

Overlake Hospital Medical Center, Washington

Christopher Linaman, Executive Chef

Overlake Hospital Medical Center as a responsible provider of healthcare services, are committed to the health of our patients, our staff and the local global community. We are aware that food production and distribution methods can have adverse impacts on public environmental health. We recognize that for the consumers who eat it, the workers who produce it, healthy food must be defined not only by nutritional quality, but equally by a food system that is economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and supportive of human dignity and justice.

Overlake Hospital signed the Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge this past winter and is launching a “go green, go healthy” campaign. We want our employees to join us in our efforts and as a result, we have adapted the pledge for our employees to sign. In our cafeteria, we have framed the Pledge and are hanging all the employee pledges alongside ours in prominent area of the cafeteria.

We understand that the pledge takes an integrated approach to providing healthy food in healthcare therefore we are taking steps to procure more sustainable foods, support local farmers, increase the nutritional value and minimize waste. In the area of sustainable foods, we use local organic greens, Starbucks fair trade coffee, rBGH-free milk, organic yogurt and serve Seafood Safe fish that is tested for mercury and PCBs supplied by EcoFish.

To provide optimal nutrition, we eliminated trans fats, exclusively source whole grain artisan breads, serve legumes, vegetables and whole grains daily in the cafeteria. The new patient menu has organic greens, whole grain bakery products, no cured meat products as well as many other sustainable foods. The patient trays have a new tray liner that explains how Overlake’s food service is going green. For our employees and visitors we have Yo! Natural Vending machines for when the cafeteria and café are closed.

In the area of waste reduction we have taken great strides. All food waste is being composted and picked up 2-3 days per week. To date, 21.6 tons were diverted from the landfills and into compost. We have eliminated all foam cups, plates and clamshells and are composting with bio-based service ware. All the food trays from the cafeteria and café go on a belt and we have kitchen staff sort the trays and compost the food and plates. In addition to composting, we have an extensive recycling program for bottles, cans, newspapers, and paper cups.

To support local farms and provide access to fresh fruits and vegetables to our employees and visitors, this summer we are piloting a CSA program for 30 employees to have organic produce delivered weekly to the hospital for the personal consumption. In addition, the chef plans to buy local produce from the farm once or twice a week and highlight the organic local produce on the specials.

We take education seriously, and are working with our marketing department. As a result, we have created a “go green” brochure, patient tray insert and are developing strategies to effectively launch the “go green, go healthy” campaign hospital-wide.



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