



# From Challenge to Opportunity: The Evolving Role of Virginia FQHCs in a Changing Climate

September 29, 2023



# Introducing Our Team



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Driving Performance, Growth, Value

[www.CSuite3.com](http://www.CSuite3.com)

- Created and implemented health care system solutions over many years related to EHRs, Affordable Care Act, and new payment models
- Rally healthcare leaders to think differently and transform imagined possibilities into concrete results
- Inspire team members to learn quickly, collaborate, and embrace the opportunities of a changing environment

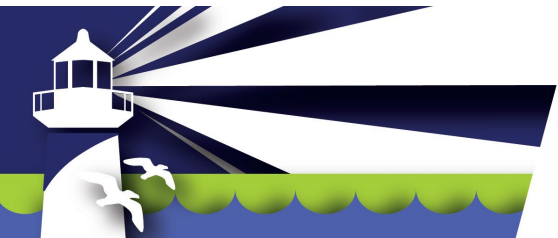
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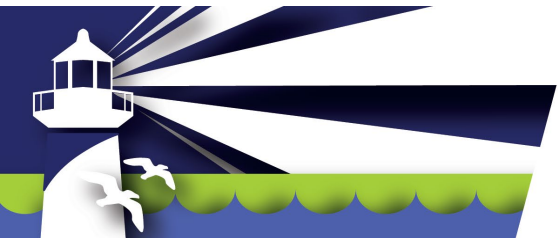
# Goals for the Session



- **Highlight critical implications of climate change for Virginia's FQHCs and the people you serve**
- **Share ideas from health systems who have already started their journeys**
- **Provide information about funding, regulatory agencies, and other resources**
- **Inspire you to launch your own climate change mitigation journey and create an action plan**



# THE CHALLENGE



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# Climate Change: Now Part of Our Lives



Heat record after heat record will be broken in 2023

## *The New York Times*

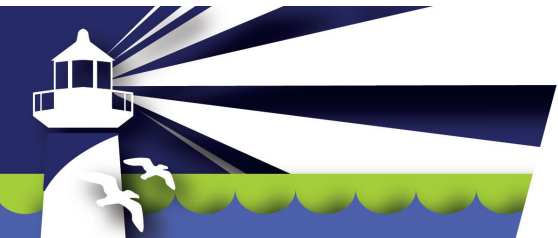
Utilities in U.S. urge conservation as sizzling temperatures increase demand for power

## *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

Richmond City Council unanimously backs plan to battle climate change

## *The Virginian-Pilot*

As the planet warms, scientists worry that cases of infectious diseases could spike



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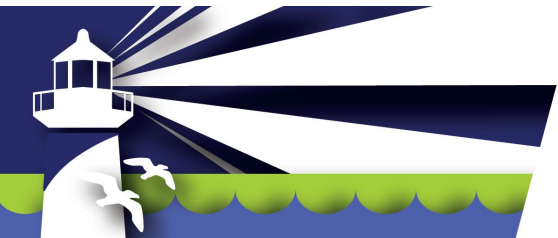
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# Poll Question: What can Virginia Expect?

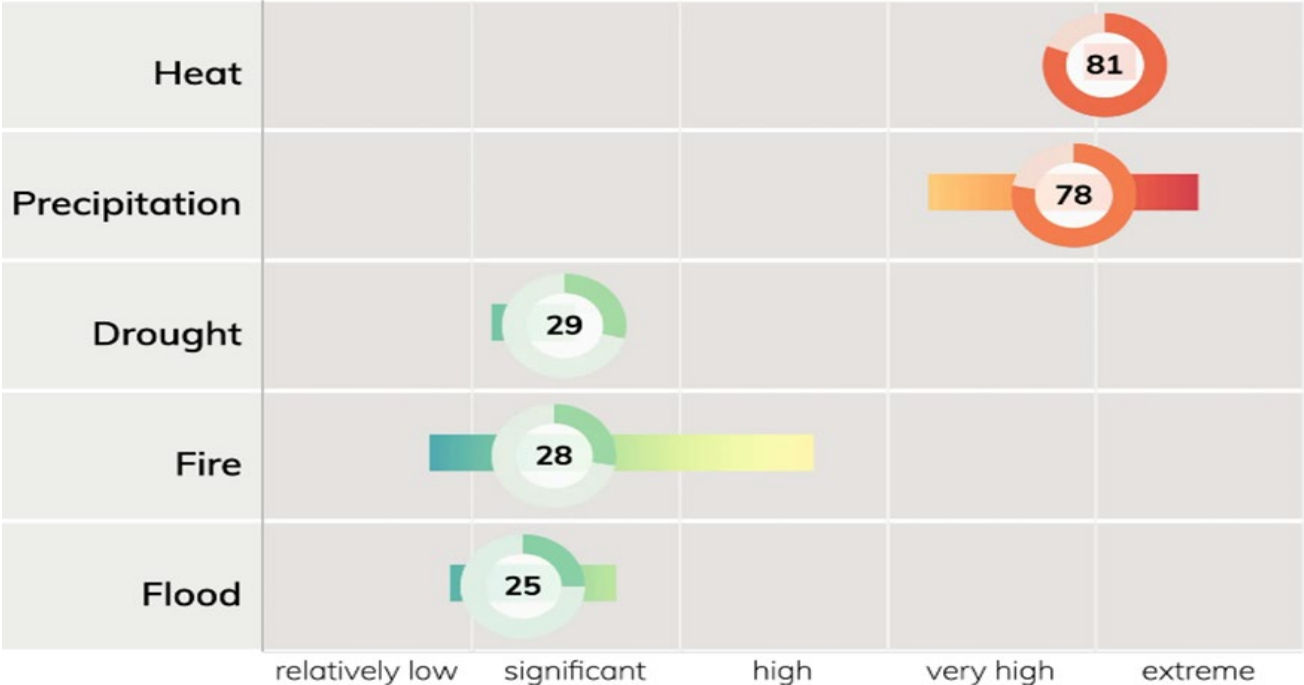
**In Virginia, which of these will be exacerbated most by climate change? Rate these risks by low (1), significant (2), high (3), very high (4), extreme (5) – some risks may be the same**

- Heat
- Precipitation
- Drought
- Fire
- Flood

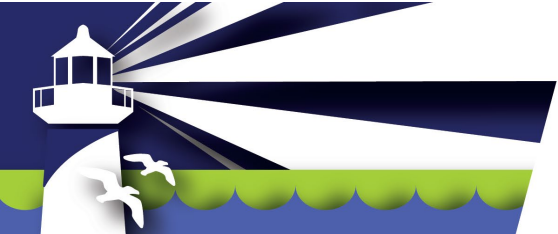


# Virginia Climate Change Forecast

Median Risk Ratings for Virginia



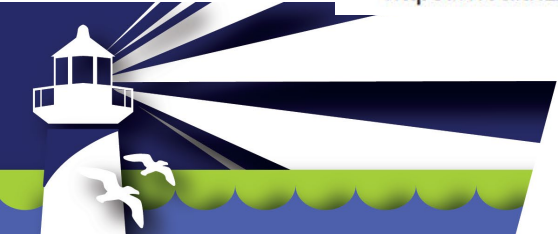
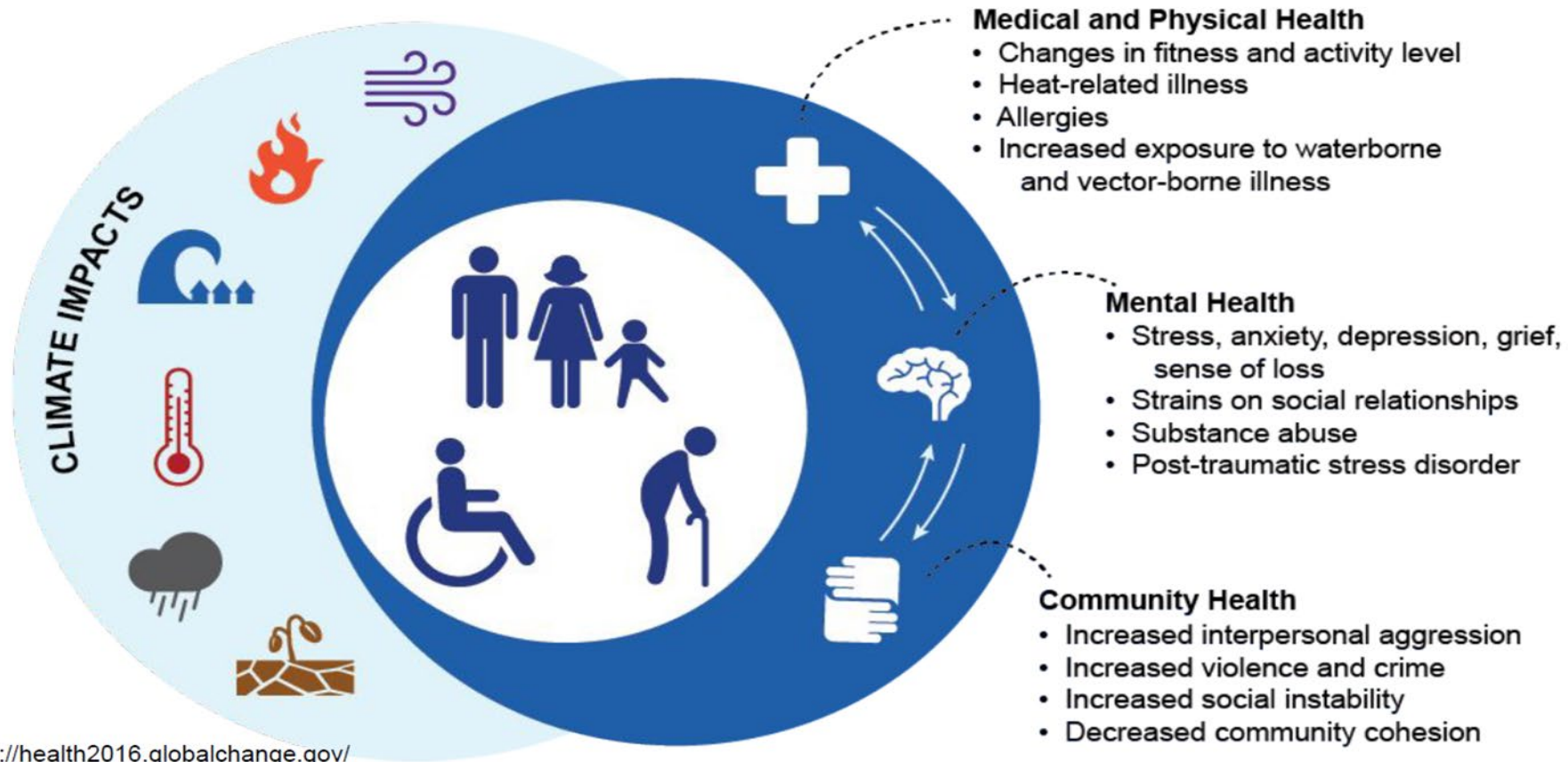
CLIMATE RISK REPORT  
[www.climatecheck.com](http://www.climatecheck.com)



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# Impact of Climate Change on Human Health



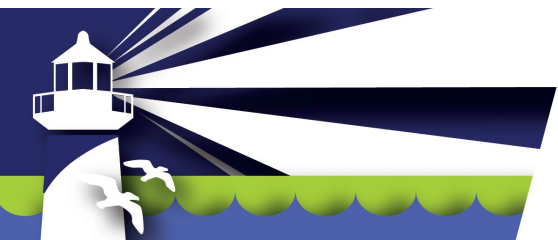


# Clinic Staff are Feeling the Impact

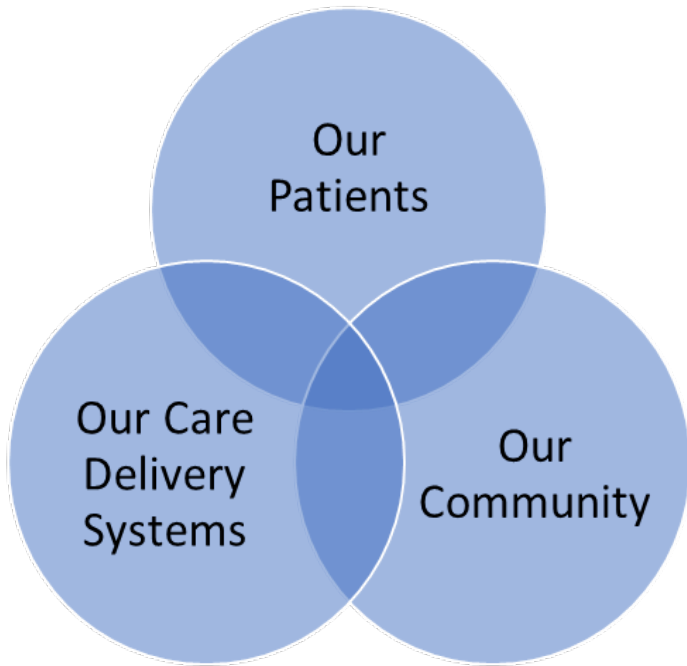
- **81% of clinic staff said their clinic experienced some kind of disruption due to extreme weather within the past three years**
- **Fewer than 20% of clinic staff feel their clinic is “very resilient” in the face of extreme weather**
- **77% of clinic staff say they do not have the knowledge or tools to implement climate change preparedness at their clinic**
- **More than 80% want education and training to protect their patients from climate-related events**

Americares survey conducted in California, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Texas

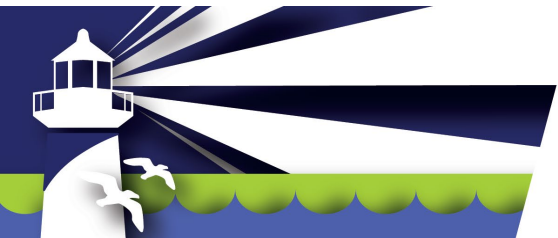
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# As an FQHC Leader, What is Your Role in Addressing Climate Change?



- **You Care for Vulnerable Populations**
- **You Must Be Climate Resilient to Serve the Community**
- **You Can Reduce Your Own Climate Impact**



# Vulnerable Populations Hit Hardest

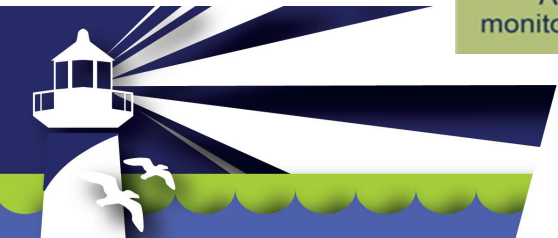
**COMMUNITIES OF COLOR**  
Some communities of color living in risk-prone areas face cumulative exposure to multiple pollutants.  
Adaptation plans that consider these communities and improve access to healthcare help address social inequities.

**OLDER ADULTS**  
Older adults are vulnerable to extreme events that cause power outages or require evacuation.  
Checking on elderly neighbors and proper emergency communication can save lives.

**CHILDREN**  
Children have higher risk of heat stroke and illness than adults.  
Adults can lessen risk by monitoring exertion and hydration.

**LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES**  
Low income families are at risk of physical and mental illnesses during flooding and in crowded shelter conditions.  
Comprehensive disaster management can improve resiliency for people with limited resources.

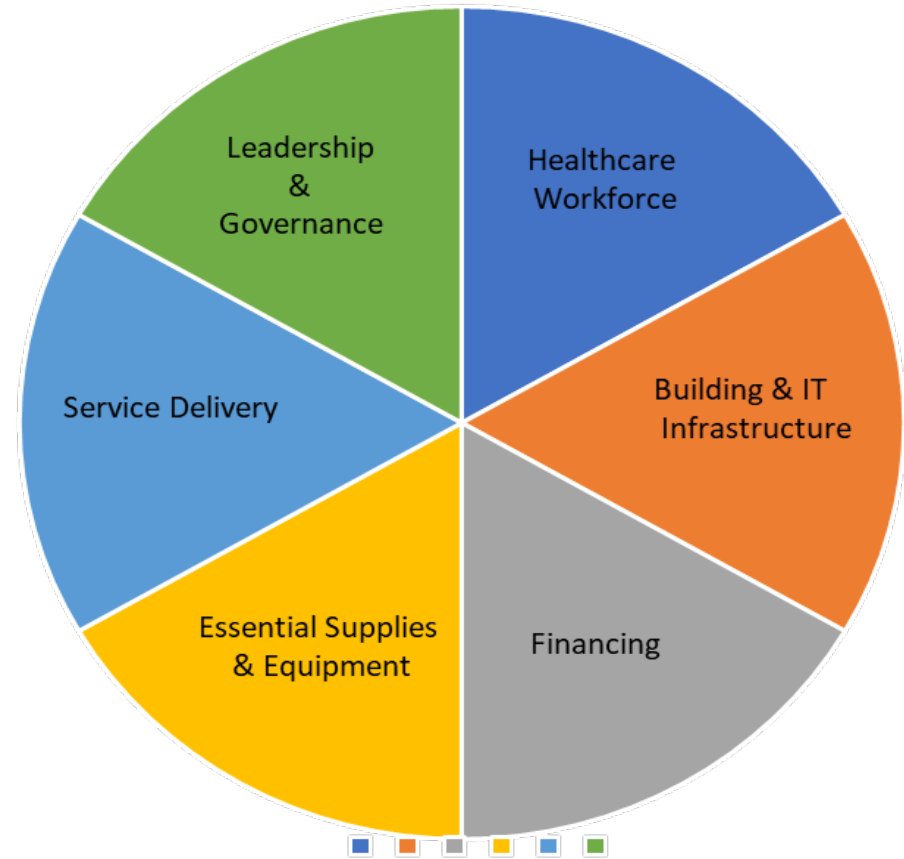
Source: The Fourth National Climate Assessment



# Climate Resilience: Essential to Fulfilling Your Mission

**“A climate resilient health system is capable to anticipate, respond to, cope with, recover from and adapt to climate-related shocks and stress, so as to bring sustained improvements in population health, despite an unstable climate.”**

(World Health Organization)



# Reducing Your Own Climate Impact



**LEADERSHIP**  
Prioritize sustainability



**CHEMICALS**  
Substitute harmful chemicals with safer alternatives



**WASTE**  
Reduce waste; treat, and safely dispose of healthcare waste



**ENERGY**  
Increase energy efficiency; move to renewable energy sources



**WATER**  
Reduce facility water consumption



**TRANSPORTATION**  
Improve transportation strategies for patients and staff



**FOOD**  
Purchase and serve sustainable healthy food; reduce food waste



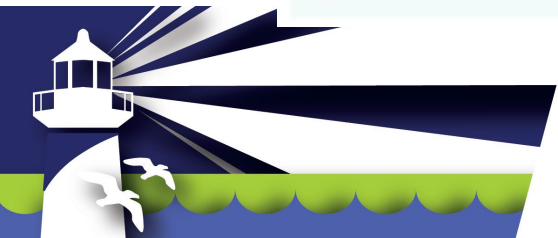
**PHARMACEUTICALS**  
Safely manage and dispose of pharmaceuticals



**BUILDINGS**  
Support green and facility design and construction



**PURCHASING**  
Buy more sustainable products and materials

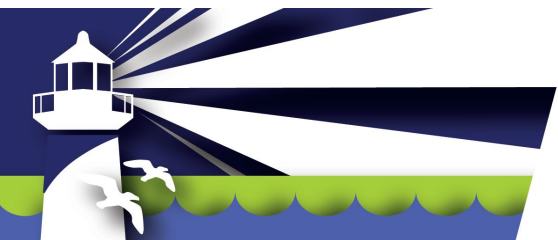


# Poll Question: What Next?

**Based on this presentation, name one early action you will take to:**

- **Keep your population healthy**
- **Increase your climate resilience**
- **Reduce your climate impact**

***Share with a colleague next to you!***



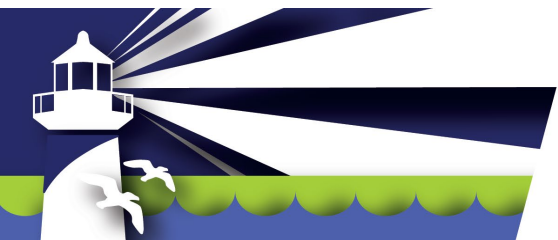
# The “Respond To” Approach

## Pros

- Less disruption and distraction from essential focus on current challenges
- Real-time ability to devote resources and priorities to most pressing challenges
- Increased understanding for compelling case for change over time
- Current readiness for unpredictable high impact events

## Cons

- Shorter timeframes for planning & implementation
- Limited opportunities to build support
- Possibility of lost or delayed health improvements
- Possibility that financial impact will be greater later



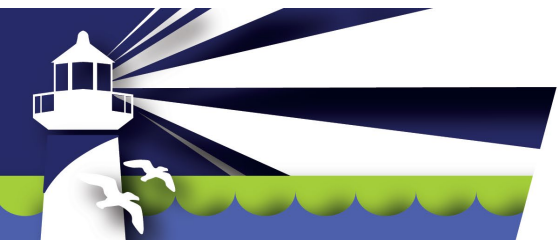
# The “Get Going” Approach

## Pros

- Capitalize on high current interest of employees
- More time for strategic and financial planning
- Improved likelihood of sustained change
- Enhanced impact on community health
- Ability to anticipate and mitigate progressively impactful climate-related events
- Current public funding options and support

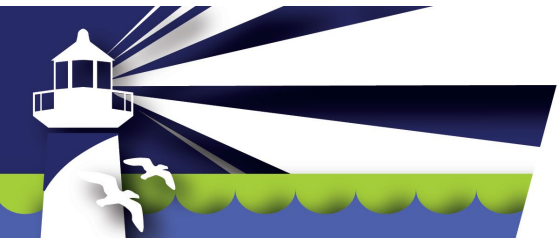
## Cons

- Requires attention of leadership
- Competes with other current priorities (but may complement them)
- May require capital investment (but with a positive ROI)





# THE OPPORTUNITY

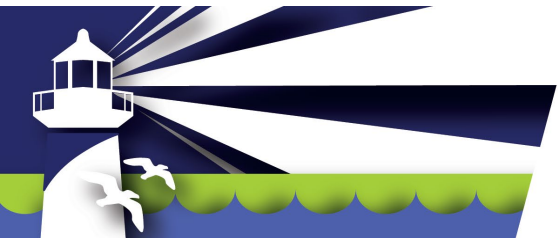


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# Getting Started

- Seek wisdom from others
- Explore available resources
- Be organized for action



# Clinics in Action

Vidant Health  
Rural NC

- Over 13 ton waste reduction

Pueblo Community  
Health Center CO

- First net zero health center in US

Mason Clinic  
WA

- US DOE Energy Star Certification of 86/100

Kimberton Clinic  
PA

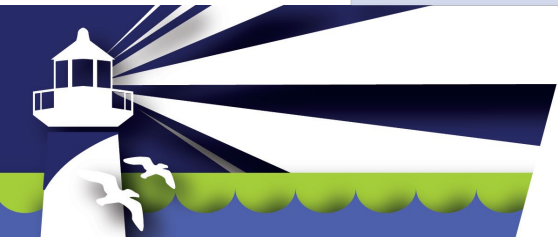
- Reduced use of drugs & tests

250 US Clinics

- LEED Certified

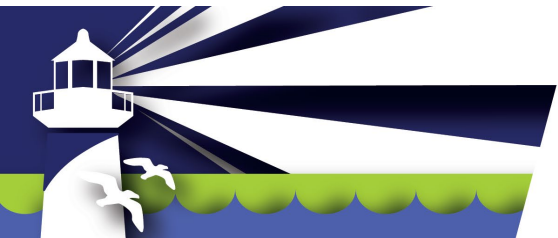
500,000 US Clinics

- Members of Practice Greenhealth



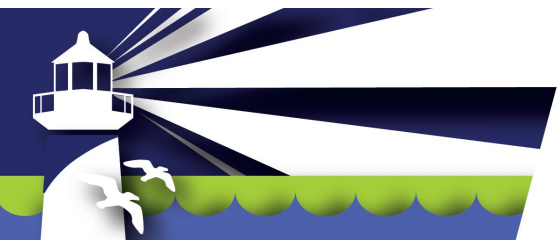
# Private Sources of Guidance – A Sample

- NACHA: <https://www.nachc.org/about-nachc/our-work/environmental-health/>
- Migrant Clinicians Network: <https://www.migrantclinician.org/our-work/mcns-environmental-and-occupational-health-program-initiatives.html>
- Americares: <https://www.americares.org/what-we-do/community-health/climate-resilient-health-clinics/>
- Practice GreenHealth: <https://practicegreenhealth.org/tools-resources/find-resource>
- Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action: <https://www.virginiaclinicians.org/>
- Healthcare Without Harm: <https://noharm.org/>
- Harvard Climate MD: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/research/climate-md/>
- Climate for Health: <https://climateforhealth.org/>
- My Green Doctor: <https://mygreendoctor.org/>
- America's Essential Hospitals: <https://essentialhospitals.org/tag/environmental-sustainability>
- AHA: <https://www.aha.org/topics/sustainability>
- United Nations: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>



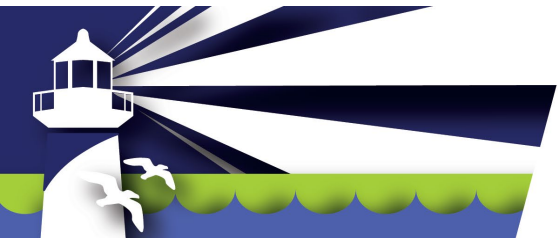
# Some Federal Resources

- Resources from NIH focused specifically on climate change impacts on health  
<https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/cchhl/>
- Compendium of federal resources to support healthcare systems engaged in climate change mitigation  
<https://duckduckgo.com/?va=a&t=hq&q=federal+funds+for+climate+change+in+healthcare&ia=web>
- Resources from the Office of Climate Change and Health Equity Portfolio of tools to track energy use and GHG  
<https://www.hhs.gov/climate-change-health-equity-environmental-justice/climate-change-health-equity/actions/health-care-sector-pledge/federal-resources/index.html>



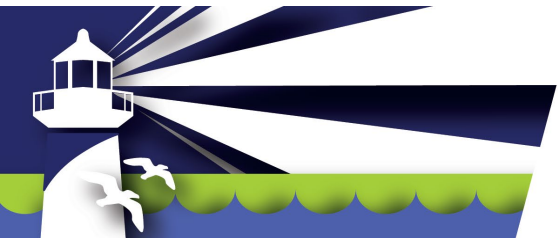
# Federal Funding Opportunities Exist

- <https://www.hhs.gov/climate-change-health-equity-environmental-justice/climate-change-health-equity/actions/health-care-sector-pledge/federal-resources/index.html>
- [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-02/documents/gi\\_financing\\_options\\_12-2014\\_4.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-02/documents/gi_financing_options_12-2014_4.pdf)
- <https://www.epa.gov/waterfinancecenter/efcn>
- <https://www.epa.gov/waterfinancecenter>
- <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-08/documents/srf-sustainability-conversation-guide-v9.pdf>
- <https://toolkit.climate.gov/content/funding-opportunities>
- <https://www.whitehouse.gov/cleanenergy/open-funding-opportunities/>
- <https://www.energy.gov/scep/renew-americas-nonprofits>



# Change is Inevitable But Preparation is a Choice

Engelina Jaspers



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# What We've Learned About Transformation

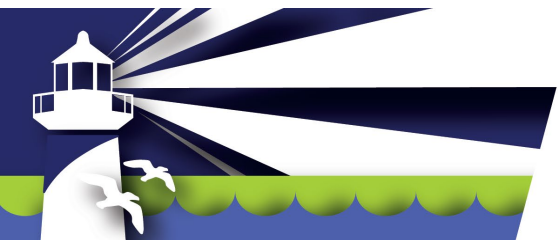
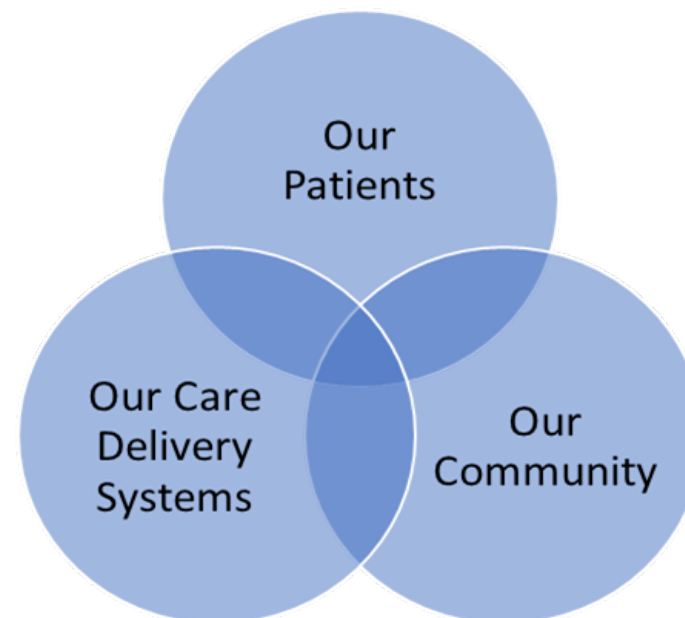
- **Leverage power of early adopters and target key influencers**
- **Excite leadership and build their confidence to lead the change**
- **Celebrate and share successes—transfer learning quickly**
- **Know that Ten X Communication is the beginning of getting the word out**
- **Remember WIIFM will evolve as the transformation matures**
- **Check in often with key constituencies**
- **Count the wins in three areas: financial, clinical, and human**





# Setting Priorities is a Key to Success

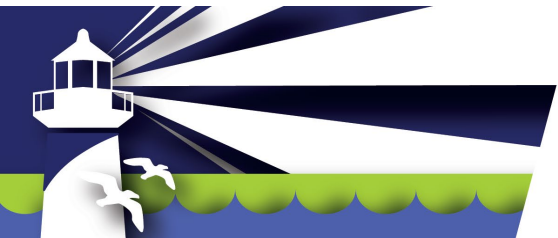
- **Climate-Related Patient Care**
- **Structural & Organizational Resilience**
- **Climate Mitigation**



# Preparing Your Action Plan



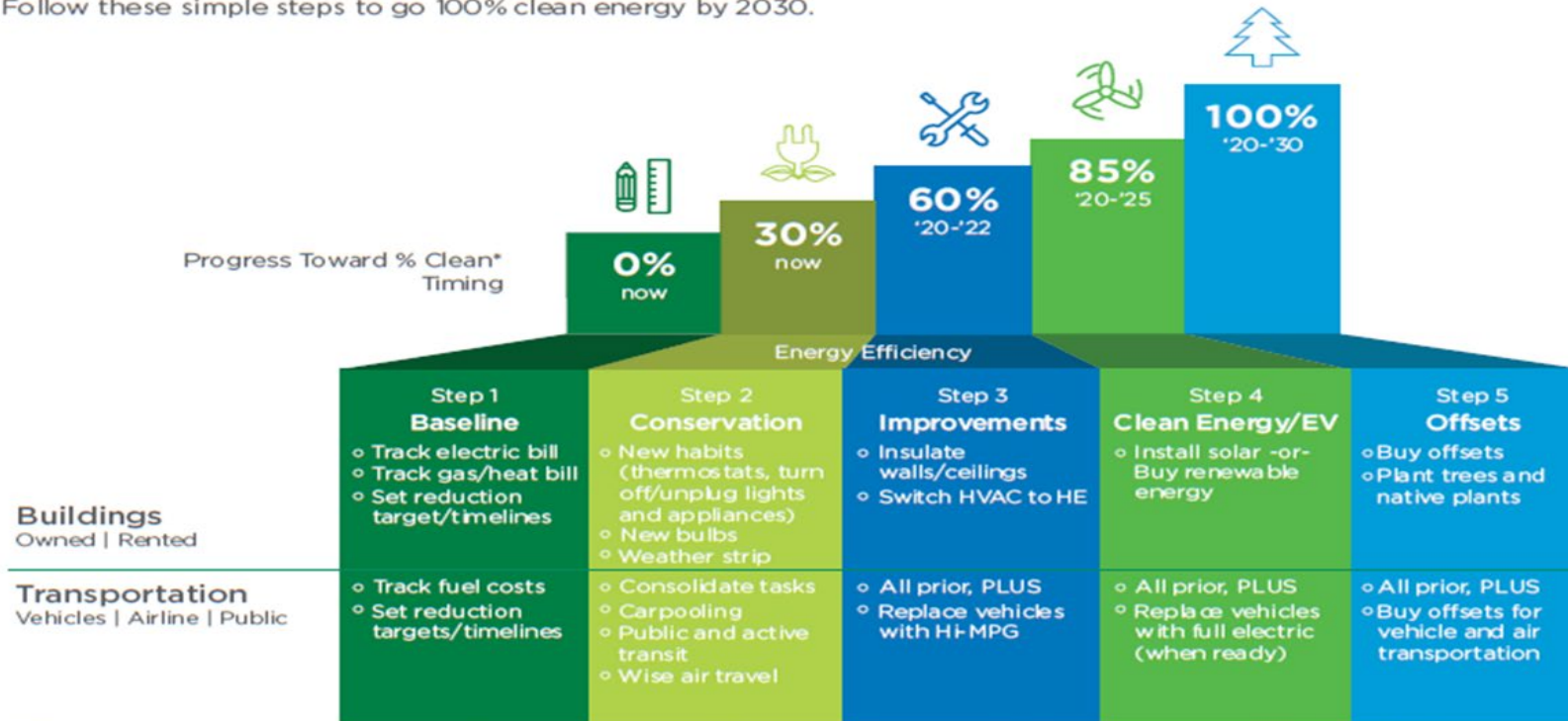
- **Assess your environment**
- **Educate your board**
- **Engage your internal and external stakeholders**
- **Assemble action team**
- **Create goals**
- **Design options and prioritize**
- **Develop implementation plan and success measures**
- **Implement, assess, learn, adjust**
- **Publicize your successes (and your lessons) widely**



# Example Plan Focused on Climate Mitigation

## ROADMAP TO 100% CLEAN BY 2030

Follow these simple steps to go 100% clean energy by 2030.



\* This roadmap is meant to help you frame your pathway to clean energy, to do what you can when you can. Actual percentages may vary by location, scale of improvements, and order of implementation. Guidance given are national averages estimates by EnergyStar.gov

From ecoAmerica Moving Forward Guide

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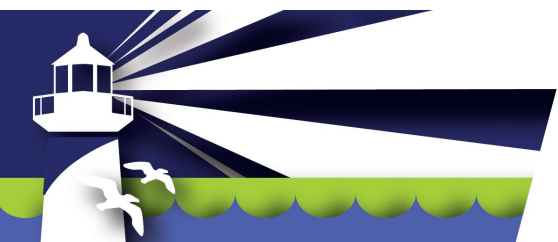


# Start with Your Easy Stuff

**Healthcare staff care about this issue and want to be actively engaged**

*Examples:*

- **Create preventive measures, e.g., heat alerts and use current tools to communicate with community**
- **Develop creative ways to reduce climate impact through energy savings & waste reduction (e.g., treasure hunts)**



# And Remember ROI



- Energy optimization in an outpatient health care facility can result in a 15% reduction in energy use and produce cost savings within a year.
- Encourage behavior changes that reduce energy use and waste. Ask your power company about clean and renewable energy options.
- Roll savings forward. Establish a Green Revolving Fund to invest in larger projects.
- Start with visible, inexpensive and easy changes. Publicly highlight your successes and savings to build support and credibility.



# This Can Be Your FQHC

## Resilient

- Sound roof and foundation
- Efficient/strong doors & windows
- Back up power
- Water reserve
- Good security & signage
- Climate-comprehensive disaster plans
- Ongoing maintenance program
- Available IT infrastructure
- Resilient partners



## Community Guardian

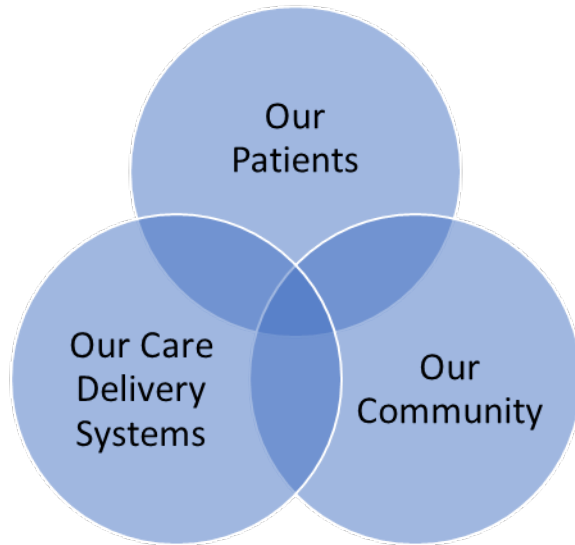
- Engaged leaders, clinicians & staff
- Climate-informed community education programs
- Strong community planning
- Financially sound decision-making
- Open for community in disaster
- Climate-related preventive care & action alerts
- Collaboration with partners

## Sustainable

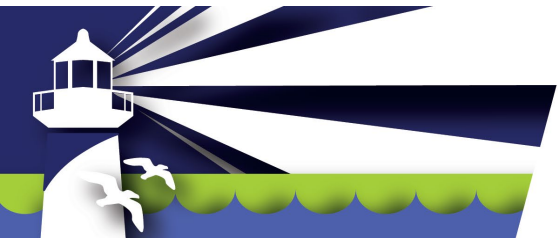
- Water efficient
- Waste efficient
- Energy efficient
- Renewable energy sourcing
- Improved indoor air quality
- Sustainably grown food
- Efficient transportation access
- Sustainably vetted purchasers
- Sustainability conscious strategic planning



# Work Sheet Activity



- **What's your compelling case for change?**
- **Where are your best opportunities to begin this journey?**
- **What challenges/competing priorities are present?**
- **What resources—talent, creative thinkers, committed colleagues, community resources, partners - are possibilities to help with this work?**
- **Who are your key influencers, both positive and challenging?**



# Questions?

