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Sustainability in healthcare capital works

As a significant user of natural resources the Department of Health and Human Services is committed to delivering health care facilities that deliver positive patient outcomes, are environmentally efficient and have a minimal impact on the environment.

The department recognises the importance of providing facilities with access to daylight, fresh air and external views for patients, staff and visitors. The positive effects of good indoor environment quality is well known and has the potential to deliver significant savings across the health care system, both through improved patient outcomes and staff productivity.

This area contains information on:

- 1 [Integrating sustainability into health care capital works guidelines](#)
- 1 [Waste management in health care capital works](#)
- 1 [Water reuse and recycling in health care facilities](#)
- 1 [Department of Health sustainability website](#)

Integrating sustainability into health care capital works

The Department of Health and Human Services released its first *Sustainability guideline* in 2004. Since 2004 expectations around sustainability in health care have increased significantly and as such these guidelines do not reflect current sustainability practices.

In 2010 the department released a new departmental guideline for *Sustainability in health care capital works* that raised the standard of what is expected on projects from a sustainability perspective.

The *Sustainability in health care capital works* (2010) guideline and associated documents can be found [here](#).

Waste management in health care capital works

It is estimated that 260,000 tonnes of solid waste is produced by Australian Hospitals per annum. As health services grow, at approximately 5 per cent per year, so do the amounts of waste generated. These high quantities of waste put a strain on the environment as well as hospital budgets, due to the high costs of clinical waste and general waste disposal.

The department has prepared guidance for integrating waste management requirements into capital works, which can be found [here](#).

Further information on what the department is doing to promote effective waste management in public hospitals can be found at the [waste minimisation in health care project](#) page.

Water reuse and recycling in health care facilities

The department has produced *Guidelines for water reuse and recycling in Victorian health care facilities*. The guidelines cover the regulatory framework and specific measures that should be taken to protect the health of users of recycled water in hospitals and health care facilities.

The guidelines can be found [here](#).

Department of Health sustainability website

Further information on what the department is doing on sustainability beyond capital works can be found [here](#).