

## CASE STUDY: Hackensack Meridian Health

Hackensack Meridian Health, a premier nonprofit healthcare organization, stands as New Jersey's largest and most comprehensive integrated network. Offering a full spectrum of medical services, innovative research, and compassionate care, it comprises 18 hospitals and over 500 patient care sites, including ambulatory centers, surgery centers, and rehabilitation facilities. With a dedicated team of over 35,000 members and 7,000 physicians, it's a leader in healthcare philanthropy, prioritizing the well-being of communities across the state. Noteworthy accolades include having the top-ranked adult and children's hospitals in New Jersey according to U.S. News & World Report's 2023-24 rankings, with Hackensack University Medical Center recognized nationally in six specialties. The following locations are part of this case study:

- Hackensack Meridian University Medical Center, Hackensack, New Jersey
- Hackensack Meridian Bayshore Medical Center, Holmdel, New Jersey
- Hackensack Meridian Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Neptune, New Jersey
- Hackensack Meridian Ocean University Medical Center, Brick, New Jersey



Hackensack Meridian University  
Medical Center  
Hackensack, NJ

## THE OPPORTUNITY

The Joint Commission (TJC) introduced a voluntary Sustainable Healthcare Certificate program taking effect on January 1, 2024. This program assesses whether hospitals have implemented essential structures and processes to reduce their carbon footprint and minimize waste. The Sustainable Healthcare Certificate is open to all hospitals accredited by The Joint Commission, as well as non-Joint Commission accredited hospitals that comply with applicable federal laws, such as the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Conditions of Participation.

The SHC requires hospitals to do the following:



### Step 1

Measure three of more of the following greenhouse gas emission sources:

- Energy use
- Purchased electricity
- Anesthetic gas use
- Pressurized metered-dose inhalers
- Fleet vehicle transportation
- Waste disposal



### Step 2

Establish reduction targets for each of the tracked greenhouse gas emissions sources. These targets should be attainable and developed using science backed targets.



### Step 3

Create a Climate Action Plan that details how the organization will achieve the greenhouse gas reduction targets for each tracked emissions source.



### Step 4

Commit resources to making progress towards your greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Establish Sustainability Committee
- Commit financial resources to sustainability measures
- Integrate Sustainability into Hospital Strategic Plan



### Step 5

Demonstrate greenhouse gas emissions reduction through the emissions databased you've developed in Step 1 of this certification process.

*This is for Recertification only.*

## THE SOLUTION

Hackensack Meridian Health (HMH) engaged Environ Energy to assist with the pursuit of The Joint Commission (TJC) Sustainable Healthcare Certificate (SHC). Environ Energy consulted the HMH Sustainability Team by providing services to validate data, expand upon climate action plans, and review the strategic plan in alignment with the Certificate requirements. Specifically, Environ Energy completed the following tasks.

### **Greenhouse Gas Inventory:**

We completed a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory for the identified emissions sources at each of the four (4) hospitals. By doing so, we verified the existing HMH GHG databases at both the corporate and local hospital level. Lastly, we validated that the HMH GHG baseline value was in alignment with all locations pursuing the SHC.

### **Emissions Data Validation:**

We reviewed the facility level GHG data with each hospital's Sustainability Team, which included both network and local resources, to ensure they understood the data and requirements to achieve each facility's carbon reduction target.

### **Climate Action Plan Review/Development:**

We performed a gap analysis on the hospital's existing Climate Action Plan to identify areas in need of further development or analysis, including but not limited to, defining timelines to meet HMH's bold sustainability goals. Additionally, we created a list of suggestions to help them communicate the work detailed by the Climate Action Plan to their community and other relevant stakeholders.

### **Strategic Plan Review/Recommendations:**

We provided recommendations to enhance the HMH Strategic Plan by identifying areas where better structures and processes could be put in place to sustain success.

### **Road to Recertification:**

Lastly, we developed a roadmap to ensure that each hospital would be able to get recertified in the future, which would require showing progress towards carbon reduction goals.

### Testimonial

*"We are always looking for ways to create a healthier environment for the communities we serve. When the Joint Commission Sustainability Certification was released we were excited to pursue it as a way of validating our commitment to the work. Partnering with Environ helped us put better processes in place for ensuring that our greenhouse gas emissions data were being tracked and reported consistently throughout each of our hospitals. Once we had a better grasp on our data it enabled us to further refine our strategic sustainability plan and maximize the positive impacts on the community"*

#### **Kyle Tafuri**

*Vice President, Sustainability  
Hackensack Meridian Health*

### **About Environ:**

*Environ is a full-service, national energy consulting firm, empowering commercial, industrial, and non-profit entities to become more sustainable by improving building energy efficiency, facilitating clean energy procurement, increasing resilience, complying with regulations, and meeting ESG commitments. Our team is here to guide and drive sustainable change in your organization. Contact us today for an energy assessment.*