

10 Point Green Plan for Practices 2022/23 – Cheshire

In October 2020, the NHS published the [Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service](#) report which set ambitions on reaching net zero for emissions controlled directly by the NHS by 2040, and for emissions influenced by the NHS by 2045.

This 10-point plan has been developed by the Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Climate Change Taskforce Primary Care Sub-Group, comprised of CCG and Primary Care colleagues, to help guide practices to reduce their environmental impact in line with the NHS' net zero ambitions. For feedback and/or suggestions, please contact [Grace Marshall](#).

The plan is outlined below and detailed on subsequent pages. Actions can be delivered in any order, so please customise to best suit your practice.

Whilst the idea of reducing your environmental impact may seem daunting, every positive change you make, however small, will bring benefits to you, your practice, your patients, and our planet, both now and for generations to come.

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1. Declare a Practice Climate and Nature Crisis
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2. Optimise inhalers
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3. Calculate the Practice's carbon footprint
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4. Consider switching to a 100% renewable electricity provider
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5. Consider switching your business banking provider to a green bank
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6. Environmental prescribing and treatment
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7. Engage, educate, and empower patients to take individual action on the climate crisis for the benefit of their health
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8. Promote active transport for both staff and patients
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9. Embed the '3 Rs' into Practice culture – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
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10. Use the Green Impact for Health Toolkit

1. Declare a Practice Climate and Nature Crisis

This will demonstrate to both staff and patients that the practice takes their health and future seriously.



- a. Create a statement to put on your website, feature in your newsletter, and share on social media.
 - i. [Climate Emergency declaration guide](#) available from See Sustainability
 - ii. [Sample wording for the declaration](#) available from See Sustainability
- b. Keep the climate crisis as a standing agenda item which features on every practice meeting.
- c. Join your local [Greener Practice](#) group – please contact [Nicola Dowling](#) for the Cheshire & Merseyside group.
- d. Embed sustainability in your practice culture – view all existing and new projects/changes through the lens of environmental impact and choose environmentally friendly options wherever possible.

2. Optimise inhalers



- a. Read Greener Practice's document on the [carbon footprint of inhalers](#), which includes a handy crib sheet for easy reference and comparison.
- b. Watch this short [video](#) produced by Cheshire CCG about the environmental impact of inhalers, and examples of switching in practice.
- c. Reduce the number of Metred Dose Inhalers (MDIs) prescribed and review progress regularly, for example:
 - i. Review a subset of patients with particularly high carbon inhalers prescribed (i.e. Flutiform MDI, Symbicort MDI, Ventolin Evohaler MDI).
 - ii. Review a subset of patients with a high number of reliever inhalers (i.e. SABAs) prescribed annually – start with [12+ per year](#), and work downwards.
 - iii. Switch suitable patients to Dry Powder Inhalers (DPIs)
- d. Consider environmental impact at each respiratory review.
 - i. Utilise the NICE [patient decision aid](#).
 - ii. *NB: Respiratory review resources are currently being developed on the Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care System footprint, and by Greener Practice.*
- e. Encourage patients to return old or unwanted inhalers to pharmacies for environmentally safe disposal through reminders and promotions.
- f. Encourage the use of appropriate inhaler technique e.g., using placebo devices and promoting the Rightbreathe app and [website](#).
- g. Utilise [Green Inhaler](#) resources as an educational tool for both patients and staff.

3. Calculate the Practice's carbon footprint

By doing this, you can identify hotspots of carbon emissions for reduction.



- a. [Free carbon calculator tool](#) available from See Sustainability (option for low detail input available – please note this does not include carbon calculations for treatments or procedures).
- b. Create a plan to target and reduce each hotspot identified, such as:
 - i. Swapping to an environmentally friendly stationery company. Practices can choose to sign up to access the [NHS Supply Chain](#) to access their frameworks.
 - ii. Changing lightbulbs to LED.

- iii. Turning off monitors when not in use to reduce electricity consumption.
- c. The [SHAPE tool](#) can be used to assist with data gathering on the patient population.

4. Consider switching to a 100% renewable electricity provider



- a. *NB: Cheshire CCG are currently working to get a cost-saving mass tariff arranged through NHS Property Services; however, this will take time so if you wish to please make the switch in the meantime.*

5. Consider switching your business banking provider to a green bank.



Greening your money is the single most effective thing you can do to reduce your personal or business impact on the climate crisis.

- a. Many banks directly invest in the fossil fuel industry and may have other unethical practices. Find out more about green and ethical banking:
 - i. <https://www.moneyexpert.com/current-account/ethical-banking/>
 - ii. <https://moralfibres.co.uk/best-ethical-banks/>
 - iii. <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/money-finance/shopping-guide/current-accounts>
- b. This can also apply to private pensions such as NEST – to find out more visit: <https://makemymoneymatter.co.uk/>
 - i. *NB: NHS Pensions is a defined benefit fund and is not invested.*
- c. To learn more about the environmental impact of invested funds, watch this COP26 [talk & short film](#).
- d. Consider contacting your business banking provider to find out where they stand, and to ask them to do better if you are unsatisfied with their response.

6. Environmental prescribing and treatment



- a. Consider non-pharmaceutical medical interventions such as [green social prescribing](#) or an increase in [physical activity](#), bearing accessibility in mind.
- b. Engage with the IIF polypharmacy reviews, including signposting and collaborative working with community pharmacy.
- c. Engage with the Clinical Commissioning Group/Integrated Care System prescribing incentive schemes.
- d. Focus on preventative care wherever possible as opposed to reactive care, such as treating pre-diabetes through lifestyle changes to prevent diabetes.
- e. Sign up for bulletins on your practice prescribing trends at <https://openprescribing.net/>.
- f. Follow [Royal Pharmaceutical Society medicines optimisation guidance](#).
- g. Engage in a low waste prescribing approach:
 - i. Deprescribe where appropriate.
 - ii. Stop unnecessary third party ordering.
 - iii. Encourage patient-led ordering using the NHS App.
 - iv. Raise awareness of, and encourage, recycling options.
 - v. Avoid unnecessary waste for care home residents and people living independently.
- h. Continue remote consultations where appropriate.
 - i. Encourage care home staff to use iPads and RESTORE2 for remote care home consultations.

7. Engage, educate, and empower patients to take individual action on the climate crisis for the benefit of their health



- a. Discuss the climate crisis with your Patient Participation Group and get them involved in practice actions as identified through discussion and carbon footprinting.
- b. Engage with your Social Prescriber on green schemes and discussing climate and health initiatives in your local care community group, including schemes run by your local Hospital Trust.
 - i. Encourage balanced plant-based diets and activity for maintaining a healthy weight and reducing car use, and improved physical and mental health.
 - ii. Engage with and promote green community schemes such as community gardens, tree planting, gardening, and caring for wildflower areas.
 - iii. There are a range of organisations which have schemes running locally, including [Cheshire Wildlife Trust](#), [Mersey Forest](#) and [The Conservation Volunteers](#).
 - iv. RSPB & NHS Scotland ran a [Nature Prescription pilot](#) and have shared their results ([video also available](#)).
- c. Include environmental rationale when prescribing treatment such as increased exercise.
- d. Promote self-care practices and education using [CCG resources](#).
- e. For group education sessions, consider combining these with walking routes.

8. Promote active transport for both staff and patients



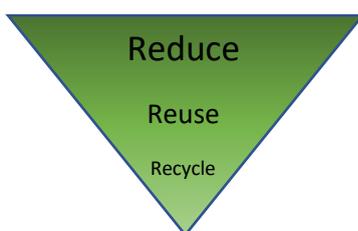
- a. Sign up to a [Bicycle Lease scheme](#) for staff and install bike lockers and changing facilities if required.
- b. Encourage staff to walk or cycle to work where possible.
 - i. Testimonial from a Chester GP:
About 2 years ago I gave up my car for work and got on my bike. The main reason was concern about the environmental and health impact of driving lots of short distances in a car and to see if cycle commuting and visits were a viable option. Since then, I've cycled to work every day and done home visits by bike or on foot. My GP bag clips on my bike rack, but a colleague uses a small backpack instead. The rainfall radar App on my phone helps me time showers if it's raining. After visits I come back to the surgery refreshed and energised. The look on patient's faces when I turn up on my bike is always worthwhile and it means that I can truly preach what I practice. As well as keeping me fit I hope it inspires others to look at what is possible.
- c. Be aware of local Council for information on transport schemes available for residents.
 - i. [Cheshire East](#)
 - ii. [Cheshire West and Chester](#)
- d. Encourage patients to attend appointments using active transport as opposed to driving; explain the cardiovascular and respiratory benefits of this, and encourage the adoption of active transport into daily life.
 - i. [Ramblers Walking for Health](#) have many local routes and social groups for patients and staff of all mobility levels.
- e. Consider installing Electric Vehicle charging points for cars and bikes at the practice.
 - i. *NB: Cheshire CCG are currently looking into charging solutions at scale across the footprint.*
- f. Get involved with [Active Cheshire](#) and use their resources for both patients and staff.

- g. Sign up to become an [Active Practice](#) – assistance may be available from Active Cheshire for eligible practices.

9. Embed the '3 Rs' into Practice culture – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



- a. Reduce – consider alternative options rather than buying new items. This can also apply to consumption of energy and other resources.
- Use scrap paper and paper clips instead of post it notes.
 - Reduce the number of blood forms which are printed – save time and paper waste by saving forms electronically and only printing when the patient requests the form for collection or attends for their test.
 - This can also apply to office snacks – try opting for naturally wrapped treats such as satsumas, or snacks with compostable or recyclable packaging.
- b. Reuse – consider how existing or second-hand items can be utilised. i.e., use an old projector stand as a standing desk.
- <https://www.revolution-zero.co.uk/> reusable IIR masks were successfully trialled and adopted locally in Winsford, and elsewhere across the country
 - NB: National free PPE suppliers have been contacted, and reusable options are currently being considered.*
- c. Recycle – sort your recycling in house or sign up to a company who can sort off-site for you. Consider how to recycle 'hard-to-recycle' items, such as:
- Lotion tubes or pumps ([Boots](#) and [Superdrug](#) offer recycling schemes).
 - Medicine blister packets (Superdrug offer a [recycling scheme](#)).
 - Printer toners using existing schemes such as:
 - <https://www.brother.co.uk/recycling> (For genuine Brother parts, high quality items can be refilled and directly reused)
 - <http://www.zerowasterecycling.co.uk/faq.aspx>
 - <https://cartridges4charity.co.uk/toner-cartridge-recycling/>
 - <https://everycartridge.com/uk/alternatives/>
 - <https://www.officexpress.co.uk/recycling/> (Requires purchase of toner through Office Xpress to become a customer)



10. Use the Green Impact for Health Toolkit



- The toolkit is free to use at <https://www.greenimpact.org.uk/giforhealth>.
- It contains many useful large and small ideas to follow and can be used as best fits the Practice – many of which are included in this plan so you will be off to a good start in achieving an Award!
- The toolkit can be completed by volunteers; either formal volunteers, PPG members, or willing friends or family (know any bored students during school/university holidays?).

Additional Resources:

[Royal College of General Practitioners](#)

[Centre for Sustainable Healthcare](#)

[Greener NHS & Greener NHS Knowledge Hub](#)

[UK Health Alliance on Climate Change](#)

Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care System (ICS) Green Plan (available after 31/03/22)

This Plan will bring together the Green Plans for all 18 Hospital Trusts across Cheshire & Merseyside, as well as green ambitions from CCGs and Primary Care, to set the direction of travel for our System going forwards into a sustainable future.

Version Control:

Approval Date	Version Number	Summary of Changes
18/02/2022	1.0	Version 1