Procuring vending machines in healthcare

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Speakers

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About HCWH Europe

o A **non-profit membership organisation** of European hospitals, healthcare systems, healthcare professionals, local authorities, research/ academic institutions, and environmental and health organisations.

o **Bringing the voice of healthcare professionals** to the European policy debate about key issues, such as: chemicals, climate change and health, sustainable procurement, pharmaceuticals, sustainable food.

o **Educating the healthcare sector** to understand the importance of the environment and press healthcare leaders and professionals to advocate for broader societal policies and changes.

HCWH Europe Programmes

- Safer Pharma

- Climate-smart Healthcare

- **Sustainable Food**

- Safer Chemicals

- Sustainable Procurement

Global Green and Healthy Hospitals

Global Green and healthy Hospitals (GGHH) is an international network of:

- Hospitals
- Healthcare facilities
- Health systems
- Health organisations

Members are dedicated to reducing their environmental footprint and promoting public and environmental health.

Introduction

HCWH Europe's new publication provides case studies and guidelines for healthcare organisations looking to procure **healthier**, more **nutritious**, and more **sustainable** vending services.

Why?
- **Vending machines** can be found in many public settings in Europe, including healthcare facilities. Yet, it is an area (of food services) that is often **overlooked**.
- They offer a **convenient solution** to provide staff, patients, and visitors with basic food options when it is not possible to run a fresh meal service 24/7, but **it is important to consider diverse aspects.**

Environmental impact

Vending machines consume on average **2,700 kWh** of energy annually.

- Solutions: Improve energy efficiency of vending machines through LED lighting, by switching off machines at night in unoccupied areas that do not contain perishable items.

Vending machines generate **(plastic) waste.**

- Solutions: Purchase bio-based, compostable, or recycled paper materials; place recycling containers next to vending machines, and/or implement plastic bottle deposit schemes.

Health and diet implications

o Food and beverages in vending machines are high in calories, sugar, saturated fat, and/or sodium, which might have different health outcomes.

o See the whole picture.

o There are several measures that can influence consumers to choose healthier products: increase availability, reduce portion sizes, clearly display nutritional information on the packaging of products, and preferential pricing policies that promote healthier alternatives.

Policy context

Procurement is a powerful tool to promote the uptake of healthier and more sustainable food practices.

- **Directive (2014/24/EU)** encourages public authorities to consider environmental impacts when making procurement decisions.

Policy context (II)

The **Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria for food and catering services** aim to address the main environmental impacts of food. Specific vending machines criteria:

- Food products: Organic, fair trade, use of environmentally responsible palm oil
- Smart controls (including sleep-mode during out of hours)
- Annual energy consumption
- Global Warming Potential (GWP) of refrigerants
- Reusable cups
- Purchasing vending machines

- Other EU legislation such as **Ecodesign** and **Energy Labelling** regulations that cover energy consumption, refrigerants, and disposal also apply to vending machines.

Recommendations

1. Create a **sustainable food policy** and an action plan that **addresses key issues in the food system.**

- The action plan should set out the steps you will need to take to implement the policy.

- Identify and engage stakeholders from across different departments, disciplines, and levels.

2. Engage with suppliers to **build a shared commitment to sustainability,** food, and nutrition.

- Companies should be fully informed about the weighting given to different criteria during the pre-tender phase.
- Organise an open day for potential suppliers to present your criteria and provide an opportunity for tenderers to ask questions and visit your facilities.
- Monitor and identify areas for improvement.

Recommendations

3. Create a culture where **sustainability is** understood and becomes **a priority** amongst patients, staff, and others.

- Wider <u>communications initiatives</u> designed to raise awareness of key environment and health issues and encourage a shift in behaviours.

Recommendations

4. Share your experiences and encourage other institutions to create a healthier and more **sustainable food policy.**

South Tipperary General Hospital - Ireland

○ Voluntary system-level or national policies do not always necessarily translate into action at an operational level. Therefore, **clearer policy at the organisational level** is required.

Case studies

Hospital de Cruces - Spain

- Understand of the nutrition and hydration needs of employees and visitors to improve the sustainability and the nutritional content of products of the vending machines.
- Use of simple yet **effective communication techniques** (labelling, use of green stickers).

Case studies

The Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (SCFT) - United Kingdom

- Offer healthier snacks must be part of a wider collaborative initiative supported by a clear organisational policy. **Importance of supplier engagement** in identifying and introducing new options and the potential for competitive tender processes to support longer-term impact.

Thank you!

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