

AN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE: ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND PSYCHIATRY



Climate Change & Mental Health

This Guidebook is our call to action on climate change. Understand the key factors contributing to the crisis facing our planet. Learn about actionable recommendations to foster sustainable workplaces and minimize our environmental footprint. Lastly, explore strategies to integrate eco-friendly practices into clinical settings, and champion environmental advocacy within our communities.

Climate change and extreme weather events cause loss, displacement, and trauma, affecting mental health globally. Anxiety about the future, especially in areas experiencing climate change, is prevalent. Eco-anxiety, linked to environmental concerns, worsens depression and stress. Integrating green approaches in clinical care, like nature prescribing, can alleviate these issues and promote well-being.



How You Can Be a Leader

1

Establish a “Green Steering Committee” to guide the implementation of changes and build on the work to date.



2

Educate colleagues / community through our personal examples.



3

Seek out sustainability and education-related certifications through PEACH and PGME.



What Can I Do?



Travel

- Look for eco-friendly alternatives to daily travel by car such as carpooling, biking, public transit, or walking!
- When traveling out of town, consider the most effective route/method of transit with the lowest greenhouse gas emissions - whether it be carpooling, taking the train, etc.



Reduce Environmental Impact at Work

- Bring your own water bottle to work and try to minimize single use items
- Replace single use coffee cups and bring your own reusable coffee cup/tumbler and encourage others to do the same
 - Look into resident association programs for funding to support supplying hospital lounges with reusable mugs and cups



Meetings

- Assess the trade-offs when meeting virtually or in-person, with an effort to choose virtual as often as possible



Partnerships

- Build partnerships with groups who share our goals and support efforts to increase sustainable practices in our community
- Explore PGME sustainability programs, courses & certifications, and additional resources



Clinical Care

- Deprescribing when clinically indicated
- Familiarize yourself with [deprescribing guidelines](#) and [CASCADES sustainable pharmacy and prescribing playbooks](#)
- Explore how [outpatient](#) and [inpatient deprescribing](#) can be incorporated into your clinical practice
- Actively incorporate green and eco-friendly practices into all aspects of clinical care



Our Physical Area

- Turn off lights and other equipment before you leave each day



Climate Literacy

- Increase department members' understanding of the impacts of climate change and the work that needs to be done - Start the conversation!
 - Discuss with your staff and colleagues how they are incorporating sustainability into their treatment choices and daily practices.
- Develop expertise/knowledge in specific conditions related to eco anxiety and to related conditions in adults and children



Department Events

- Use plant-based meals at meetings and events

Tips for Hamiltonians

Travel

For information regarding secure bike parking locations, Hamilton's Bike Share initiative, and cycling infrastructure, please visit and explore the [City of Hamilton's website](#)

Reducing Environmental Impact at Work

Explore the [PARO Resident Enhancement Funds](#) in an effort to supply reusable mugs or branded tumblers in hospital lounges. Mugs could easily be sourced from your local second hand store or you can also explore companies, such as [Yeti](#), that supply HCW discounts through ID.me.

Look into the [PGME Social Accountability Grant](#) to support sustainability-focused projects.

Department Events

Explore these [top-rated plant-based eateries in Hamilton](#) using the interactive restaurant location map

Climate Literacy

Reach out to PEACH Health Ontario for more information about our educational rounds. Check out the [PEACH Health Ontario website](#) for additional resources and guidebooks

Partnerships

Explore [PEACH's special projects](#), such as [Trees for Life's Trees for Health program](#), as well as the City of Hamilton's [Community Environmental Initiatives](#)

Leadership

Participate in PEACH's evening champions course to build confidence and leadership

CONTRIBUTORS

This mini guidebook is adapted from PEACH Health Ontario's guidebook of [Environmental Stewardship and Psychiatry - A Plan For Sustainable Change](#).

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