

Supply Chain: Refuse



We spoke to **Dr. Richard Webster, Investigator, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) Research Institute** about how they are planning to reach their goal of reducing their hospital's carbon emissions by 5% each year, totalling 30% by 2025.

He pointed out that the supply chain is one of the largest contributors to the problem. This is because the carbon footprint of a health care facility includes the **lifecycle** of all the items that it buys. When a healthcare facility buys a product, they own the **cradle to grave emissions** (e.g., the carbon footprint associated with the material extraction, manufacturing, transport & disposal). It's all about finding **alternative solutions** that have a smaller carbon footprint. This can be achieved by rethinking some of the standard procurement contract language. Can companies supply more sustainable products? Can some products be sourced locally? The Pharmacy, Facilities, and Environmental Services staff can help clinicians and leadership pinpoint these problematic areas (e.g., drug waste, single-use disposable items, etc.,).

Richard reminds us that in the next few years there needs to be **growth in engagement**. Hospitals need to 1) develop a decision-making process for green projects and 2) formulate a net-zero strategy to begin this journey. He adds onto this by encouraging people to **"tackle the easy stuff first--this way you save money and carbon. Then if you re-invest this money in sustainability initiatives, you can make even more gains."**

*"A minimum effort first step is to update procurement contracts to screen out products that aren't sustainable."
-Richard Webster*

