

"Show me how and I'll do it"

A mixed methods exploration of stakeholder beliefs about
environmental sustainability in podiatric practice

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What is Sustainability?

‘Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’

(Brundtland Report, United Nations, 1987)

Why Sustainability?



- ▶ Environmental sustainability within healthcare is highlighted as an important global issue requiring collective multi- professional attention.
- ▶ The way healthcare is currently being delivered is not '*financially, socially, and environmentally sustainable*' (Duane *et al.*, 2020)
- ▶ To date, there is limited research exploring sustainability within Podiatry.

Introducing the Project

Ambitious research project by third Year undergraduate students at the University of Southampton and in partnership with the Royal College of Podiatry; exploring the current beliefs of sustainability with the podiatry profession



The Mixed Methods Approach

Part A: Questionnaire - An online survey was distributed via the Royal College of Podiatry membership e-news, with snowball cascading encouraged.

Part B: Focus Group - Respondents were invited to indicate willingness to participate in a subsequent focus group. All positive respondents were invited until the overall sample size was achieved.



Results - Questionnaire

- ▶ 75 complete survey responses were included; 59% private practice role, 29% NHS practice role, 5% managerial, education or research role, 4% student, 3% manufacture, distribution or procurement role.
- ▶ 93.3% of respondents indicated that they thought sustainability within Podiatry was an important topic.
- ▶ 73% thought the topic was important to their employer/ for their business.
- ▶ Respondents identified increased cost as a barrier to sustainable practice, noting a lack of tools to evaluate comparative costs.
- ▶ Conversely, opportunities to enhance sustainability included raising awareness, providing signposting or education, and providing tools or clinical guidelines.

Breakdown of Focus Group Participants

- ▶ The 15 positive responses from the questionnaire were recruited simultaneously
- ▶ 7 of which confirmed attendance
- ▶ Breakdown of focus group attendees stakeholder groups:

X - current role within podiatry profession
x - Previous expertise/roles within the podiatry profession

Podiatry Stakeholder Groups	FG Participants Number (N=7)						
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07
NHS Podiatrist		x		x			x
PP Podiatrist		X				x	
Managerial, education or research role		x			X	X	
Role in podiatry equipment or consumable resource manufacture, distribution, or procurement			X	X			X
Student podiatrist	X						

Recommendations were generated and thematically analysed to produce the top four themes which were of equal importance and priority:



1. Development of educational resource; to address perceptions of sustainability costs and use of PPE



2. Development of tools to evaluate carbon footprint measurement or other indicator of sustainability impact at scale or in single practice settings



3. Development of a sustainable accreditation schemes that have professional recognition



4. Development of workforce signposting about small-scale opportunities for change

Results Focus Group (N=7)

Discussion - What is next?

- ▶ There was agreement that sustainability within podiatric practice is an important topic
- ▶ Overall, the thematic construct of "*show me how and I'll do it*" reflected a consistent viewpoint adopted across podiatry stakeholder groups
- ▶ The recommendations could be used to inform future work
- ▶ The patient/public perspective should be considered - their omission is a limitation of this work

References

Duane, B. *et al.* (2020) 'Sustainability in Dentistry: A Multifaceted Approach Needed', *Journal of Dental Research*. SAGE Publications Inc., 99(9), pp. 998-1003. doi: 10.1177/0022034520919391.

United Nations,. (1987) *Our Common Future (The Brundtland Report)*, *Education of the Conference of NGOs*. Available at: https://www.are.admin.ch/are/en/home/sustainable-development/international-cooperation/2030agenda/un-_-milestones-in-sustainable-development/1987--brundtland-report.html.