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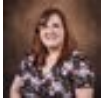
Education

Pitt announces new Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences



University of Pittsburgh in Oakland.

JIM HARRIS/PBT



By [Jordyn Hronec](#) – Associate Editor, Pittsburgh Business Times
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On April 22 - Earth Day, notably – the University of Pittsburgh announced the launch of its new Office of Sustainability in Health Sciences, which will oversee sustainability efforts in Pitt’s six schools of Health Sciences.

The new office is in partnership with Pitt’s existing Office of Sustainability, as well as the UPMC Center for Sustainability. It will represent Pitt, UPMC and the National Academy of Medicine’s Climate Collaborative, which currently counts 66 health care organizations across the country amongst its ranks.

The Office of Sustainability in Health Sciences, along with Pitt’s School of Public Health, will also serve to house a new organization – the Pennsylvania One Health Consortium, a statewide chapter of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s national One Health effort. Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania will also be part of the consortium, which will look to utilize research, education and community outreach to address the CDC’s One Health initiatives.

“Given that health care and associated research are responsible for approximately 10% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions and represent the second-largest industry contributing to landfill waste worldwide, it’s imperative that we increase education, awareness and implementation of environmentally sustainable measures across all our mission areas,” Anantha Shekhar, senior vice chancellor for the health sciences and John and Gertrude Petersen Dean of the School of Medicine, said in a release. “In addition to collaborating with the

curriculum committee to offer a combination of coursework and experiential learning related to sustainability, this office will lead efforts to generate increased funding for sustainability research and interface with Pitt and community partners focused on environmental justice and dismantling climate change-related health inequities.”

Michael Boninger, chief medical sustainability officer at UPMC and associate dean for sustainability in Pitt’s School of Medicine, will lead the new office and its efforts. Noe Woods, an obstetrician/gynecologist and chair of Clinicians for Climate Action, will serve as assistant dean.

“From medical to pharmacy to athletic training, our students want to learn more about practicing and living more sustainably,” Boninger said. “Our office will work to incorporate sustainability throughout the health science curriculums and offer new hands-on interdisciplinary opportunities to learn.”

According to the university, part of its overall Sustainability and Climate Action Plan is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2037.

“The establishment of this office for the schools of the Health Sciences and medicine deepens Pitt’s commitment to balance equity, environment and economics so current and future generations can thrive,” the university said.