

Guidance on Health Promoting and Climate-Friendly Hospitals and Health Services

Background

- ☀️ **Climate change is the greatest threat to health in the 21st century (Lancet Countdown, WHO 2020, BMJ 2020, World Bank Climate and Health Program) and furthermore intensifies existing health disparities (WHO 2021).**
- ☀️ The Austrian healthcare sector accounts for **6.7% of the total national CO2 footprint** (Weisz et al. 2020).
- ☀️ **Consequently, healthcare facilities have a particular responsibility not only to adapt to the changing climatic conditions but also to mitigate its negative impacts.** To do this successfully, they need support in the form of expertise, information, and practical guidance. (Mezger et al. 2021).
- ☀️ **From the very beginning, the HPH vision have placed emphasis on the interplay between health and healthy environments.** Interventions for health promotion and climate protection/mitigation and climate adaption, offer powerful synergies.
- ☀️ In 2023 a project was launched in cooperation with the Austrian Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services and confirmed the **need for support in implementing climate protection and adaption measures.**



Objectives

- **Develop and establish international standards and guidelines** based on the work of the „Task Force HPH and Environment“ and the Austrian strategy for climate-neutral healthcare and other (inter)national models, **to assist healthcare facilities in implementing climate-friendly practices by 2026.**
- Carry out exploratory research, review and evaluate existing quality standards.
- Collaborate with an expert panel to refine standards, test them in healthcare facilities, and make necessary revisions.

- Collaboration agreement with WHO/Europe and the International HPH Network to develop international standards from 2024 to 2026.
- Funded by Austrian Health Promotion Agenda
- Exploration and first draft of potential dimensions and sub-dimensions.

Current state

- ### Next steps
- **Refinement of dimensions and sub-dimensions by an international expert panel in a two-round Delphi-process.**
 - **Develop an initial draft of the standards and an implementation guide.**
 - **Conduct pilot tests in healthcare facilities.**
 - **Revise and finalize by 2026.**



- **Implementing climate-friendly practices into healthcare can greatly diminish environmental impact and enhance health outcomes.**
- This approach aligns with sustainable development goals and offers crucial guidance for implementing and planning impactful initiatives in organizational structures, culture, and communication practices, addressing the health impacts on patients, staff, communities, and the environment.

Conclusion

Principles of climate protection and sustainability in health promotion documents

- **Ottawa Charter (WHO 1986):** Global responsibility for conserving natural resources.
- **Geneva Charter (WHO 2021):** Sustainable low-carbon development, peace with nature.
- **Budapest Declaration on Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH 1991):** Impact of the hospital environment on the health of patients, staff, and the community.
- **Vienna Recommendations (HPH 1997):** Reduce pollution, promote healthy products.
- **HPH Strategy (2021-2025), HPH Standards (2020), HPH Policy Brief on Health promotion and climate change in health care organizations:** Integrate climate protection into health promotion.

Please note that this is just a selection of key principles, not an exhaustive list.

Principles of climate protection and sustainability in health promotion documents

- **Holistic integration of climate protection and adaptation in the organization (leadership, monitoring, implementation, evaluation)**
- **Awareness and communication**
- **Buildings and energy**
- **Resource and waste management**
- **Procurement and supply chains**
- **Food systems**
- **Mobility**
- **Green and open spaces**

