



BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA'S ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

Most of us have heard the warnings – Mother Earth is in trouble, and we need to work together to urgently address climate change. Blue Shield of California has been consistently doing its part, having achieved carbon neutrality since 2020, and taking other steps to reduce our emissions.

BUT ALL OF US NEED TO DO MORE.

As a leading health insurer, Blue Shield of California can play an important role in safeguarding health through actions on climate.

Blue Shield's Sustainability Goals outline the actions we will take in the next few years to address climate change, one of the most pressing health threats in the 21st Century. In this fact sheet, we also provide an update on our progress, as of April 2023.



GOAL ONE

BE CARBON NEGATIVE BY END OF 2023



Purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) and carbon offsets



Launch supplier sustainability program and invest in renewable energy, energy efficiency, enhanced business travel policy, and other initiatives to reduce footprint



Reduce environmental impact through climate smart healthcare models

GOAL TWO

ZERO-WASTE OPERATIONS BY 2025



Conduct waste audits at Blue Shield offices statewide and understand work from home waste streams



Develop zero-waste plan



Address challenges in municipalities where recycling and composting are not available

GOAL THREE

QUANTIFY COST OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HUMAN HEALTH BY THE END OF 2023



Convene stakeholder group to inform research



Design and conduct a study on the impact of climate events on health and well-being

GOAL FOUR

ADOPT AND PROMOTE CLIMATE SMART HEALTH CARE BY 2025



Promote virtual care to reduce trips to clinics when appropriate and identify an additional use case

SINCE ANNOUNCING THESE GOALS, BLUE SHIELD HAS MADE NOTABLE PROGRESS



LAUNCHING OUR SUPPLIER SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

Blue Shield's supply chain is a top source of our carbon emissions. In 2022, our Supplier Sustainability Program engaged 41 vendors which account for 72% of our supply chain emissions; 29 disclosed their environmental impact to CDP (formerly Carbon Disclosure Project), an important first step for decarbonization action.

2.9M

BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA MEMBERS (61%) HAVE OPTED TO GO PAPERLESS, SAVING AN ESTIMATED 25,600 TREES IN 2022. OUR GOAL IS FOR 80% OF MEMBERS TO GO PAPERLESS BY 2025.

Environmental impact estimates were made using the Environmental Paper Network Paper Calculator Version 4.0. For more information visit www.papercalculator.org.

VIRTUAL AND DIGITAL INNOVATIONS

To quantify the positive environmental impacts of virtual care, we conducted a lifecycle assessment (LCA) with two healthcare providers. The LCA compared the environmental footprint of in-person patient visits with virtual visits, taking into consideration factors such as the number of patients, providers and staff, each of their respective commutes, and electricity and water consumption. The LCA found virtual care generated an average 25% reduction in carbon emissions and 35% reduction in water consumption. While virtual care is not a solution for every healthcare need or person, we have an opportunity to promote its adoption and ensure utilization doesn't drop to pre-COVID levels.



SIGNED ON TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES CLIMATE PLEDGE

In July, Blue Shield signed the White House Climate Pledge, committing to meet the Biden Administration's goal of reducing emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

