

Improve the Present

Respect the Future

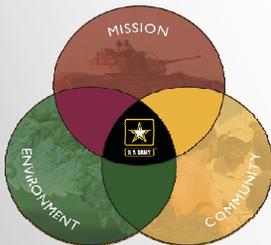
Sustainability is a broad topic with several initiatives that support MEDCOM's current mission and will prepare us for future mission requirements. These initiatives include environmentally preferential purchasing, energy and water conservation, waste stream reduction, recycling, adopting sustainable construction and renovation practices, determining life-cycle costs and building community involvement.

We can protect and improve our future by initiating sound decision-making processes. We must choose wiser and less destructive uses of our planet's assets and resources.

A successful sustainability program recognizes the need for an organization to accomplish its mission and be both financially and environmentally responsible while also contributing to and protecting the surrounding community.

Sustainability is much more than just striving to be "green." It relates to the continuity of economic, social, institutional, and environmental aspects of human society, as well as the environment. For the Army, sustainability is a long-range vision to meet today's needs and anticipate tomorrow's challenges.

We must connect our activities today to those of tomorrow with sound business and environmental practices.



MEDCOM Joins



MEDCOM is a member of Practice Greenhealth! Practice Greenhealth is the nation's leading organization for institutions in the health care community that have made a commitment to sustainable practices. Members are dedicated to the greening of health care to improve the health of patients, staff and the environment.

Does Your Facility Have a Sustainability Success Story?

If so, send it in! We want to gather lessons learned and successes to share with other medical treatment facilities.

To learn more about the MEDCOM Sustainability Strategy, or to share your sustainability success stories, contact:

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Army Medicine...Army Strong!



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SUSTAINABILITY



Accomplishing our mission through due consideration of health, value, environment, and communities while enhancing the ability of future generations to accomplish their missions.



The Army Strategy for the Environment: *Sustain the Mission, Secure the Future*

A sustainable Army simultaneously meets current and future mission requirements world-wide, protects human health, improves quality of life, and safeguards the natural environment.

We have an obligation to ensure that Soldiers of today – and Soldiers of the future – have the land, water, and air resources they need to train and a healthy environment in which to live. Simply complying with regulations will not ensure that we will be able to sustain our mission.

The purpose of the Army Strategy for the Environment:

- Strengthen the Army contribution to joint operational capability
- Meet current and future training, testing, and other mission requirements
- Improve our ability to operate installations, to include growing joint interdependency
- Reduce costs and minimize impacts so the Army can do more, and do it better
- Enhance human health, safety, and well-being
- Be an active citizen within our communities, as well as a good neighbor

Sustainability: the capacity to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

MEDCOM Sustainability

First, Do No Harm

The Army mission is only accomplished because America entrusts us with its most precious resources – its sons and daughters. The mission of MEDCOM is to promote, sustain and enhance Soldier health; train, develop and equip a medical force that supports full spectrum operations; and deliver leading edge health services to our Warriors and military family to optimize outcomes.

To succeed in this mission, MEDCOM must continue to act in a manner that is fiscally, environmentally, and socially responsible and embrace sustainable practices that will help support our mission into the future. Understanding that the adage, “First, do no harm” applies to the environment and community as well as to patients, MEDCOM is committed to developing and implementing a Sustainability Strategic Plan. When implemented, this Plan will enable MEDCOM to sustain readiness, improve quality of life, strengthen community relationships, and help reduce total costs of operation and ownership by suggesting sound environmental and social investments to promote Army sustainability.

Sustainability & Health Care

The medical profession has pledged to “first, do no harm” since the time of Hippocrates. However, in many cases purchasing habits, facility operations, and building design standards are not consistent with the professional values of health care. Applying sustainable practices can benefit health care facilities. For example:

- Purchasing items which have less environmental impact can create a healthier environment for our Warriors and military family members.
- Reusing and recycling items can reduce disposal costs.
- Using biodegradable dining hall containers provides a more sustainable alternative to styrofoam and plastics.
- Conserving resources can decrease utility, water, and disposal costs.
- Using healthier building materials can provide a more healing environment for patients.
- Some elements of building design, such as use of natural daylight and views of nature can improve patient outcomes and help patients heal faster.

MEDCOM Sustainability Strategy

MEDCOM is taking strides toward becoming a sustainable organization by developing a Sustainability Strategy. The Strategy will detail the way ahead for MEDCOM to continue the mission of providing top-notch health care while also being good stewards of the environment and tax payer dollars, and will provide a roadmap for partnering with the community and ensuring the future availability of the earth’s resources.

The initial focus areas of the MEDCOM Sustainability Strategy include:

- Waste management practices, including
 - Reducing amount of waste generated,
 - Recycling
 - Regulated medical waste, solid waste, and hazardous waste
- Energy use and conservation
- Water use and conservation
- Environmentally preferable purchasing

The MEDCOM Sustainability Strategy will establish sustainability goals and contain metrics to measure progress toward these goals. To assist in developing our strategy and goals, MEDCOM has benchmarked current sustainability practices in stateside Army medical treatment facilities (MTFs). The data collected at the MTFs will establish the baseline for measuring progress toward MEDCOM sustainability goals. Benchmarking will continue in the coming year to include Army MTFs overseas.