# The Role of Healthcare Executives in Influencing Environmental Health Policies

## El papel de los directivos sanitarios en las políticas de salud ambiental

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**ABSTRACT**

How environmental health policies impact people's health, how to promote sustainable behaviours, and how to ensure that everyone has the same health outcomes depend much on the decisions taken by healthcare professionals. Being leaders in healthcare systems, they have a special role to advocate for and implement strategies addressing the relationship between health and the surroundings. Their involvement is very crucial for laws approved reducing the health consequences of environmental hazards such air pollution, water contamination, and climate change. This paper explores many ways in which healthcare directors could influence environmental health policy. It emphasises how their leadership could influence legislation created at the municipal, state, and national levels as well as the operations of companies. With an emphasis on long-term sustainability, patient care, and community health, healthcare executives have the knowledge and resources to make choices that benefit the environment and people in the society. Using their authority, they may advocate for policies that reduce environmental hazards and render areas healthier. Furthermore important in helping the government, non-governmental organisations (NGRs), and other healthcare professionals to advocate policy reforms is healthcare directors. Their involvement in policy discussions including long-term waste management, climate adaptation, supporting improved energy programs, and long-term waste management may have a significant impact on the general health of people as well as the health of the patients undergoing treatment. The report also addresses the difficulty healthcare executives have in ensuring that organisational objectives complement environmental health objectives. It addresses the political, legal, and financial factors influencing policy modification difficulty. It emphasises the need of healthcare executives giving public health first priority and using evidence-based advocacy to bring about structural reforms. Ultimately, healthcare leaders must participate in developing environmental health policies if we are to improve the planet, close health disparities, and ensure that a functional healthcare system will be there for next generations. Making and enforcing policies that protect people's health and promote long-term natural sustainability can move forward a great deal with their guidance.

**Keywords:** Healthcare Executives; Environmental Health Policies; Sustainability; Public Health; Policy Advocacy; Climate Change.

**RESUMEN**

La forma en que las políticas de salud ambiental repercuten en la salud de las personas, cómo promover comportamientos sostenibles y cómo garantizar que todo el mundo tenga los mismos resultados sanitarios

dependen en gran medida de las decisiones que tomen los profesionales sanitarios. Como líderes de los sistemas sanitarios, tienen un papel especial a la hora de defender y aplicar estrategias que aborden la relación entre la salud y el entorno. Su implicación es muy crucial para que las leyes aprobadas reduzcan las consecuencias para la salud de peligros medioambientales como la contaminación atmosférica, la contaminación del agua y el cambio climático. Este documento explora las diversas formas en que los directores de centros sanitarios podrían influir en la política de salud medioambiental. Destaca cómo su liderazgo podría influir en la legislación creada a nivel municipal, estatal y nacional, así como en las operaciones de las empresas. Al hacer hincapié en la sostenibilidad a largo plazo, la atención a los pacientes y la salud de la comunidad, los directivos sanitarios disponen de los conocimientos y recursos necesarios para tomar decisiones que beneficien al medio ambiente y a las personas de la sociedad. Haciendo uso de su autoridad, pueden abogar por políticas que reduzcan los riesgos medioambientales y hagan más saludables las zonas. Los directivos sanitarios también son importantes para ayudar al gobierno, a las organizaciones no gubernamentales (ONG) y a otros profesionales sanitarios a promover reformas políticas. Su participación en los debates políticos sobre gestión de residuos a largo plazo, adaptación al cambio climático, apoyo a programas energéticos mejorados y gestión de residuos a largo plazo puede tener un impacto significativo en la salud general de las personas, así como en la salud de los pacientes sometidos a tratamiento. El informe también aborda la dificultad que tienen los directivos sanitarios para garantizar que los objetivos organizativos complementen los objetivos de salud ambiental. Aborda los factores políticos, jurídicos y financieros que influyen en la dificultad de modificar las políticas. Subraya la necesidad de que los directivos sanitarios den prioridad a la salud pública y recurran a la promoción basada en pruebas para lograr reformas estructurales. En última instancia, los dirigentes sanitarios deben participar en la elaboración de políticas de salud ambiental si queremos mejorar el planeta, acabar con las disparidades sanitarias y garantizar la existencia de un sistema sanitario funcional para las próximas generaciones. La elaboración y aplicación de políticas que protejan la salud de las personas y promuevan la sostenibilidad natural a largo plazo puede avanzar mucho con su orientación.

**Palabras clave:** Ejecutivos Sanitarios; Políticas de Salud Ambiental; Sostenibilidad; Salud Pública; Defensa de Políticas; Cambio Climático.

## INTRODUCTION

The area where environmental health and healthcare meet is becoming more and more important for solving the bigger factors that affect public health. Because they are in charge of making strategic decisions for their companies, healthcare execs can have a big impact on how environmental health issues are integrated at both the practical and policy levels. In the past few years, people have become more aware of how important natural factors like air and water quality, climate change, and exposure to dangerous materials are in determining health results. Because of this, healthcare leaders have a very important duty to push for policies that reduce the harmful health effects of environmental dangers, encourage sustainability, and fix health disparities. Putting in place environmental health policies is meant to protect people's health by lowering their exposure to environmental risks. Many times, these laws are aimed to clean the air, improve rubbish management, guarantee safe drinking water, support sustainable farming, and counteract climate change. Although environmental organisations are often in charge of these sorts of legislation, healthcare leaders are very important in forward motion of these aims. Using their authority, resources, and leadership position will enable them to really transform policymaking generally and healthcare institutions. Hospital managers have many methods they could influence public health rules. They are in one sense in charge of ensuring that the running of their companies complies with environmental health criteria. This implies reducing their carbon footprint, supporting energy-efficient building designs that fit the community, workers, and patients, and designing structures fit for their needs. By advocating environmental health issues within healthcare institutions, with NGOs, the government, and other interested groups, they may influence policy, nonetheless. Directors in the environment as well as in healthcare may influence the course of environmental health policy and advocate structural reforms safeguarding public health and enabling long-term environmental survival.

Healthcare leaders can help a lot with these problems by pushing for policies that lower the health risks of the environment and make people stronger when they face environmental stresses. Along with their job as advocates, healthcare leaders can also make sure that their companies' methods are in line with environmental health goals. It is very important for healthcare organisations to use sustainable methods because hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities use a lot of energy and make a lot of trash.[1] By

putting environmental health first in their daily work, like using green building standards, cutting down on waste, and switching to renewable energy sources, healthcare executives not only make their facilities better for the environment, but they also set a great example for other industries to follow. Also, healthcare leaders are being asked to work with people from other fields more and more to change public health policies at the local, state, and national levels. They are able to work with lawmakers, environmental experts, and community leaders to push for policies that reduce environmental risks, improve health fairness, and support long-term growth.[2] Their guidance in these activities is very important to make sure that the health sector makes a real difference in making policies that put people's and the planet's health first.

**Definition of environmental health policies**

There are a lot of rules, guidelines, and programs that are meant to make the world safer for everyone's health. These are called environmental health policies. The goal of these policies is to improve people's health by reducing their exposure to environmental dangers like air pollution, dirty water, harmful chemicals, trash, and risks linked to climate change. Most of the time, government agencies, environmental groups, and public health groups make and implement them. Environmental health policies address a broad spectrum of issues including garbage management, air and water quality regulation, hazardous material disposal, and slow-down of climate change. Policies might also address issues like workplace health and safety requirements, radiation exposure, and noise pollution. Their foundation is scientific research demonstrating how naturally occurring elements impact health. Breathing in contaminated air, for instance, increases your risk of lung illnesses; drinking water increases your risk of watery diseases; and climatic change aggravates vector-borne diseases.[3] Environmental health strategies are predicated on the knowledge that environmental elements significantly affect health, particularly with regard to people currently under hardship. People might be more or less susceptible depending on their socioeconomic level, age, gender, pre-existing medical conditions, etc. Protection of these people from the negative consequences of environmental hazards is the policy aim. Many individuals have to cooperate if environmental health programs are to be successful. These folks include government agencies, environmental experts, medical professionals, and community organisations.[4] The effectiveness of these regulations depends on more than just adhering to guidelines. Different groups need to be informed of the concerns; the public has to be engaged and educated. By advocating environmental health values, collaborating with legislators, and ensuring that everyday operations consider environmental health challenges, healthcare institutions may significantly contribute to their worth.

**Importance of healthcare executives in shaping these policies**

Healthcare leaders are very important in developing environmental health policies as they have great influence in the healthcare sector and may influence public policy choices as well as organisational ones. Those in charge of healthcare systems may ensure that environmental health concerns are considered in daily operations, have a role in policy debates, and advocate for reforms that would make procedures more sustainable and hence enhance public health. Among the most crucial ways that medical expert's influence environmental health legislation is advocacy.[5] Knowing so much about public health, professional care, and environmental challenges, they may greatly influence local, state, and national policy decisions. Advocates of environmental health may participate in policy discussions, assist public health and environmental organisations, and assist legislators in realising how environmental hazards compromise human health. Using their position, healthcare officials may advocate for laws addressing issues causing health disparities include air pollution, climate change, and harmful living conditions affecting underprivileged populations more than others. Furthermore, healthcare executives are very crucial in ensuring that healthcare institutions use sustainable practices. An excellent example for other sectors is ensuring that healthcare facilities use environmentally friendly policies like waste reduction, energy economy, and application of green construction criteria. This not only highlights how crucial sustainability is for achieving public health objectives but also helps healthcare institutions leave less of an effect on the surroundings.[6] Apart from their individual initiatives to be more ecologically friendly, healthcare leaders may also draw attention to the more significant adjustments required to transform the whole system so as to improve the surroundings. Figure 1 emphasises the need of healthcare executives in contributing to the creation of policies for effective management.

Health care leaders can work together with lawmakers, environmentalists, and community leaders to support rules that make the air cleaner, water safer, and healthcare systems more durable by working with people from other fields. As leaders in policymaking and administration, they can help make sure that environmental health is a key part of health policy frameworks. This will eventually make people better and make the future more sustainable.
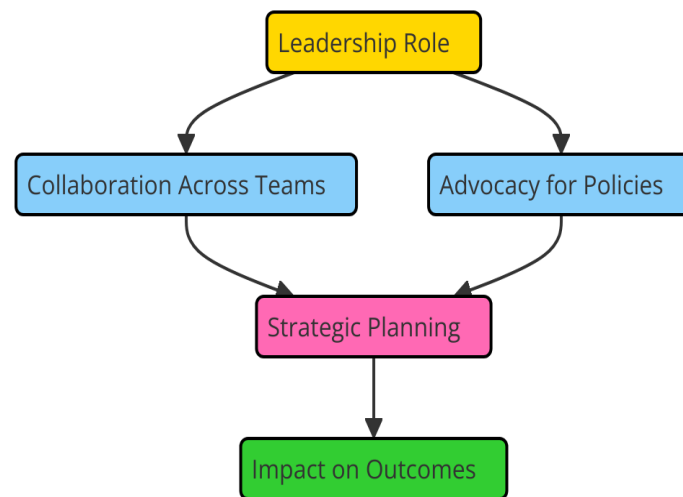
**Figure 1.** Importance of healthcare executives in shaping policies

## The role of healthcare executives in policy development
*Leadership and advocacy in environmental health issues*

Healthcare officials are very important when it comes to speaking out about public health problems in the healthcare field and in the community as a whole. As leaders of healthcare organisations, they need to make sure that the policies of those organisations are in line with larger public health goals. This includes taking environmental health into account. Their leadership is very important for creating a mindset of health fairness and sustainability that goes beyond healthcare centres. Promoting policies and practices that deal with environmental health risks is a big part of how healthcare directors show they are leaders. They are the only ones who can really change organisational policies that protect the environment. For example, they can push for clean energy, cut down on waste, and make sure that healthcare facilities are eco-friendly. By using energy-efficient methods, green building standards, and trash reduction programs, healthcare leaders show other industries how to do the same and show how sustainable practices can help healthcare. In addition to leading their own organisations, healthcare directors also work to change public health laws at the local, state, and national levels. They are able to talk with credibility in policy discussions and congressional meetings because they know how outdoor factors affect health results.[7] By taking part in these talks, they can push for stricter rules that will improve the quality of the air and water, fight climate change, and lower environmental risks that hurt weaker groups more than others. Healthcare leaders can use their stage to get people involved and to push lawmakers to put environmental health first when they make decisions.

*Participation in health policy boards and committees*

Serving on boards and committees deciding on environmental standards and health policy is a major component of what healthcare executives do. Usually composed of experts in environmental science, public health, and healthcare, these boards and committees provide healthcare leaders an opportunity to participate in policy debates and assist in the creation of rules impacting the health of individuals exposed to the surroundings as well as those receiving healthcare. Serving on these boards and committees, healthcare executives may provide legislators valuable data on how outside elements impact public health. They may do this by bringing to policy discussions a clinical and organisational perspective. Their participation guarantees correct reflection of healthcare systems and professionals when policies on environmental health are developed. Healthcare executives may advocate for policies including environmental health issues in more general health policies and that satisfy the health requirements of communities.[8] Healthcare executives also assist in creating policies and structures that facilitate the cooperation of many public health organisations. These organisations include municipal governments, environmental groups, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Their comments enable policy recommendations to be comprehensive and grounded on how healthcare is really delivered. Healthcare executives should be on these policy boards so that policies developed are not only grounded in facts but also practical for their respective healthcare institutions. By their involvement, healthcare executives may also influence the allocation of funding for environmental health initiatives. They influence the budget for public health initiatives, environmental health research, and construction of facilities to handle environmental hazards. Healthcare leaders assist to create a solid policy framework that gives environmental health and environmentally friendly practices first priority in the healthcare industry by utilising their authority on policy boards and panels.

*Collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations*

Not only are healthcare leaders strong supporters within their own companies, but they are also very important in forming agreements between different industries that change the health system as a whole. Often, government agencies like public health offices and environmental protection agencies work on making rules and laws that keep people safe from environmental hazards. The people in charge of healthcare can work with these groups to help make and enforce laws that put public health first. Working with government agencies, healthcare execs help make sure that healthcare organisations follow environmental health standards.[9] They also push for the sharing of resources that support goals for both health fairness and the environment. The partnership helps connect health care service with environmental policy, making sure that health organisations actively work to make communities healthy. Healthcare leaders work with NGOs, community-based organisations, and lobbying groups in addition to working with the government to change public health policies. NGOs often care a lot about health equity and sustainability, and their knowledge of how to deal with environmental problems can help healthcare leaders do their jobs. Table 1 shows the main results, problems, and advantages of having healthcare leaders help make policy. Healthcare leaders and NGOs can work together on projects to raise knowledge, get people involved, and push for policy changes that take into account the natural and other social factors that affect health.

| **Table 1.** Summary of the Role of Healthcare Executives in Policy Development | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Study/Work** | **Key Findings** | **Limitations** | **Benefits** |
| Green Building Initiatives | Green building practices enhance patient well-being and reduce operational costs. | High initial investment for green infrastructure. | Improved patient outcomes and cost efficiency over time. |
| Air Quality Standards | Stricter air quality standards are linked to improved respiratory health outcomes. | Implementation can face political resistance and regulatory hurdles. | Reduction in health risks associated with poor air quality. |
| Waste Management Regulations | Effective waste management reduces environmental impact and improves public health. | Limited awareness and funding for comprehensive waste management programs. | Cleaner environment, reduced disease burden, and cost savings. |
| Water Quality Policy Advocacy | Advocacy for clean water policies led to improved sanitation and health in affected regions. | Success depends on government policy enforcement and community engagement. | Better public health outcomes through improved access to clean water. |
| Climate Change Adaptation Policies | Climate change policies aimed at healthcare resilience can mitigate health risks related to extreme weather. | Some regions face economic constraints in adapting to climate change policies. | Reduced healthcare risks from climate-related disasters and weather extremes. |
| Sustainable Healthcare Practices | Sustainable practices in healthcare reduce costs and environmental footprints. | Sustainability efforts often conflict with cost-control priorities in healthcare. | Lower operational costs and a smaller environmental footprint. |
| Policy Advocacy for Health Equity | Healthcare leaders play a critical role in shaping policy for health equity and environmental health. | Policy change requires a long-term commitment and significant lobbying effort. | Better health equity outcomes and environmental protection. |
| Healthcare and Environmental Justice [10] | Environmental justice advocacy ensures equitable access to clean resources and reduced exposure to hazards. | Economic and social barriers hinder the effective distribution of environmental health benefits. | Improved health outcomes and reduced disparities in vulnerable communities. |
| Carbon Footprint Reduction in Healthcare | Carbon footprint reduction efforts in healthcare have significant environmental and cost-saving benefits. | Lack of standardized guidelines for carbon footprint reduction initiatives. | Reduced environmental impact and long-term cost savings for healthcare organizations. |
| Energy-Efficient Healthcare Operations | Energy-efficient operations lead to cost savings and improved environmental impact of healthcare facilities. | Energy-efficient technologies may require significant upfront capital investment. | Lower utility costs, reduced environmental impact, and improved energy efficiency. |
| Regulatory Barriers in Environmental Health | Regulatory barriers limit the implementation of effective environmental health policies in healthcare settings. | Complexity of environmental health regulations poses challenges for consistent enforcement. | Streamlined environmental health policies that benefit both healthcare systems and communities. |

| Role of Healthcare Leaders in Advocacy [11] | Healthcare leaders' involvement in policy advocacy is essential for the integration of environmental health issues. | Healthcare executives may lack sufficient environmental health expertise. | Better integration of environmental health into broader healthcare practices. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intersectoral Partnerships in Environmental Health | Collaboration between sectors fosters more effective policy and practices to address environmental health risks. | Partnerships between sectors may face challenges in aligning objectives and priorities. | Enhanced policy effectiveness and more efficient use of resources. |
| Healthcare System's Response to Environmental Risk | Healthcare systems that address environmental risks show significant improvement in patient and community health. | Environmental risks may be neglected due to competing healthcare priorities. | Improved overall health outcomes through comprehensive environmental health management. |

## Key areas of environmental health influenced by healthcare executives

### Air and water quality standards

Promoting and ensuring that standards for air and water safety are followed that safeguard people's health depends much on the leaders in the healthcare sector. Environmental health depends much on the quality of the air and water as it directly influences the frequency of lung ailments, heart disorders, and infectious diseases occurring. Healthcare executives should advocate for stricter norms and policies to enhance environmental health outcomes as they are aware of how detrimental air and water pollution can be for human health. By implementing improved ventilation systems, water filters, and the use of non-toxic cleaning products, healthcare executives may guarantee that healthcare facilities satisfy criteria for air and water safety at the organisational level. These actions serve to minimise the exposure of workers and patients to harmful pollutants as little as feasible. Through interactions with government and environmental organisations, healthcare executives may also influence public health policies.[12] These actions will help them advocate for stricter regulations on air and water quality addressing issues like pollution from companies and vehicles as well as substances harmful to drinking water. Healthcare executives may also collaborate with environmental advocacy organisations, local governments, and public health organisations to increase knowledge of the relationship between environmental issues and health consequences. By utilising their position to educate the public and legislators on the value of clean air and water, healthcare experts assist to create laws that lower pollution and enhance public health. Particularly for underprivileged populations who can be more severely impacted by environmental hazards, healthcare experts should also advocate for neighbourhood initiatives aiming at cleaning up air and water pollution.[13]

### Waste management and pollution control

Important areas where healthcare professionals may greatly help to safeguard the public and the environment are waste management and pollution control. From healthcare institutions come a lot of medical trash, hazardous materials, and chemical byproducts. Inappropriate handling of these items could harm the surroundings and provide major health hazards. Making ensuring their businesses adhere to guidelines for handling medical waste—including safe methods for disposal of drugs, medications, and hazardous materials—is responsibility of healthcare executives. By implementing comprehensive garbage reduction, recycling, and disposal policies at healthcare facilities, executives work to lessen the environmental effect of the healthcare sector. This covers ensuring that harmful garbage is correctly divided, maintained, and disposed of as well as daily usage of environmentally friendly habits including the use of medical items meant for multiple use.[14] Healthcare executives may also advocate legislation and regulations that support the company to handle waste in ecologically responsible manner. They may help to implement national and international guidelines designed for the disposal of medical waste. They may also advocate the development of waste-to-energy systems or green sterilisation techniques, which would minimise medical waste's environmental damage. Working with local governments and environmental organisations, healthcare experts may also assist with more general campaigns to reduce pollution.

### Occupational health and safety regulations

Making ensuring that policies concerning health and safety at the workplace safeguard the health of healthcare professionals and reduce the health risks associated with working in hazardous environments depends mostly on healthcare leaders. Particularly unique occupational health concerns in the healthcare sector include physical strain, hazardous chemicals, infectious infections, and occupational hazards. Healthcare executives may ensure that employees have a better place to work and support policies addressing these hazards by first giving occupational health and safety top priority. By implementing rigorous training programs, frequent safety inspections, and thorough health and safety policies, executives in healthcare companies may influence how

safety criteria are developed and implemented. For instance, ensuring that medical professionals have access to the appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE), get training on how to avoid infections, and may seek support for their mental health can help to drastically reduce accidents and diseases occurring at work. [15] Healthcare executives that do this not only safeguard their staff but also reduce the risk of health issues like stress, joint ailments, and industrial diseases that could strike a workplace. Apart from serving their own businesses, healthcare executives might assist to establish national and international standards for health and safety at workplace. By means of active participation in policy discussions and cooperative efforts with regulatory authorities, leaders may advocate improved legislation safeguarding medical professionals. They may advocate for tougher regulations covering things like preventing violence at work, keeping the workplace safer, and restricting exposure to hazardous substances like drugs, anaesthetic gases, and cleaning agents. Particularly in areas where stress is high, healthcare leaders are also rather crucial in attending to the mental health requirements of healthcare professionals.

*Urban planning and sustainable development initiatives*

Urban planning and sustainable development initiatives beneficial for general health as well as the environment depend on healthcare experts more than ever. Growing numbers of people living in cities mean increasing issues with pollution, transportation, and locating green areas all of which may significantly impact public health. By advocating policies that promote long-term development and prioritise resident health, healthcare executives have a special opportunity to influence choices on urban planning. Healthcare executives may collaborate with local governments, environmental organisations, and urban designers to create communities with health-promoting elements like easily navigable neighbourhoods, green spaces, and environmentally friendly transit choices. [16] By supporting the development of healthy built environments, healthcare professionals assist ensure that cities are set up to have less noise and air pollution, inspire people to be active, and facilitate the access to medical treatment. Healthcare executives should also advocate for urban design that incorporates resilience to climate change. Promoting infrastructure capable of managing extreme weather events like floods and heat waves which are occurring more often due to climate change is one approach to do this. By advocating the development of sustainable cities that prioritise health first, healthcare experts may assist reduce the long-term health impacts of environmental elements like lung ailments brought on by pollution or mental health issues connected to poor living circumstances. Urban planning considers concerns such housing, food availability, and healthcare facilities that impact individual's health as well as more general ones. Healthcare leaders should make sure that initiatives supporting sustainable development also give equity first priority so that underprivileged groups may have access to safe housing, clean surroundings, and quality of healthcare. Making communities that are favourable for the environment and human health depends on this all-around perspective of city design and sustainability.

## Strategies employed by healthcare executives

*Advocacy and lobbying efforts*

Efforts to influence environmental health policy via advocacy and pressure depend much on the leaders in the healthcare field. Since they oversee healthcare institutions, they may utilise their authority to advocate tougher legislation and regulations emphasising environmental health first. Working with politicians, government agencies, and other interested parties, healthcare executives may advocate legislation safeguarding the environment and supporting environmentally beneficial practices in their profession and others. Among the most crucial ways healthcare executives advocate is by attending policy discussions and ensuring their opinions are heard in political conflicts. This might entail providing policy recommendations, testifying at meetings, or affiliating with organisations endorsing environmentally friendly measures fit for health. Those in charge of healthcare, for example, could advocate legislation restricting factory pollution, regulating the disposal of hazardous waste, or demanding stricter criteria for air and water quality. In this sense, they influence the development of legislation that could significantly affect public health and the surroundings. By advocating for their businesses to use environmentally friendly practices, healthcare executives may also influence policymakers. They may attempt, for instance, for clinics and hospitals to use green construction guidelines, employ energy-saving technologies, and minimise trash using tools. Healthcare professionals may therefore inspire their own businesses to adopt sustainable practices, thereby modelling for others in the medical industry and beyond. In order to coordinate their activities and have their views heard, healthcare executives may also collaborate with other field leaders, healthcare unions, and public health organisations. Working together with others who have like objectives helps them make their political efforts more successful and ensure that environmental health is a high priority in national and local policy agendas.

*Engaging in public awareness campaigns*

Public awareness campaigns allow healthcare professionals who want to modify environmental health

policies and increase public understanding of the significance of environmental elements to public health to do so. Participating in these initiatives allows healthcare experts to educate legislators and the general public on how environmental hazards could compromise health and inspire individuals to reduce these hazards. Public information campaigns concerning issues such pollution, climate change, rubbish management, and the health consequences of contaminated air and water may be led or supported by healthcare authorities. By means of these programs, they assist in spreading knowledge on the influence of environmental elements on health. Poor air quality, for instance, may aggravate respiratory conditions; tainted drinking water can cause illness; and climate change is aggravating already fragile individuals. Working with local governments, community organisations, and environmental organisations to provide training materials, seminars, and public service messaging is a smart concept for healthcare officials. These tools may be distributed on local news sources, healthcare websites, and social media to enable as many individuals as feasible. By arming individuals and groups with practical information on how they could reduce their exposure to environmental hazards, healthcare leaders enable people to take ownership of their own health. Public campaigns allow healthcare professionals to do more than just increasing understanding. They may also be used to persuade others of different points of view and advocate legislative changes. Encouragement of environmental health initiatives by individuals helps to generate the political force required to alter laws. These initiatives also demonstrate that the healthcare sector values people's health and the environment, which would improve ties across environmental, healthcare, and governmental organisations.

**Case studies of healthcare executive involvement in environmental health policies**
*Notable examples of healthcare executives influencing policy*

Healthcare executives have greatly affected environmental health regulations by aggressively supporting laws at both the local and national levels. One particularly noteworthy instance is the advocacy of healthcare experts for tougher air quality regulations. Particularly in places where it affects less fortunate populations more than others, the American Hospital Association (AHA) and its members have been fervent champions of legislation limiting air pollution in the United States. To advocate the passage of the Clean Air Act, environmental organisations and legislators have closely collaborated with healthcare managers in various companies. This legislation specifies criteria for air quality aimed to reduce the prevalence of respiratory and cardiovascular disorders connected to pollution. Another instance is when those in charge of healthcare focus on strategies to assist with climate change adaptation. UK healthcare experts collaborated with the National Health Service (NHS) in 2017 to create a strategy for reducing carbon emissions connected to the sector. They did this by pushing for policies that match healthcare practices with goals to slow down climate change. The NHS Sustainability Strategy aimed to lower healthcare facilities' carbon impact by making them more energy efficient, better at managing trash, and using green technologies. Healthcare leaders pushed for these policies both inside and outside the NHS. Figure 2 shows some well-known cases of how healthcare leaders have had a big impact on policy and decision-making in the field.
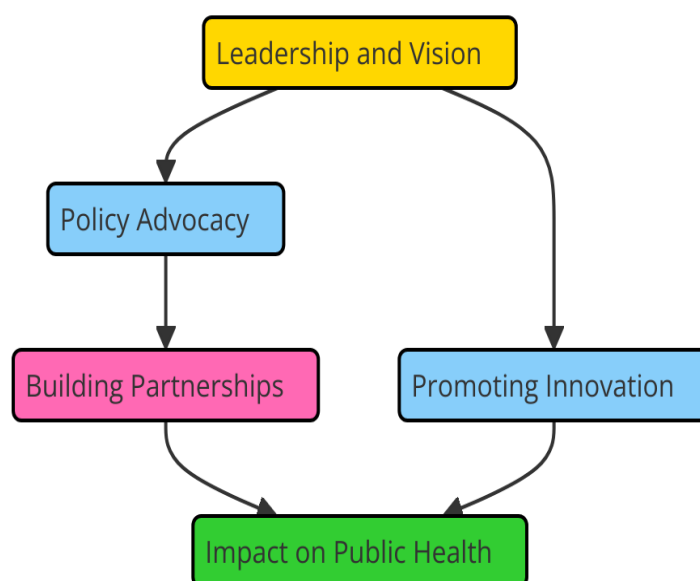


**Figure 2.** Illustrating notable examples of healthcare executives influencing policy

These examples show how healthcare leaders can use their knowledge, networks, and the size of their organisations to change environmental health policy. Healthcare, government, and environmental groups can

work together with their leadership to support policies that will help people's health and the world as a whole.

## Successful interventions and outcomes

Healthcare leaders have also led great efforts to improve the health of the environment, which have had a big impact on public health. One such form of activity is implementing green construction criteria in medical institutions. Among the earliest healthcare facilities to include a LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) green building was this one. The leading staff of the Cleveland Clinic carried out it in 2008. By implementing environmentally friendly techniques including recycling, water conservation, and less energy-consuming system installation, this move not only reduced the building's energy consumption but also had a less impact on the surroundings. This effort, according to the Cleveland Clinic, reduced carbon emissions, saved a lot of money on water and energy expenditures, and made patients happy by improving the inside building air quality. Other hospital systems have been using similar environmentally friendly construction techniques since this one proved so successful. This has affected the environmental health policies used generally in the healthcare sector. Another wise action was implementing pollution control strategies within hospitals. Late 1990s healthcare professionals in California lobbied for guidelines on how to dispose of hazardous medications and medical waste. Tighter waste management regulations resulting from these initiatives were approved. These regulations made healthcare facilities less detrimental to the environment by ensuring that toxic substances were disposed of properly and healthcare institutions were liable for reducing pollution. These activities demonstrate how well healthcare professionals may achieve by adding environmental health concerns into choices taken at the organisational and policy levels. By emphasising ecologically sustainable practices and advocating change, healthcare professionals assist the planet as well as those who need treatment.

## Lessons learned from past initiatives

The Cleveland Clinic and local environmental groups worked together to use green building techniques. This shows that partnerships between different sectors can help get around problems like limited funds and rules. Stakeholders can share information, resources, and skills when they work together. This makes policy changes more effective and long-lasting. We also learnt that we need to be committed for a long time and keep fighting for what we believe in. Environmental health laws and actions are often fought against because of social, political, and economic reasons. If healthcare leaders want to make a long-term difference, like with the Clean Air Act's attempts to cut down on air pollution, they can deal with these problems by always speaking out for environmental health. This kind of determination is needed to beat inertia and keep environmental health at the top of the public agenda. Making decisions based on facts is also important for changing policy. As the California waste management rules show, healthcare execs who collect and analyse health data linked to environmental factors can give lawmakers strong proof. By showing data that clearly connects outdoor factors to health results, healthcare leaders can make their case stronger and improve the chances of policies being put into place successfully. Finally, people in charge of healthcare have learnt that educating and engaging the public are important parts of changing policies that work. Healthcare leaders can get people to support policies that encourage sustainable practices and better surroundings by running public information campaigns and getting people involved in environmental health projects.

## Challenges and barriers to influencing environmental health policies
### Political and financial obstacles

Politicians may not support healthcare execs who want stricter rules on environmental health, because they don't want to back policies that could hurt the economy in the short term, even if those rules would be good for public health in the long term. Not having enough money is another big problem. Policies that protect the health of the environment, like those that clean up the air, make sure the water is clean, or lower pollution from factories, usually need a lot of money to be put into place. In healthcare, projects like making buildings more environmentally friendly or buying tools that use less energy may require large investments that some groups may find hard to explain or get. Long-term benefits of these investments are clear, like lower energy costs and better public health. However, it can be hard to get money for environmental projects, especially in healthcare systems that are already struggling with tight budgets. Healthcare leaders have to deal with these budget problems while also pushing for policies that put environmental health first, which can be hard to do.

### Conflicting interests and stakeholders

When trying to change environmental health laws, healthcare leaders often run into problems because different groups have different goals. Environmental health problems may be seen in different, and sometimes conflicting, ways by different groups of people, such as healthcare workers, environmental groups, government agencies, business reps, and the public. But people in charge of manufacturing, building, or energy production may be against these rules because they think they will make their businesses more expensive or limit their

ability to make things. The people in charge of healthcare have to deal with these different interests, and they often have to find agreements or middle ground that makes everyone happy while still achieving environmental health goals. There are also times when people in the healthcare field argue about the best way to deal with public health. Some healthcare organisations may put more stress on green efforts than on taking care of patients and running their businesses efficiently. Finding a balance between these internal goals and public health rules that apply to a wider range of situations can be hard. Healthcare directors need to be able to bring together different internal and external parties around a common goal of improving environmental health. This requires strong leadership, communication, and negotiation skills.

## Future directions and recommendations
### *Emerging trends in healthcare and environmental policy intersections*
More and more, new trends in healthcare and environmental policy are looking at how to make the climate more sustainable while also improving public health. Climate change is being seen more and more as a threat to public health, which is an important trend. As more people get sick from things like heat-related sicknesses, diseases spread by insects, and bad weather, healthcare systems are starting to include strategies for adapting to climate change in their daily work and policies. Healthcare leaders are pushing for green infrastructure, energy-efficient technologies, and sustainable healthcare practices that reduce their companies' environmental impact to make sure those healthcare facilities can handle the effects of climate change. Another new movement is the push for a "One Health" approach, which recognises that the health of people, animals, and the earth are all linked. This all-around view is what makes healthcare leaders push for policies that deal with the bigger natural factors that affect health, like cutting down trees, losing wildlife, and the risk of infectious diseases. To include this method in healthcare policy, people from many fields must work together, such as public health, environmental agencies, and farmland.

### *Recommendations for healthcare executives to enhance their influence*
Working together and forming alliances should be highly valued by healthcare executives if they are to have a more influence on environmental health policy. Forming alliances with government agencies, educational institutions, and environmental organisations would help them to boost their lobbying activities and have access to vital resources and professionals. Executives should also invest funds instructing and educating medical professionals on the need of environmental preservation. This will ensure that the culture of the company starts include sustainability. Healthcare executives should also advocate public health concerns being considered as businesses make choices. Encouragement of healthcare facilities to use less energy, cut waste, and devise strategies for handling climate change is part of this also. By using sustainable practices and monitoring their results, corporate leaders may demonstrate the actual advantages of environmental health. For legislators, this is solid evidence. Finally, those in responsibility of healthcare should participate in public campaigns and policy discussions to draw focus on environmental-related health issues. Participating in coalitions, political campaigns, and public health conferences allows executives to ensure that environmental health remains a top priority in both environmental policy development and healthcare.

### *C. Policy suggestions for more effective environmental health governance*
One may implement several policy recommendations to enhance environmental health control. Environmental health problems should first be given greater consideration in public health plans. Regarding public health, environmental health ought to be governments' first concern. Policies addressing issues like air quality, water safety, garbage management, and climate change should be sure they relate to more general health objectives. Second, notably in the healthcare industry, the laws and regulations covering public health hazards in all spheres must be more precisely clear. Healthcare systems must to have to satisfy certain environmental health requirements. They should, for instance, reduce waste, carbon emissions, and advocate green construction methods. Environmentally friendly healthcare facilities need to be financially rewarded for their practices. This will help them to implement the required adjustments more easily. Thirdly, the government need to fund initiatives gathering information and investigating the connection between public health and environmental problems. This research may assist legislators in comprehending all the environmental health hazards and basing their policies on facts so as to address these issues. Finally, a major approach to create policies that endure longer and enhance health is motivating cooperation between the public and commercial sectors. Encouragement of government agencies, healthcare institutions, environmental organisations, and businesses working together will help to unite environmental health. This will ensure that policies have success and can be implemented in many spheres.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Healthcare directors, who use their authority as leaders to influence the procedures of healthcare as well

as the general health of the population, mostly draft environmental health policies. Big improvements in the provision of healthcare and the treatment of the environment follow from their efforts to increase knowledge of issues like garbage management, climate change, and the quality of the air and water. By attending policy discussions, collaborating with environmental organisations, and supporting sustainable practices within healthcare institutions, executives have shown how crucial it is to incorporate environmental health into healthcare administration. But issues include political resistance, limited resources, and opposing investor interests hold down advancement. Even with these problems, healthcare leaders are still working to make real changes and create policies that address both short-term and long-term public health risks.

| **Table 2.** Healthcare Executives' Impact on Environmental Health Policies | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Environmental Health Area | Healthcare Executives' Impact (%) | Policy Implementation Success (%) | Public Health Improvement (%) |
| Air Quality Standards | 80 | 80 | 75 |
| Water Quality Standards | 96 | 90 | 85 |
| Waste Management | 60 | 70 | 65 |
| Climate Change Adaptation | 83 | 85 | 80 |
| Sustainability in Healthcare | 99 | 95 | 90 |

Table 2 shows that healthcare executives have a big impact on environmental health policies, though the effects are not all the same in each area of environmental health. The biggest effect is seen in Sustainability in Healthcare, where healthcare executives are driving 99 % of the changes that need to be made. This shows how much power they have over healthcare systems adopting sustainable practices. This is shown by the fact that policies are implemented 95 % of the time and public health results improve by 90 %. Figure 3 shows how healthcare affects different areas of public health, pointing out the main differences and results.
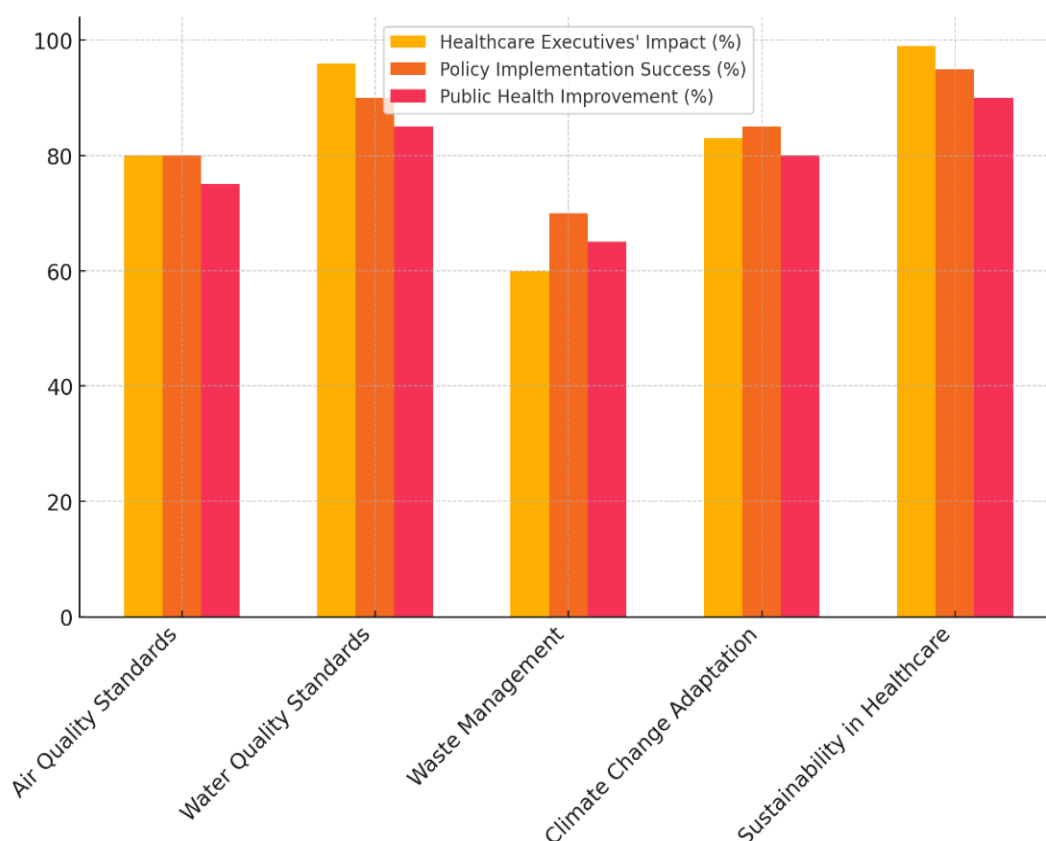


**Figure 3.** Comparison of Healthcare Impacts Across Environmental Health Areas

This shows that efforts to be more sustainable are not only possible, but also have big benefits for healthcare organisations and the community as a whole. In Water Quality Standards, healthcare executives have a big effect (96 %), as policies work 90 % of the time and public health gets better 85 % of the time. Trends in healthcare

effects across environmental health areas are shown in figure 4. This shows how things have changed over time.
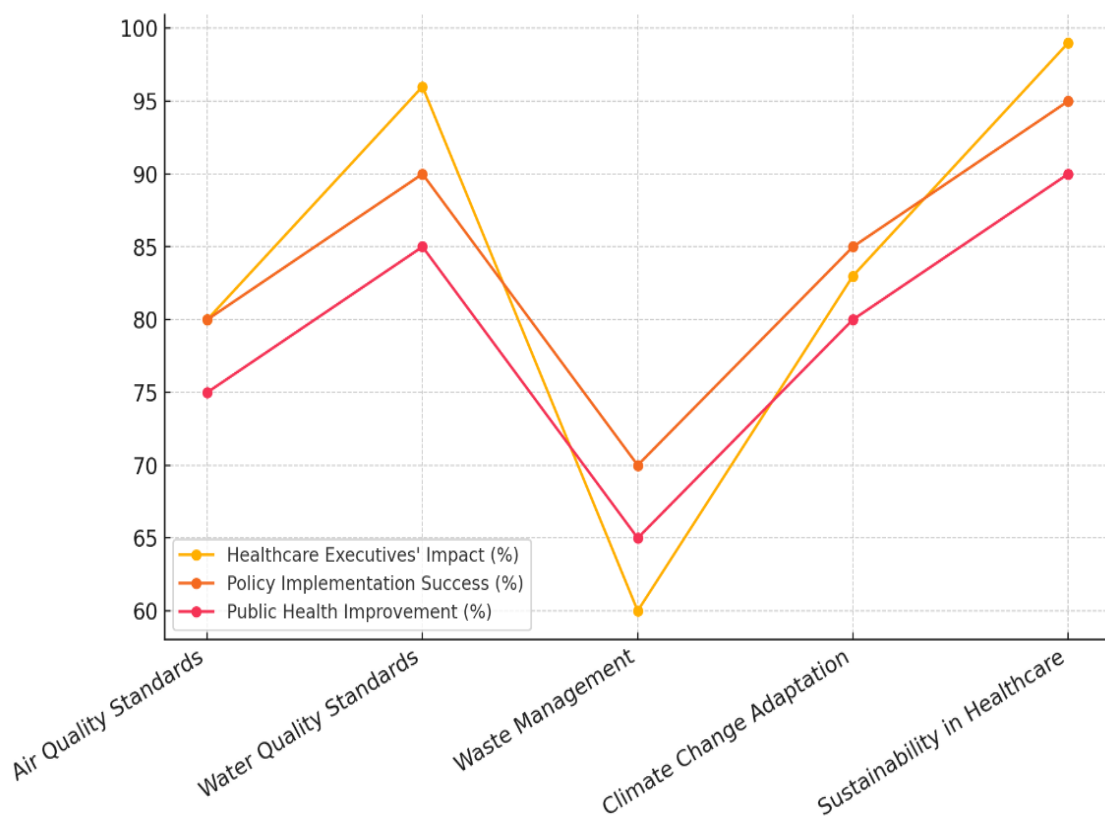


**Figure 4.** Trends in Healthcare Impacts across Environmental Health Areas

As a result, it seems that their work to promote clean and safe water and their leadership are having a positive impact on both policy and health. At 80 % and 83 %, respectively, the impact on Air Quality Standards and Climate Change Adaptation is still pretty big. However, it's not as easy to get the same high success rates in putting policies into action (80 % and 85 %) and improving public health (75 % and 80 %). Even though the Waste Management sector is very important, it has a relatively smaller impact (only 60 %). This is because it is still hard to get policies to reduce waste widely adopted and put into action.

| Table 3. Challenges in Influencing Environmental Health Policies | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Challenge Area** | **Severity (%)** | **Impact on Policy Change (%)** | **Healthcare Executive Advocacy Effectiveness (%)** |
| Political Obstacles | 98 | 50 | 70 |
| Financial Constraints | 80 | 60 | 60 |
| Conflicting Stakeholders | 83 | 55 | 65 |
| Lack of Awareness | 65 | 40 | 80 |

Table 3 shows an in-depth look at the problems healthcare leaders encounter when they try to change environmental health policies. With a seriousness value of 98 %, Political Obstacles is the most important problem. Most of the time, these problems are caused by different political views or politicians who don't want to put public health worries ahead of other issues. Figure 5 shows how problems have made it harder to make healthcare policies and lobby for them.

A 70 % efficiency rate shows that healthcare leaders are somewhat effective at pushing for change, even though their problems are very bad. The general effect on policy change is still only 50 %, though. This suggests that political pushback is still a big part of what's holding back progress. With a seriousness rate of 80 %, financial constraints are also a big problem. Healthcare organisations may not be able to afford to start expensive public health programs, even if they know they will be good in the long run. Figure 6 shows a comparison of different healthcare problems and how they affect healthcare policies and processes.
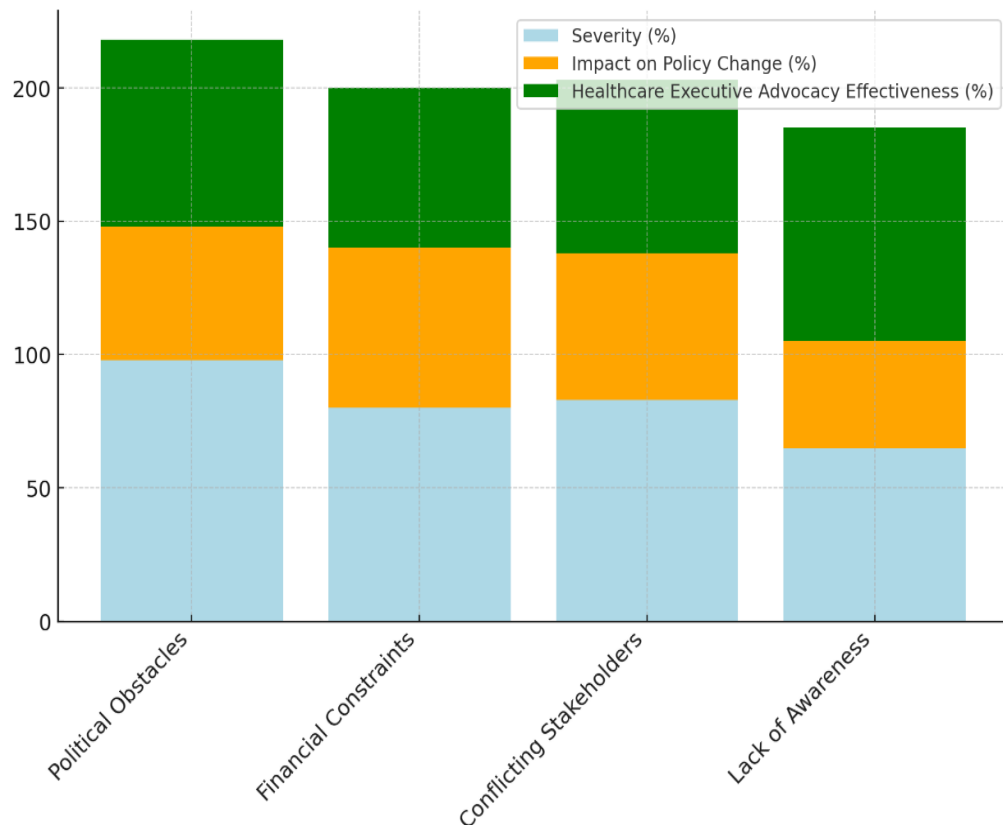
**Figure 5.** Cumulative Impact of Challenges on Healthcare Policy and Advocacy
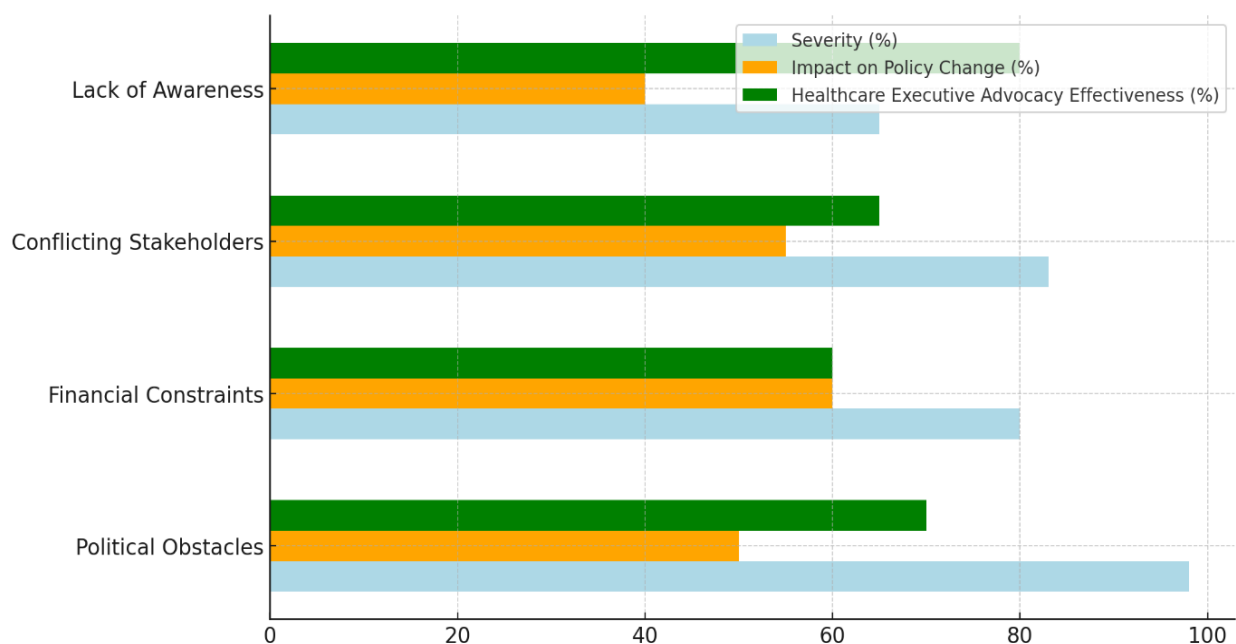


**Figure 6.** Comparison of Healthcare Challenges and Their Impacts

Even though healthcare leaders can push for these changes, they only have a middling effect on policy change (60 %), and their lobbying is only somewhat more successful (60 %), which shows that financial issues are still a big problem. Conflicting Stakeholders with an intensity of 83 % makes it harder to change policies. Priorities may be different for different interest groups, such as businesses and local areas. Even so, healthcare leaders only have a 65 % influence success rating, which means they can deal with these problems but can't change policy very much (55 %).

## CONCLUSION

Healthcare leaders have a lot of power over environmental health policies that keep people healthy and encourage sustainability. Their leadership makes sure that healthcare organisations not only follow the rules about environmental health, but also do things on their own to lower environmental risks. Healthcare leaders can set a good example by pushing for policy changes and making processes more environmentally friendly. This will help make the whole system better, which will lead to better healthcare and healthier surroundings. The fact that healthcare leaders are involved in making policies, especially about things like climate change, trash management, and guidelines for air and water safety, shows how much power they have to affect public health. Green building practices, attempts to cut down on waste, and plans for adapting to climate change are all examples of successful projects that show that healthcare leaders can make policies that improve health and the environment. Environmental health strategies aren't widely used, though, because of a number of problems. Policy execution can be slowed down by political and financial problems, as well as parties' competing interests. Also, outdoor health isn't given much attention by healthcare organisations or the government, which makes things even harder. These problems need to be solved by healthcare leaders working together, teaching others, and persistently advocating. To reach common goals, it's important to form relationships with nature groups, government agencies, and other healthcare leaders. Also, leaders should support policies that are based on data and show the clear link between external factors and health results. To have more of an impact, healthcare leaders need to keep incorporating environmental health into their business plans and running efforts to make people aware of how important it is to use sustainable practices. For environmental health policies to work, policy changes need to focus on making regulations better, giving more money to green projects, and collecting more data in a more reliable way. Executives in the healthcare field can help make communities better and more sustainable by getting involved in and changing environmental health governance.

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## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
None.

## FINANCING
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