

# Reducing the Health System's Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Key Messages to Catalyze Climate Action

## Messaging video transcript and displayed text

This transcript contains both the spoken audio and the displayed text from a video sharing sample messaging that state Medicaid agency staff can use to help their peers and partners understand the opportunity Medicaid has to become a pioneer in fostering the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and pave the way for a more sustainable and resilient health system. The provided time stamps are designed to assist navigation throughout the video. **This transcript can be used as a companion piece to the video, which can be accessed [here](#).**

**00:00**

### Audio

State Medicaid programs are well positioned to play a leading role in fostering the reduction of harmful greenhouse gas emissions. Now is the time to ensure key players in your agency and your partners understand the opportunity Medicaid has to become a pioneer and pave the way for a more sustainable and resilient health system.

### Displayed text

Reducing the Health System's Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Key Messages to Catalyze Climate Action

**00:21**

### Audio

In this video, we have organized sample messaging into several themes to help you appeal to different areas of interest. You can use this messaging with your Medicaid colleagues and leaders, other state agencies, providers, and policymakers you're looking to engage. These sample messages can be a foundation no matter how you are communicating with your audiences – whether it is verbally in meetings, chats, or presentations, or written in emails, memos, or proposals. Tailoring these sample messages can help them resonate with your audience and what they care about most. Let's get started. We encourage you to pause the video as needed to give you time to consider each message. Closed captioning, as well as a full transcript of all audio and displayed text, are available for this recording.

### Displayed text

- Lowering Emissions in the Health System
- Why Medicaid?
- Progress is Possible

A full transcript of all audio and displayed text is available.

## 01:09

### Audio

Our first messaging theme follows two frames with slightly different approaches that center on lowering harmful emissions in the health system.

### Displayed text

- Lowering Harmful Emissions in the Health System
  - “Do No Harm” Conflict
  - Shared Benefits

## 01:21

### Audio

The “ ‘Do No Harm’ Conflict” is our first message, placing our focus on the scale of the issue at hand. It calls attention to the growing negative health and economic impacts of a rapidly changing climate, and it highlights the close relationship between climate change and our health system. The key point here is that climate change poses a growing threat to our health system, which drives up health care use and costs. Because the health system is also a top producer of greenhouse gases, it is in conflict with our mission to do no harm.

### Displayed text

“Do No Harm” Conflict – Climate change poses a growing threat to public health in the United States, increasing health care use and costs while diminishing the sustainability of our health system. But that same health system is itself a top producer of the harmful greenhouse gases that drive climate change. This means our current health system is in direct conflict with our guiding principle to do no harm.

## 01:53

### Audio

This message might be helpful to use as a starting point when speaking with people who might not understand the relationship between climate change and our health system, or people who understand it but think climate-focused work falls outside the scope of their job.

### Displayed text

Use with those who do not understand the relationship between climate change and our health system or think climate-focused work falls outside job scope.

## 02:07

### Audio

*No audio*

### Displayed text

- Lowering Harmful Emissions in the Health System

- “Do No Harm” Conflict
- Shared Benefits

## 02:10

### Audio

Our second message, “Shared Benefits,” still discusses the need to lower harmful emissions but approaches this need through a lens of opportunity. In this message, we focus on key reasons why the health system has a vested interest in pushing for reduced greenhouse gas emissions. These include realizing the added benefits we get when we act to control climate change—known as co-benefits—as well as avoiding risks, saving costs, advancing policy priorities, and improving access to care for Medicaid beneficiaries. The most important pieces of this message include the need to take action to reduce emissions now, which can have many future benefits, such as helping to address social determinants of health, enhance health equity, and support improved health outcomes. Plus, savings can be reinvested into other Medicaid priority areas.

### Displayed text

Shared Benefits – Investing money to proactively curb harmful greenhouse gas emissions from the health system can help us realize co-benefits for adjacent economic sectors and related policy issues, such as equity. Reducing emissions addresses social determinants of health, enhances health equity, and supports improved health outcomes, which can cut down on excess health care usage and costs. Money saved through sustainability measures can be strategically reinvested across multiple Medicaid priority areas. Many of the emission reduction strategies can generate economic benefit for adjacent sectors and local employment overall.

## 03:05

### Audio

This message might be a good way to enter into conversation with people who are most interested in improving health and economic outcomes or people who work to keep costs and spending in check.

### Displayed text

Use with those who aim to improve health and economic outcomes or want to keep costs and spending in check.

## 03:19

### Audio

Our second messaging theme is framed around a combination of responsibility and inspiration to underscore the many strengths of Medicaid, and why Medicaid in particular is well suited to take a leading role in catalyzing climate action.

### Displayed text

- Why Medicaid?
  - Strong Position
  - Health Equity

### 03:33

#### Audio

The “Strong Position” message here taps into Medicaid’s successful history of leading the charge amid numerous wide-reaching public health threats, such as the opioid crisis or COVID-19. The key points to focus on in this message include the historically innovative nature of Medicaid leadership coupled with our unique state-federal partnership structure, which together give us a proven foundation for leading in new areas. We can also leverage our significant purchasing power and regulatory capacity to incentivize the health system to reduce its emissions.

#### Displayed text

Medicaid has a long tradition of innovative and resourceful leadership in the face of emerging health threats. Our state-federal partnership structure lets us remain flexible and experiment to meet the specific needs of our state in a way that other agencies cannot. We can leverage our significant purchasing power, regulatory capacity, and other creative strategies, partnerships, and policy pathways to incentivize reduced emissions in the health system.

### 04:08

#### Audio

This message might be helpful to use when speaking with people who are invested in Medicaid transformation or quality improvement. Because Medicaid serves people experiencing structural inequities who are disproportionately affected by climate change, any steps that help improve the quality of care and contain future costs are beneficial to consider.

#### Displayed text

Use with those who want to invest in transformation or are seeking to improve quality of care.

### 04:29

#### Audio

*No audio*

#### Displayed text

- Why Medicaid?
  - Strong Position
  - Health Equity

### 04:31

#### Audio

Health equity is a major priority for state and Federal Medicaid agencies. Our “Health Equity” message focuses more on the inequitable impact of climate change and how that closely ties in with Medicaid’s overarching purpose. This message emphasizes that climate change disproportionately affects the historically marginalized communities Medicaid is designed to serve. Therefore, efforts to reduce emissions can help enhance and safeguard health equity, which is a top Medicaid priority.

### Displayed text

Climate change disproportionately affects the communities Medicaid is designed to serve. Efforts to reduce the health system's harmful greenhouse gas emissions can help enhance health equity and address social determinants of health, which are top Medicaid priorities. We can now integrate our responsibility to safeguard health equity with growing efforts to reduce our health system's environmental impact.

## 05:02

### Audio

Such a message might appeal to people tasked with addressing social determinants of health; or people focused on advancing health equity.

### Displayed text

Use with those who aim to address social determinants of health or lead health equity efforts.

## 05:12

### Audio

Our final messaging theme highlights Medicaid's unique position and available opportunities. Each example we share here uses a more inspirational framing to help demonstrate possibility and spark hope and motivation.

### Displayed text

- Progress is Possible
  - In This Together
  - Opportunities Abound

## 05:26

### Audio

Our "In This Together" message showcases opportunity for collaboration as Medicaid professionals look to pursue climate action. Your colleagues and partners do not have to start from scratch, and they are not in this alone. They can learn from others who are already doing this work in some capacity. Here, we focus on the importance of collaboration and the opportunities that come with it. By taking lessons from others who are pursuing climate action, we can kickstart our own actions to pave the way for a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient health system.

### Displayed text

Medicaid has a well-established history of collaborating within and across agencies to drive solutions in the face of emerging health threats. By working with and learning from the bold and innovative actions of others, we can again take the helm to safeguard the health of all we serve amid our changing climate. Together, we can pave the way for a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient health system.

## 05:58

### Audio

It might be helpful to use this message when speaking with people who are trying to navigate the pressures of competing priorities or resource and capacity constraints, or when speaking with people who want to engage but simply do not know where to start.

### Displayed text

Use with those who face competing priorities, are managing resource or capacity constraints, or do not know where to start.

## 06:12

### Audio

*No audio*

### Displayed text

- Progress is Possible
  - In This Together
  - Opportunities Abound

## 06:14

### Audio

“Opportunities Abound,” our final message sample, highlights the wide range of paths Medicaid agencies can follow to begin working toward lowering harmful greenhouse gas emissions. This message calls attention to the fact that more and more legislation, policy, programming, and funding opportunities are focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. When considering the work Medicaid is already doing through a climate lens, we may find that we can improve our ability to assess health risks driven by climate change and figure out creative and effective ways to integrate them into our policies and our work with health care providers.

### Displayed text

We can now tap into the emerging landscape of national and state legislation, policies, programs, and federal and philanthropic funding focused on efforts to reduce harmful emissions. Applying a climate lens to our work can help us better assess climate change-driven health risks and integrate them into our policies and provider engagement. New solutions we pursue might even bring about additional benefits to other sectors or policy priorities in our state.

## 06:51

### Audio

This type of message might resonate especially with people who are interested in the policy implications of any actions they might take or people who participate in various coalitions or cross-agency or department groups.

### Displayed text

Use with those who are interested in policy implications or work across agencies or departments.

## 07:04

### Audio

We understand how critical messaging is to help you grab the attention of your colleagues and leaders, other state agencies, providers, and policymakers to make a compelling case for change. The messaging examples we shared in this video focused on points that might appeal to these audiences, but they just begin to scratch the surface for the discussions you can have.

### Displayed text

- Lowering Emissions in the Health System
  - “Do No Harm” Conflict
  - Shared Benefits
- Why Medicaid?
  - Strong Position
  - Health Equity
- Progress is Possible
  - In This Together
  - Opportunities Abound

## 07:28

### Audio

For more tools that can help you strengthen your messaging and feel more confident talking about climate action in your own agency, we encourage you to explore other resources authored by Mathematica that are supported by the Commonwealth Fund. You can find them through the URL displayed on the screen or by searching for the *Catalyzing State Medicaid Leadership on Climate Change Mitigation* project on [mathematica.org](http://mathematica.org).

### Displayed text

- Strengthen Your Messaging
- [mathematica.org/projects/catalyzing-state-medicaid-leadership-on-climate-change-mitigation](http://mathematica.org/projects/catalyzing-state-medicaid-leadership-on-climate-change-mitigation)
- A full transcript of all audio and displayed text for this video is available on this website.

This video, developed and produced by Mathematica and supported by the Commonwealth Fund, is part of the *Catalyzing State Medicaid Leadership on Climate Change Mitigation* project. Learn more about this project and related products by visiting [www.mathematica.org/projects/catalyzing-state-medicaid-leadership-on-climate-change-mitigation](http://www.mathematica.org/projects/catalyzing-state-medicaid-leadership-on-climate-change-mitigation).