



Building Networks and Partnerships: The Only Route to Sustainable Healthcare

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Why partnerships matter now

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Climate change is hurting our health systems

Floods, heatwaves, and wildfires are the new normal. Hospitals are forced to close or scale back when they're most needed.

The WEF finds that climate-induced impacts will account for a further **\$1.1 trillion** in extra costs to healthcare systems by 2050, creating a significant additional burden on already strained infrastructures and medical and human resources.*



*World Economic Forum, Quantifying the Impact of Climate Change on Human Health, 2024

Healthcare is part of the problem

Healthcare contributes 4.6% of global emissions. and up to 8% in some European countries.

If we don't take action, healthcare sector emissions could triple by 2050.*

Healthcare is on the frontlines, *and* part of the problem.



*The 2023 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change



The Healthcare Industry
globally produces

5.9 MILLION TONS
of waste every year,

**25% OF WHICH IS
MADE OF PLASTIC.**

This waste ends up polluting our
land, water, air & bodies, making
the plastics crisis a direct health
crisis.

*Photo by Maria Kojck, "Waste From One Surgical
Operation"*

We aren't doing enough

Current policies remain far from sufficient to achieve the reductions needed - or prepare the health sector for the increased climate change impacts.

Europe is warming faster than any other continent, but **worldwide we are not prepared for rising health risks from climate change.** These risks can become catastrophic without urgent and decisive action.*



*European Environment Agency, European Climate Risk Assessment, 2024

How we see it: Healthcare's dual mandate

To “do no harm,” healthcare must act on two fronts: to both **reduce emissions** (mitigation) and **adapt to climate change** (adaptation).

Mitigation and adaptation are **two sides of the same coin**: they create resilient health systems that can protect care delivery and health both today and in the future.





But...

**no single hospital or ministry
can adapt and decarbonise
alone.**

A challenge of this scale demands
collaboration and coordination on an
immense scale.

HEALTH CARE WITHOUT HARM EUROPE'S VISION AND MISSION

OUR VISION

A sustainable healthcare sector in Europe that does no harm and improves human and environmental health.

OUR MISSION

Transform the healthcare sector so that it reduces its environmental footprint, becomes more resilient, and establishes itself as a leader for sustainable development in Europe.

A photograph of a wind turbine in a green field, with the image overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The text is white and bold, positioned in the upper left quadrant.

**HCWH Europe's
Strategic Vision:**

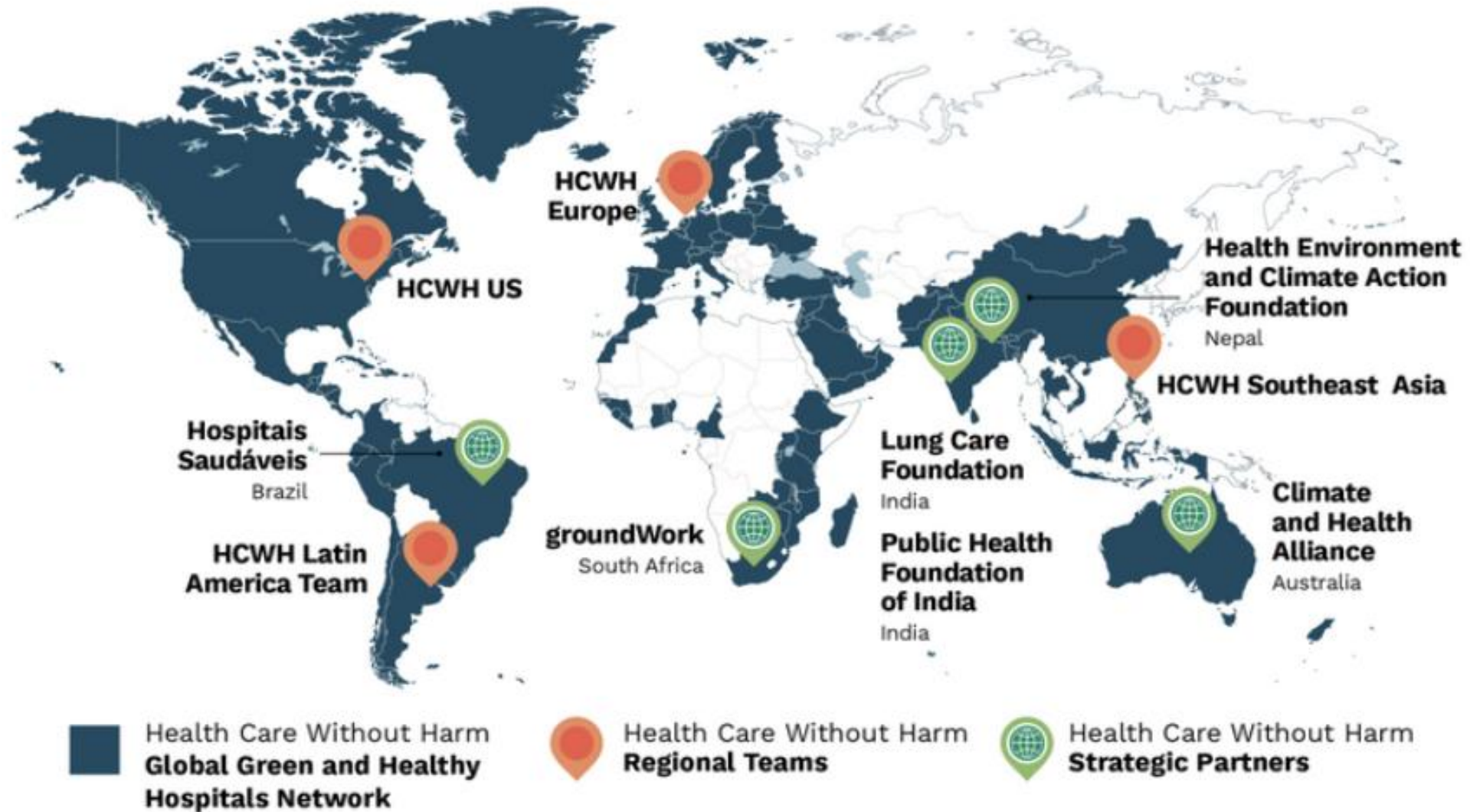
**Networks & Partnerships
for Impact at Scale**

Networks and partnerships are the engine of systemic resilience

- Awareness and ambition are growing... Climate action often stalls at implementation
- Hospitals are often attempting to solve the same problems in isolation
- Networks:
 - reduce duplication
 - spread innovation faster
 - build confidence and capacity
 - create momentum.

As solutions are developed and piloted, **networks and partnerships** are how we activate system transformation, grounded in local language and realities.

Health Care Without Harm *is* a Network Organisation



Health Care Without Harm Europe *is a Membership Organisation*

- 240 members,
- Representing 8,400 facilities in 28 countries with over 1.8 million staff
- Serving 150 million people across the WHO Europe region
- Part of the Global Green and Healthy Hospitals Network (GGHH) – 2,000 members in 86 countries – join at <https://greenhospitals.org>





STRATEGY 2026-2030:

Concentrating on scale and impact through stronger networks and partnerships

Goal 5: Build more impactful national and European networks of institutions & professionals to drive sustainable healthcare outcomes in policy and practice.

By 2030, we will:

1: ESTABLISH COUNTRY-LEVEL HCWH EUROPE NETWORKS:

Create new national networks that increase our members' cooperation, coordination and mutual support to help them build greater sustainable healthcare impact in their countries.

2: BUILD A VIBRANT NEW 'SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS NETWORK':

Integrate and expand our existing networks into becoming the leading European healthcare professionals network, changing sustainable healthcare practice in their fields.

3: INCREASE OUR IMPACT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION:

Build European and national partnerships with organisations that can help us reach our Mission and Goals: particularly national and international policymaking bodies, and networks and associations of healthcare professionals and facilities.

Where there are already vibrant networks, work in partnership ...



KLUG

Deutsche Allianz
Klimawandel und Gesundheit



Welcome to the Sustainable Healthcare Networks Platform

The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare (CSH) Networks Platform is here to help you build a sustainable healthcare community, learn, and collaborate with others and positively fight the climate crisis.

Please [Sign up](#) or [Log in](#) to like, comment or join conversations, view members and share ideas on sustainable healthcare.

Sign up

Log in



CENTRE for
SUSTAINABLE
HEALTHCARE



What effective collaboration looks like in practice

HCWH Europe

VISION | A sustainable healthcare sector in Europe that does no harm and improves human and environmental health

IMPACT | To transform the healthcare sector so that it reduces its environmental footprint, becomes more resilient and a leader for sustainable development in Europe



Healthcare sector policy change

The healthcare sector adopts and drives policy for sustainable healthcare.

Evidence base developed on sustainable healthcare policy & practice.

Policy & decision makers have knowledge, understanding & tools to make policy change for sustainable healthcare.

Critical mass developed through movements to advocate for policy change.

Healthcare sector practice change

The healthcare sector uses sustainability processes, procedures, products, materials and services.

Healthcare staff gain awareness, knowledge & skills and have tools to change practice.

Healthcare staff demand sustainable, innovative products, materials & services.

Healthcare sector culture change

Sustainability is normalised within the healthcare sector.

Healthcare providers' values & governance reflect commitment to sustainability policy and practice.

Healthcare staff proactively champion sustainability policy & practice change.

Sustainability functions are embedded & resourced within healthcare providers.

Research and learning

Advocacy

Education and training

Pilot projects

Community building



The healthcare sector contributes to significant human and environmental harm



Working in Partnership to change Policy

- Removal of **Mercury** in healthcare settings
- Massive **reduction in incineration** by hospitals
- EU ban & reduction of use elsewhere of **Desflurane** – an anaesthetic gas with a huge carbon footprint
- **Global Plastics Treaty** – removal of exception for healthcare (with Break Free from Plastics and others)



A win for climate and health

As of 1 January 2026, the EU has banned the routine use of desflurane – an anaesthetic gas with a climate impact thousands of times greater than CO₂.*

*Kazda L, Pickles KM, Hull A, Barratt AL: NSW Health Net Zero Clinical Leads Program. Reducing use of desflurane in the anaesthetic department: A controlled interrupted time series analysis. Anaesth Intensive Care. 2026 Jan;54(1):63-71.

Working in Partnership to change Practice

- **MOUNTADAPT** - 27 partners, including universities, research centres, local institutions, health systems, NGOs, companies, and innovators.
- Pooling expertise, knowledge, and resources to transform health systems to be resilient against the challenges posed by climate change in mountainous regions of Austria, France, Romania & Slovenia.
- Replication sites in Andorra, Germany & Romania

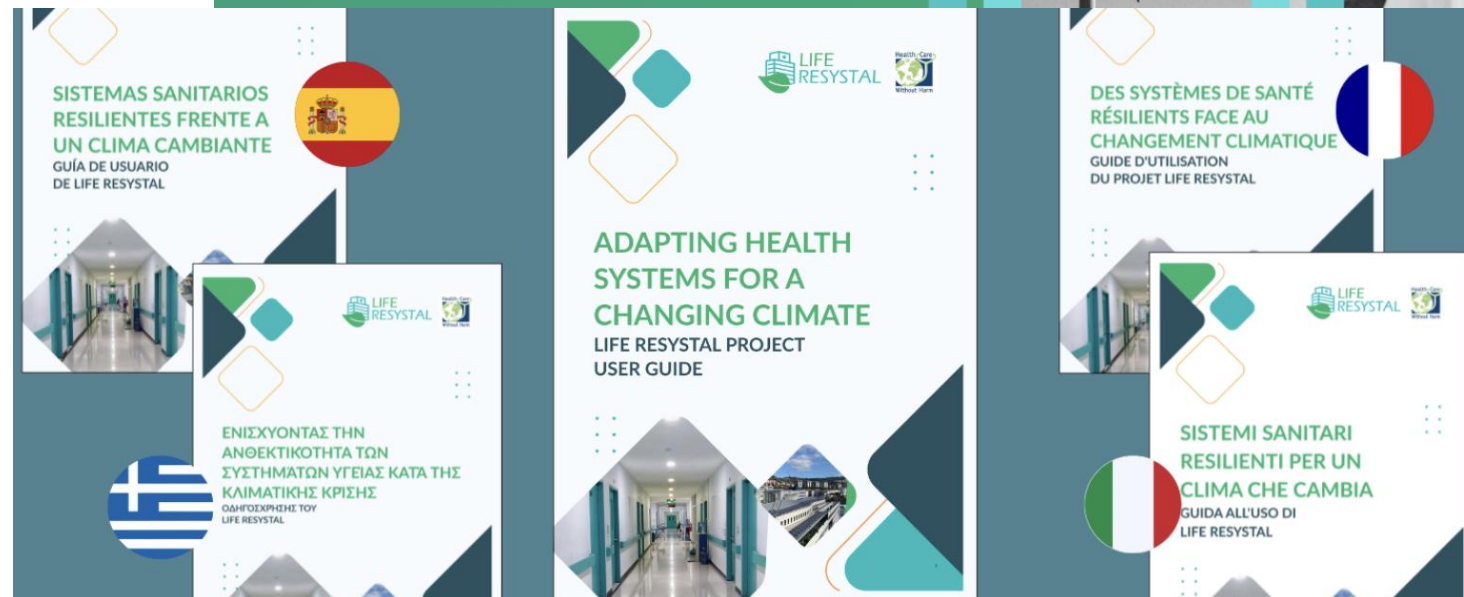


Working in Partnership to change Practice

- **LIFE RESYSTAL** – nine hospitals and health system partners in Spain, France, Greece and Italy
- Project has begun to build a network committed to the climate adaption of the European health sector.
- Demonstrated healthcare infrastructure adaptation in diverse climate conditions; and provided scientific support for implementing Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) measures.

Climate change resilience framework for health systems and hospitals

The LIFE RESYSTAL project is working to address gaps in the European health systems' climate resilience.

[Learn More](#)[Pilots](#)

Born Green Generation

Health Care Without Harm Europe is **driving a growing movement** for a Born Green Generation: Reducing exposure of vulnerable babies to toxic chemicals in plastics.

We innovated and tested solutions **to use less plastic in products and processes** in maternity and paediatric care in real wards **with our eight hospital partners**, we delivered the proof we needed: **it works.**



In one year with just eight hospitals:

- **Almost 40,000 babies** were born or treated with lower-plastic care
- **131,000 plastic devices** eliminated
- **Over 7.6 tonnes of plastic** removed
- **€256,000** in cost savings

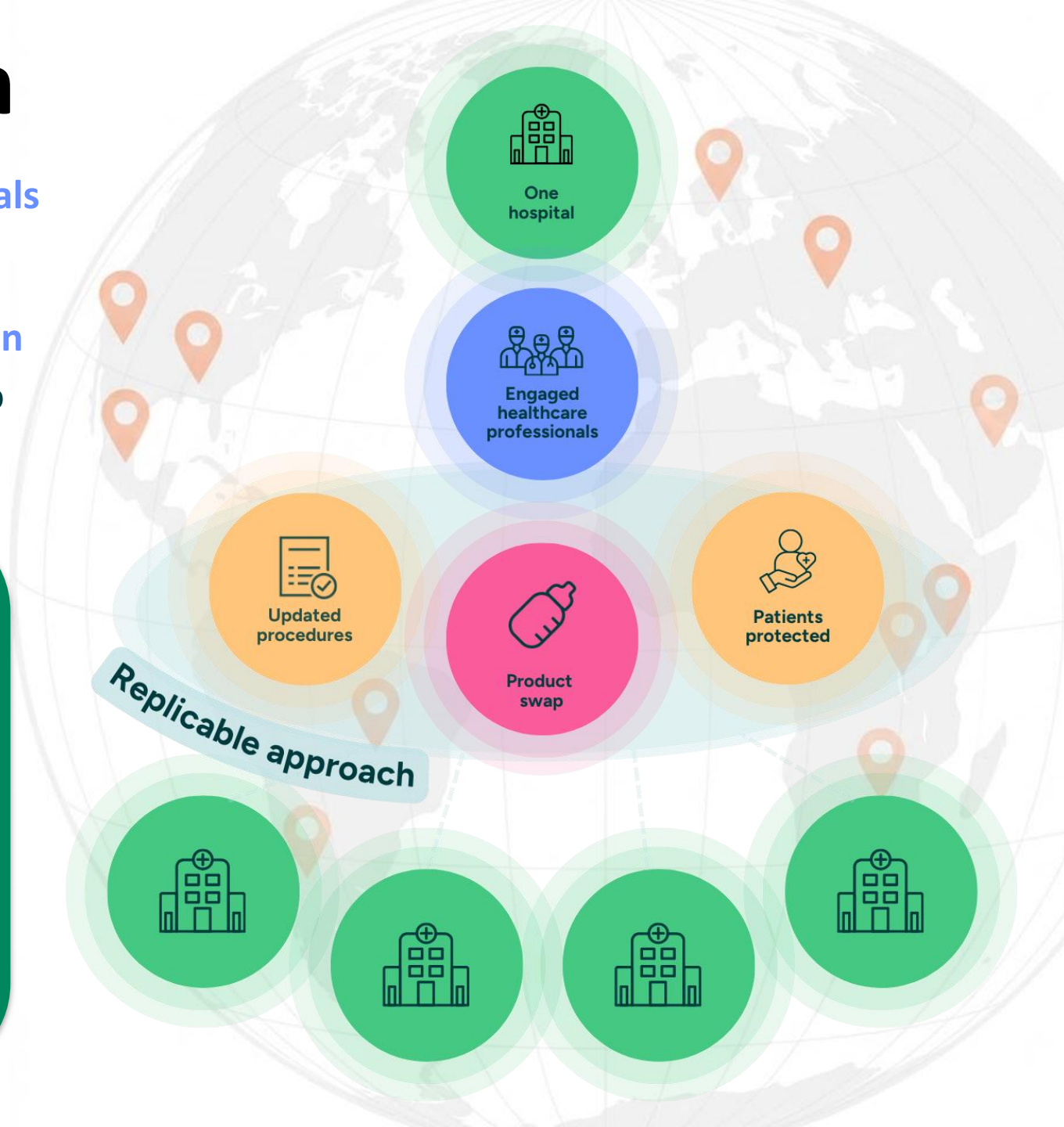
Born Green Generation

The next step is to **share and replicate across hospitals and countries**.

Change is already accelerating, with **10 new European countries** and **9 additional countries**, from the US to India to Australia showing interest.

By 2030 with 1,000 hospitals we will:

- Better protect 5 million babies
- Eliminate 3,000 tonnes of plastic – equivalent equivalent to removing enough plastic bottles to circle the Earth once
- Save hospitals €35 million in maternity and paediatric wards alone



Working in Partnership to change Culture

- **AMR EDUCare**
- 13 partners developed educational materials for healthcare professionals to reduce the spread and exposure to antimicrobial resistance.
- Over 6,500 healthcare professionals from Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal and Spain trained through a specially developed course available for free in their language.
- Free in English for others



Courses ▾ Get involved ▾ News ▾ About us ▾ 

AMR Knowledge Portal

The AMR EDUCare project offers educational materials for healthcare professionals to reduce the spread and exposure to antimicrobial resistance

Antimicrobial
prescribing
optimisation



Antimicrobial
waste reduction
& management

Patient empowerment

Tailored modules are available for doctors, pharmacists, nurses, and healthcare managers at <https://amr-educare.lecturio.com>

The training covers the following topics

- optimising antimicrobial prescribing
- reducing and managing antimicrobial waste
- empowering patients through effective communication

Incorporated in all training modules

- cutting-edge digital skills and change behaviour tools

Project partners:

Project coordinator: Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) Europe





Sustainable healthcare is fundamentally collaborative.

Together, we can build a climate-resilient health sector across the world.



Thank you!

Learn more about our work, contact us, or join our networks:

- Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) Europe
- Website: europe.noharm.org
- Email: europe@hcwh.org
- Networks: Doctors for Greener Healthcare, Pharmacists for Greener Healthcare, Nurses Climate Challenge Europe, and Global Green and Healthy Hospitals

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