

# EDUCATION



Education is more than just the filling of a bucket. It's the lighting of a fire. It's about engagement, empowerment, and inspiration. And, all of this may impact us from a young age. For example, Dr. Anna Gunz, a paediatrician in London, Ontario, says, "My first degree was in geography. I studied the social, economic, and environmental pieces of climate change. Then I went into medicine. So, my background is in environmental science and I've been looking for ways to unite these fields together." She has been on this journey to integrate these fields together--to bring continued consciousness to the idea that our environment impacts our health. Many others including Dr. Husein Moloo at the University of Ottawa have been on similar roads, working on diverse projects in education, advocacy, research, and Quality Improvement (QI).

## SUCCESSES

**Tangible outcomes in education and results:** "My role as a doctor has not only to be the canary in the coal mine but also to support knowledge translation either to my peers and to the public." -AG



- Working with pediatric organizations (e.g., [Canadian Pediatric Society](#), [Paediatricians of Ontario](#)) to shed a stronger and brighter light on how environmental issues impact child health and wellbeing

- Establishing a new collaborating centre for a child and environmental health clinic (Clinical and Advocacy components)

- Integrating environmental and child health intersections into the medical school curriculum to better educate medical students/trainees

- Building sustainability projects in the hospital (e.g., new QI projects, streamlining waste in the pediatric ICU, autoclaving surgical tools, linking the medical student Earth Club to new QI projects)

"The initiatives we've successfully spread throughout our department were first trialed by one team, which optimized them through several Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycles, making them easier for other divisions to adopt. You can also ask around — what are your colleagues doing? What ideas can you find in the QI literature? Are there strategies you can adopt or adapt?" (HM)

Learn more in "Sustainable health care: Simple efforts can reduce your practice's carbon footprint" written by HM [here](#).

## PRACTICAL ADVICE



- Work within existing systems (e.g., embed environmental thinking into existing QI frameworks)

- Look for allies so you can think of more than one way to justify a challenge/problem (there is strength in multiple perspectives!)

- Track costs

- Build these environmental solutions into 1) foundation consciousness for fundraising initiatives; 2) Patient and staff wellbeing

"Thinking about the triple bottom line for QI, where environmental impact and social accountability is considered in addition to economic cost, is a simple way to start reframing all QI activities." (HM)

### Interviewees:

Dr. Anna Gunz (AG), Pediatrics, Western University

Dr. Husein Moloo (HM), Colorectal Surgery, University of Ottawa

