

The Climate Chronicles

March/April 2025 - Making a long-term commitment to organizational sustainability

What is Scope 3 Data?

Now tracking "other" emissions associated with doing business not covered in Scopes 1 and 2



In greenhouse gas emissions accounting, there are three scopes of data. Scope 1 includes emissions associated with heating and cooling buildings, operating vehicles, and fugitive emissions (for an organization like ours, fugitive emissions

include things like anesthetic gases). Scope 2 includes emissions associated with electricity use at the organization. Scope 3 includes all other emissions associated with doing the business of the organization; getting supplies made and delivered to our facilities, having our waste hauled away and processed, the commutes of our employees to their jobs, and the traveling of our patients to their appointments, and more. Scope 3 emissions are much harder for an organization like Northern Light Health to quantify, because unlike Scopes 1 and 2, where most of the required information exists in our own records and invoices, Scope 3 data is "owned" by the people and partners we work with.

While we have been tracking our Scopes 1 and 2 emissions for a few years, in late 2024, Northern Light Health published the first accounting of Scope 3 as well, in an expanded report of our baseline year, 2021. This report is available online on our sustainability page, (northernlighthealth.org/sustainability) and provides interesting insight into our emissions by member organization and source.

We are finalizing our emissions numbers from 2024 and will be publishing a similar (continued on page 2)

The One Healthcare Ecochallenge

Team Northern Light Health wants your help!

The One Healthcare Ecochallenge returns April 1! Join our team and start planning your month of meaningful change at <https://onehealthcare.ecochallenge.org>
Scan the QR Code to join our team!



Our Planet, Our Health: Climate Action Convention

Northern Light physician attends conference that mobilizes health professionals around climate action

Jessica Bloom-Foster, MD, recently attended the "Our Planet, Our Health: 2025 Climate Action Convention", an annual event put on by The Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health (MSCCH), a multinational consortium of organizations and societies seeking to lend the voices of the healthcare community calling for climate action and doing the research needed to support it.

Sessions included eye-opening and practical panel sessions on "Identifying and Addressing Misinformation on Climate Science", "Catalyzing Collective Action to Decarbonize Healthcare: Now What?", and "Plastics and Our Health". Topics included talking to patients about their "media diet" and its impact on health, shifting the narrative about climate change to focus on personal impacts, and recognizing the role of healthcare in contributing to as well as addressing health harms from climate change.

The Chief Environmental Stewardship Officer from Providence Healthcare (a 51-hospital organization across 5 western states) shared experience with local and state initiatives to increase sustainability at their institutions. They maintain an open resource library at providence.org. Dr. Bloom-Foster attended virtually, and shared this was eligible for Continuing Medical Education credits.

Building a communication plan around sustainability

Looking at the results of our education and communication efforts



Recognizing that the healthcare industry emits nearly 9% of all greenhouse gases, Northern Light Health's Education and Communications (EduCom) workgroup developed a communication plan to inform and educate staff, patients, and families about our sustainable healthcare practices to address climate change concerns. The goal was

to be seen as a respected and transparent industry leader in sustainability. Objectives included raising awareness among 50% of employees, recruiting 15 additional workgroup members, and reaching an external audience of 100,000 people within 18 months. Target audiences were patients, visitors, employees, board members, donors, recruitment candidates, and regulatory bodies, with a key message emphasizing the organization's commitment to sustainability and reducing its contribution to climate change.

Strategies included educating internal and external audiences, leveraging local and state media, and promoting efforts to external partners, business leaders, and legislative bodies. Recruitment and retention strategies aimed to attract those passionate about environmental health. Internal tactics included creating an intranet portal, newsletters, educational events, leadership messaging, onboarding slides, and recruitment flyers. External tactics involved developing a public webpage, social media videos, patient area slides, press releases, television news segments, annual report materials, and podcasts.

Scope 3 Data

Continued from page 1

"all-scopes" report in the spring. This expanded understanding of our total emissions footprint will allow us to comprehensively evaluate our progress towards emissions reduction over the past four years, clarifying where we have had the most success, and what opportunities for improvement exist. This broader understanding is an important step forward in our mission to provide excellent patient care in a more sustainable way.



The results showed the successful recruitment of 40 additional workgroup members and reaching over 1.12 million people externally. For example, a press release on eliminating desflurane as an anesthetic gas was mentioned 21 times across various media, reaching an estimated audience of 413,385 people, with an equivalent value of \$28,411 in earned media. Internally we reached 90% of employees with a more than 9% engagement rate. To better understand our outcomes, surveys and focus groups would better help us understand employee awareness and engagement with our message.

