

Climate & Health Institute

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The Climate and Health Institute (CHI) at the George Washington University (GWU) strives to develop an evidence-based global response by governments and stakeholders to mitigate the climate crisis and equitably improve public health. Our mission is to promote equitable protection of population health at the local, national, and global level by:

- Conducting policy-relevant and community-oriented research that reveals relationships between climate change, human health and equity;
- Educating and empowering the newest generation of leaders in equitably minimizing climate change and its health consequences; and
- Communicating and translating cross-disciplinary knowledge to integrate health and equity into actions to address climate change.

The Director of the Institute is Susan Anenberg, PhD, Associate Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health at the Milken Institute School of Public Health. The Institute Co-Director is Neelima Tummala, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery at the GW Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) and the George Washington University Hospital (GWUH). The membership of the Institute is broadly representative of the University, including students and faculty from the School of Public Health, the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy, GW Law School, the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, and others.

The Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness within the School of Public Health is an organizational member of CHI. The Redstone Center is led by William H. Dietz, MD, PhD, a member of the NAM Climate Interest group. The Redstone Center formed a CHI Subcommittee on GW's Healthcare Sector to address the contributions of GWU's medical sector to greenhouse gas emissions. The subcommittee is co-chaired by Dr. Tummala and Dr. Dietz. Through this subcommittee, CHI conducts the following activities that address priorities of the NAM Action Collaborative:

- **Health Care Delivery:** The subcommittee is examining the practices of the GWUH and MFA that contribute to the GW medical sector's greenhouse gas emissions and developing strategies for reducing such emissions. The subcommittee is advocating to hospital leadership to commit to sustainability strategies and intends to support the hospital and MFA in implementing such strategies once this commitment is secured.
- **Health Care Supply Chain and Infrastructure:** In addition to its advocacy at the existing GW-run hospital, the committee is actively supporting sustainable infrastructure in the development of a new GW-run hospital, including a major microgrid project funded by FEMA at the site, as well as solar arrays. The subcommittee is currently working to ensure that the microgrid moves forward, that the hospital design incorporates energy efficiency, and that sustainable energy production is maximized at the site.
- **Health Professional Education and Communications:** To empower healthcare workers to advocate for decarbonizing the healthcare sector, and to strengthen CHI's influence in

pursuing healthcare sustainability reforms, the subcommittee is developing support and awareness across the University community, including among medical students, the MFA, and the Schools of Nursing and Physician Assistants. MFA physicians are incorporating climate and decarbonization strategies into grand rounds for their residents, and the GW Medical School curriculum incorporates coursework on the health impacts of climate change.