



Idaho Nurses Association – Greener Idaho Topic January 2009

Health Care Without Harm

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Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) is an international coalition of over 473 organizations including: hospitals and health care systems, medical professionals, community groups, health-affected constituencies, labor unions, environmental and environmental health organizations, and religious groups located in more than 50 countries. The mission of HCWH is to transform the health care sector worldwide, without compromising patient safety or care, so that it is ecologically sustainable and no longer a source of harm to public health and the environment (<http://www.noharm.org/us/aboutUs/missionGoals>).

HCWH Goals:

1. Create markets and policies for safer products, materials and chemicals in health care. Promote safer substitutes, including products that avoid mercury, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic and brominated flame retardants.
2. Eliminate incineration of medical waste, minimize the amount and toxicity of all waste generated and promote safer waste treatment practices.
3. Transform the design, construction and operations of health care facilities to minimize environmental impacts and foster healthy, healing environments.
4. Encourage food purchasing systems that support sustainable food production and distribution, and provide healthy food on-site at health care facilities.
5. Secure a safe and healthy workplace for all health care workers.
6. Ensure patients, workers and communities have full access to information about chemicals used in health care and can participate in decisions about exposures to chemicals.
7. Promote human rights and environmental justice for communities impacted by the health care sector, while assuring that problems are not displaced from one community or country to another.

To learn more about HCWH and specific issues that can potentially affect health check out the HCWH Web site at <http://www.noharm.org>, or contact Nancy Otterness, nttern@boisestate.edu. Thank you Nancy for our first member contribution for Greener Idaho!