



## Why Healthier Food?

The way food is produced, processed, packaged, distributed and consumed in the United States has significant impacts on human health. Nationally, the United States spends billions of dollars to treat diet-related, chronic diseases—\$147 billion to treat obesity alone, another \$116 billion to treat diabetes, and hundreds of billions to treat cardiovascular disease and cancer. To improve the health of patients, staff and communities, Healthier Hospitals is teaming up with hospitals to encourage healthy food consumption.

## Healthier Hospitals Solutions

Healthier Hospitals is challenging hospitals to take on two measurable goals to help hospitals serve healthier food. These goals have been selected for their positive impact on human health and the environment, as well as to drive increased demand for healthier products in the marketplace.

Objective	Impact
<p><b>Less Meat</b> Reduce meat purchased by 10 percent per year OR achieve ultimate goal of an average 1.5 oz (.09375 lbs/meal) per meal served.</p> <p>–and–</p> <p><b>Better Meat</b> Increase by five percent per year or achieve ultimate goal of 20 percent of meat and poultry purchases raised without the routine use of antibiotics.</p>	<p>Mitigates climate change by reducing fossil fuel use, models healthy eating behavior and saves important antibiotics for human medicine.</p>
<p><b>Local Food Purchasing</b> Increase the percentage of local food purchases by five percent annually OR achieve ultimate goal of 20 percent of total.</p> <p>–and–</p> <p><b>Sustainable Food Purchasing</b> Increase the percentage of sustainable food purchases by five percent annually OR achieve ultimate goal of 20 percent of total.</p>	<p>Leverage buying power to shift the food systems in a more regional and sustainable direction; improve health of patients, staff and visitors.</p>

Hospitals and health systems will be recognized for achieving ranks of Level One and Level Two by completing the two goals in the order of their choice.

## Why Should Hospitals Take on this Challenge?

Hospitals have a unique opportunity to use their purchasing power and mission of healing to model healthy food procurement and consumption by serving fresher, healthier, more nutritionally dense food to patients, staff and communities. Health care organizations nationwide are writing healthier menus, working with local farmers to purchase local sustainably-grown products, reducing the amount of meat they purchase and serve, and purchasing more fair trade and certified organic products.

## Success Stories

**Palomar Health** began their ‘Less Meat, Better Meat’ journey in 2010 by successfully reducing their meat consumption by 10 percent year over year for three years. They even held a plant-based chef training for their staff and invited colleagues from other healthcare organizations in their community to attend. Additionally, the hospital participates in the San Diego County Nutrition in Healthcare Leadership Team (NHTL) and conducted a “Let’s Go Local Showcase” as well as continues to meet regularly with each of their suppliers in pursuit of affordable, healthful, sustainable product from their region. Palomar Health saw an increase of purchases of sustainable, local and organic produce by 60 percent in two hospitals during their fiscal 2014 year resulting in an overall total food purchasing of 13 percent sustainable, local and organic.

**TheDACare**, an 8-hospital health system located throughout northeast Wisconsin, began purchasing

ground beef and hamburger patties from Aspen Ridge Beef in Colorado, a supplier that is Certified Humane Raised and Handled. Additionally, the hospital is exploring how to support local chicken and egg producers by working to quantify their commitment to purchase while they explore expansion, including a new slaughter facility, in order to meet the predicted volume as well as other hospitals in the region.

**UCSF Medical Center** increased their purchase of Harvestland, a no antibiotics ever, chicken breast to more than 42,000 pounds annually. Additionally, the hospital also purchases grassfed hamburger from Estancia Beef. The cost was 50 percent more per pound, but UCSF managed this by providing education and passing the increase on to its retail customers. In the end after conducting an audit from pre and post the change, they sold more of the new hamburger option and made a higher profit than the conventional burger.

## Get Started

Register today to enroll in Healthier Hospitals, which is free to any hospital in the United States and Canada. To get started, visit [www.healthierhospitals.org](http://www.healthierhospitals.org) and choose one or more Challenges. Enrollees are invited to commit to at least one of the six “Challenge” areas: Engaged Leadership, Healthier Food, Leaner Energy, Less Waste, Safer Chemicals and Smarter Purchasing. Hospitals can choose to tackle a single Challenge or any combination of the six Challenges. By signing up, health systems will gain access to free tools and resources such as how-to implementation guides,

webinars and a network of peers. Through the Healthier Hospitals program, hospitals will track progress at the local level and share data to show the measurable impact of the project. Visit the HH website to learn more about the Challenges and the resources available to help participating health systems achieve these goals.

Questions? Ask us at [info@practicegreenhealth.org](mailto:info@practicegreenhealth.org). Or follow us on Twitter at [@HHIorg](https://twitter.com/HHIorg) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/healthierhospitalsinitiative](https://www.facebook.com/healthierhospitalsinitiative).