOOD IN HEALTH CARE

A 2015 New England Program Report with Highlights and Survey
The New England Healthy Food in Health Care program network has grown to 140 participating healthcare facilities, 64 of which have signed the Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge. New England has a dynamic network of organizations, charitable foundations, individuals, and healthcare leaders working to build the region’s food system, and we engage with this community in multiple ways. We work to support our region’s fishing and farming communities, network health care with other institutional sectors to make food system change, and improve access to healthy, local, and sustainable foods.

Hospital Leadership Teams in each of the six New England States bring together these engaged hospitals to leverage collective buying power, share innovative strategies, best practices, and product information, and learn about key issues. A few highlights over the past two years have included:

**Better Meat**
The New England HFHC Program works actively with facilities and their suppliers to increase the availability of meats raised without routine antibiotics. To this end, we convened a New England Meat Workshop in June, 2015, bringing together healthcare representatives with their suppliers and local meat producers to discuss ways to supply healthcare institutions with meat in New England produced without routine antibiotics.

Additionally, we assisted the Massachusetts Hospital Association in launching their Antibiotic Stewardship Initiative in April 2015. Sixteen hospitals have signed on to date, committing to transition one regularly purchased meat item to a source raised without routine antibiotics and to work with their suppliers to increase the options available to them.

Finally, we rallied New England health care to take action on antibiotic use in agriculture on Food Day in 2014 and 2015 with over 75 healthcare facilities serving an estimated 25,856 meals with meat raised without routine antibiotics. Seventy-four percent of meat purchased was from sources local to the region.

**Upstream Investing in Healthier Food Systems**
In 2014, we conducted a landscape assessment in Massachusetts to better understand the ways in which health care was integrating food access and food systems into their community benefit work. The study found that 36 facilities conducted a total of 80 activities related to food systems, including nutrition classes, fruit and vegetable prescription programs, food pantries, farmers markets and more. As a result of the Massachusetts based research, HCWH has secured a grant to conduct this research at a national scale and develop a toolkit that will assist facilities in replicating successful programs.
REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Local and Sustainable Purchasing
The New England HFHC Program takes full advantage of the diversity of the regional food system on land and at sea with a number of focused sustainable food purchasing initiatives, including:

- **Produce** - Health Care Without Harm worked with FairAcre Traders, an aggregator of produce from food hubs across New England, to identify hospital clients for their pilot launch which facilitated new purchases of local produce by participating hospitals.

- **Seafood** - We continue to promote access to local, wild, seasonal seafood for New England facilities with efforts to promote underutilized varieties of fish and domestic, chemical-free shrimp. Our latest effort is in collaboration with New Hampshire Community Seafood on a seafood-purchasing pilot with New Hampshire hospitals launched in July of 2015.

- **Local Foods** - Using a fun and competitive structure, the Rhode Island Health Care Local Foods Challenge is inspiring six participating Rhode Island hospitals to support New England food producers and fishers. Launched in May 2015, the challenge is a competition for $1000 in prize money to the hospital that best procures and promotes local foods.

2015 Farm to Institution Summit
The New England Healthy Food in Health Care program hosted our second regional convening of healthcare representatives, as a component of a larger three-day cross-sector Farm to Institution Summit attended by over 650 individuals committed to increasing local and sustainable food procurement by the region’s institutions. The healthcare forum drew over 150 participants and brought together members of the supply chain, advocacy organizations, and healthcare leaders to discuss ways to improve access to local and sustainable foods.

New Resources and Reports

Setting the Table for Success: A Toolkit for Increasing Local Food Purchasing by Institutional Food Service Management, developed as part of Farm to Institution New England’s Food Service Project to assist institutions in utilizing the request for proposal (RFP) and contract negotiation processes to increase purchases of local foods.

Choosing Seafood for Health Care - New England Sustainable Food Product Registry - A place for facilities to share and identify local and sustainable foods that work for a healthcare setting.

**PARTNERING WITH LOCAL FISHERMEN**

“Boston Medical Center has transitioned from using frozen farm-raised fish to exclusively buying from local Gloucester fisherman. By partnering with the Gloucester Fisherman Wives Association, Boston Medical Center provides wild caught, fresh, and local fish to its patients and employees while also supporting local fisherman.”

— Boston Medical Center - Boston, MA
Health Care Without Harm seeks to transform the health sector worldwide, without compromising patient safety or care, so that it becomes ecologically sustainable and a leading advocate for environmental health and justice.

With offices in the United States, Europe, Latin America, and Asia, HCWH is an international coalition of hospitals and health care systems, medical professionals, community groups, health-affected constituencies, labor unions, environmental and environmental health organizations, and religious groups.

This report was produced by Health Care Without Harm’s national Healthy Food in Health Care program, which harnesses the purchasing power and expertise of the health care sector to advance the development of a sustainable food system.

Visit [www.no-harm.org](http://www.no-harm.org) for more information.

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