**10 Point Green Plan for Practices 2023 – Cheshire & Merseyside**

In October 2020, the NHS published the [Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service](https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2020/10/delivering-a-net-zero-national-health-service.pdf) 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 Greener Primary Care Group and Cheshire & Merseyside Greener Practice Network, comprised of Integrated Care Board 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 Mandi Cragg.

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.

1. Declare a Practice Climate and Nature Crisis

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

3. Calculate the Practice’s carbon footprint

4. Monitor and reduce your practice’s energy usage

2. Optimise inhalers

6. Environmental prescribing and treatment

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

8. Promote active transport for both staff and patients

9. Embed the ‘3 Rs’ into Practice culture

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.
	1. Create a statement to put on your website, feature in your newsletter, and share on social media.
		1. [Climate Emergency declaration guide](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/15947d70-9404-4d54-921d-79cf246e9dc0/downloads/Declaring%20a%20climate%20emergency%20-%20Final.pdf?ver=1639670905757) available from See Sustainability
		2. [Sample wording for the declaration](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/15947d70-9404-4d54-921d-79cf246e9dc0/downloads/Declaration%20of%20a%20Climate%20Emergency%20pledge.pdf?ver=1639670902897) available from See Sustainability
	2. Keep the climate crisis as a standing agenda item which features on every practice meeting.
	3. Join your local [Greener Practice](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/) group – please contact candmgreenerpractice@gmail.com for the [Cheshire & Merseyside group](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/join-our-network/local-groups/cheshire-and-merseyside/). Meetings take place every 6-8 weeks on Tuesday evenings.
	4. 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.
	5. Attend the Cheshire & Merseyside Primary Care Sustainability Network for quarterly updates on specialties, invites circulated when meeting dates are set.
2. **Optimise inhalers**Metered Dose Inhalers (MDIs) make up a significant proportion of the greenhouse gas emissions from primary care, and so optimising asthma care and inhaler use, in addition to switching inhalers to lower emission equivalents, is a national priority.
	1. There are four [Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) 2022/23 Indicators](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/network-contract-directed-enhanced-service-investment-and-impact-fund-2022-23-updated-guidance/) aimed at improving asthma care and reducing the environmental impact:
		1. RESP-01 – Increase preventer inhaler use. Preventer inhalers are often low-emission Dry Powder Inhalers (DPIs), and improve overall asthma care.
		2. RESP-02 – Reduce high usage of reliever inhalers (6+ prescriptions annually). In addition to the health risks associated with reliever over-use, reliever inhalers tend to be high emission MDIs.
		3. ES-01 – Reduce the percentage of non-Salbutamol inhalers prescribed as MDIs.
		4. ES-02 – Optimise prescribing to prioritise lower emission Salbutamol inhalers. i.e. prescribe specific lower emission MDIs such as Salamol.
	2. Utilise Greener Practice’s online [High Quality and Low Carbon Asthma Care Toolkit](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/high-quality-and-low-carbon-asthma-care/), containing step-by-step Quality Improvement projects that correspond with IIF Indicators, with numerous helpful resources.
	3. Greener Practice have a [guide](https://s40639.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/Reducing-Carbon-Footprint-of-Inhaler-Prescribing-v3.3.2.pdf) setting out key priorities and principles for low carbon asthma care, which includes a handy crib sheet for easy reference and comparison of inhaler carbon footprints.
	4. Review a subset of patients with particularly high carbon inhalers prescribed (i.e. Flutiform MDI, Symbicort MDI, Ventolin Evohaler MDI).
	5. Consider environmental impact at each respiratory review.
		1. Utilise the NICE [patient decision aid](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng80/resources/inhalers-for-asthma-patient-decision-aid-pdf-6727144573).
	6. Encourage patients to return old or unwanted inhalers to pharmacies for environmentally safe disposal through reminders and promotions.
	7. Encourage the use of appropriate inhaler technique e.g., using placebo devices and promoting the Rightbreathe app and [website](https://www.rightbreathe.com/).
	8. Utilise Greener Practice [resources](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/high-quality-and-low-carbon-asthma-care/resources/) as an educational tool for both patients and staff, including two informative videos.
3. **Calculate the Practice’s carbon footprint**
By doing this, you can identify hotspots of non-clinical carbon emissions for reduction.
	1. [Free carbon calculator tool](https://www.gpcarbon.org/#/) available from See Sustainability (option for low detail input available – please note this does not include carbon calculations for treatments or procedures).
	2. Create a plan to target and reduce each hotspot identified, such as:
		1. Swapping to an environmentally friendly stationery company. Practices can choose to sign up to access the [NHS Supply Chain](https://www.supplychain.nhs.uk/) to access their frameworks.
		2. Use yellow and black striped waste bags (known as tiger bags) for non-infectious clinical waste to reduce unecessary waste. [NHS Property Services](https://www.property.nhs.uk/news/insights/how-to-dispose-of-waste-correctly/) have a number of resources to support making sure all waste is disposed of correctly.
		3. Reduce electricity costs from constantly boiling kettles by installing a boiling water tap, and turning this off outside of working hours.
		4. Save on water by labelling the appropriate flush to use with dual-flush toilets. For single flush toilets, Hippo Bags can be installed to save water with each flush.
		5. Have a robust system for reporting facilities problems, i.e. leaky taps, such as having screensaver reminders for the process.
	3. The [SHAPE tool](https://shapeatlas.net/) can be used to assist with data gathering on the patient population.
4. **Monitor and reduce your practice’s energy usage**This will help to save money as well as reduce environmental impact.
	1. Promote energy saving guides and pointers for staff and patients on saving energy both in practice and at home, such as the [Energy Saving Trust](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/) or [Get Energy Savvy](https://www.getenergysavvy.info/home).
	2. Review your practice’s [EPC/DEC](https://www.gov.uk/energy-performance-certificate-commercial-property) for recommendations to improve energy efficiency, including projected payback periods.
	3. Take steps to improve insulation such as using radiator backing and refreshing ceiling insulation.
	4. Consider switching to a 100% renewable electricity provider.
		1. *NB: C&M ICB 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. Undertake an energy audit to find hotspots for energy use, for example:
		1. Changing lightbulbs to LED.
		2. Turning off monitors when not in use to reduce electricity consumption. This can be done automatically or on a timer (i.e. to turn off at 7pm)
		3. Install PIR (aka magic eye or dawn and dusk sensors) for corridors and outdoor lights.
		4. Turn off equipment such as air conditioners, heaters, when not in use.
		5. Install heating timers.
		6. Switching to one central printer instead of multiple smaller printers in one room.
	6. When electricity use has been reduced as much as possible, consider installing solar panels or sources of renewable energy. This can be considered as part of estates contract renewals with the building landlord/s.

1. **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.
	1. Many banks directly invest in the fossil fuel industry and may have other unethical practices. Find out more about green and ethical banking:
		1. <https://www.moneyexpert.com/current-account/ethical-banking/>
		2. <https://moralfibres.co.uk/best-ethical-banks/>
		3. <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/money-finance/shopping-guide/current-accounts>
	2. This can also apply to private pensions such as NEST – to find out more visit: <https://makemymoneymatter.co.uk/>
		1. *NB: NHS Pensions is a defined benefit fund and is not invested.*
	3. To learn more about the environmental impact of invested funds, watch this COP26 [talk & short film](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bmON6KB0CM).
	4. 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.
2. **Environmental prescribing and treatment**Approximately 48% of general practice’s carbon footprint comes from prescribing pharmaceuticals.
	1. Consider non-pharmaceutical medical interventions such as [green social prescribing](https://nhsforest.org/sites/default/files/Prescribing%20Green%20Space-3.pdf) or an increase in [physical activity](https://www.rcgp.org.uk/about-us/news/2019/august/gp-practices-supported-to-recommend-active-lifestyles-to-patients-and-staff.aspx), bearing accessibility in mind.
		1. Resources and information is available from the [All Together Active](https://alltogetheractive.champspublichealth.com/all-together-active/) Strategy, [Ramblers Wellbeing Walks](https://beta.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/wellbeing-walks), [Natural Health Service](https://naturalhealthservice.org.uk/wordpress/), and [Mersey Forest](https://www.merseyforest.org.uk/).
	2. Engage with the IIF polypharmacy reviews, including signposting and collaborative working with community pharmacy.
		1. [PrescQIPP IMPACT - Improving Medicines and Polypharmacy Appropriateness Clinical Tool](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cgrace.marshall%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CDesktop%20Connect%5Cd3e1995b-9695-492d-9d55-ec0d31e68dfa%5CPrescQIPP%20IMPACT%20-%20Improving%20Medicines%20and%20Polypharmacy%20Appropriateness%20Clinical%20Tool)
		2. [Polypharmacy Guidance on Realistic Prescribing](https://www.therapeutics.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Polypharmacy-Guidance-2018.pdf)
	3. Engage with the greener Integrated Care System prescribing incentive schemes.
	4. Focus on preventative care wherever possible as opposed to reactive care, such as treating pre-diabetes through lifestyle changes to prevent diabetes.
	5. Sign up for bulletins on your practice prescribing trends at <https://openprescribing.net/>.
	6. Share [Healthcare Without Harm Europe’s Safer Pharma video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PTpylVotd8) with prescribers and patients.
	7. Engage in a low waste prescribing approach:
		1. Avoid overprescribing by reading the ‘[Good for you, good for us, good for everybody’](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1019475/good-for-you-good-for-us-good-for-everybody.pdf) plan from the Department of Health & Social Care.
		2. Deprescribe where appropriate, following [Royal Pharmaceutical Society medicines optimisation guidance](https://www.rpharms.com/Portals/0/RPS%20document%20library/Open%20access/Policy/helping-patients-make-the-most-of-their-medicines.pdf).
			1. [Wirral STOPP START Tool to support medication reviews](https://mm.wirral.nhs.uk/document_uploads/other-topics/STOPP_START_Tool2015.pdf)
			2. [Deprescribing in frailty guidance](https://westcheshireway.glasscubes.com/share/s/bnfcqn2r5hmupgdou9n5o40i6i)
		3. Stop unecessary third party ordering.
		4. Encourage patient-led ordering using the NHS App.
		5. Raise awareness of, and encourage, recycling options such as:
			1. Medicine blister packet recycling at participating pharmacies – there may also be local community schemes near you run from clubs or churches
			2. Returning inhalers to pharmacies for safe disposal
		6. Avoid unecessary waste for care home residents and people living independently.
		7. Ensure prescription durations are appropriate for the course of medication required
		8. Check for medicine stockpiling where suitable as part of home visits, see Dr Deb Gompertz’s [talk](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/information-and-resources/events-webinars/past-webinars/greener-practice-south-yorkshire-with-deb-gompertz-25-1-22/) for more information
		9. Encourage patients to check the bag whilst in the pharmacy when collecting their prescriptions to reduce medicine waste in case of incorrect dispensing
	8. Continue remote consultations where appropriate.
		1. Encourage care home staff to use iPads and RESTORE2 for remote care home consultations.
3. **Engage, educate, and empower patients to take individual action on the climate crisis for the benefit of their health**By increasing awareness and empowering patients, smaller actions can have a bigger impact. Keen patients may also be able to support implementing green actions at the practice, and spread messages wider.
	1. Discuss the climate crisis with your Patient Participation Group (PPG) and get them involved in practice actions as identified through discussion and carbon footprinting.
		1. Encourage PPGs to take an activist approach to supporting with green actions, such as examples from this Plan or the [Green Impact for Health Toolkit](https://www.greenimpact.org.uk/giforhealth)
		2. Use PPGs to link with local climate or environment groups
		3. Get in contact with your ICB for support, and to share successes widely
	2. Share the [series of 7 short videos](https://westcheshireway.glasscubes.com/share/s/il35ho8dtr7hgdifa9ggjq00nh) on waiting room screens and social media to help promote patient awareness on the link between planet and health. [YouTube links are also available for the videos](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAm3ch0bjUdgeoQevU6U58e_HlRkMcnUX).
	3. Engage with your Social Prescribing Link Worker on green social prescribing schemes and discussing climate and health initiatives in your local care community group, including schemes run by your local Hospital Trust.
		1. Set up green care community/PCN meetings to include social prescribers and other ARRS staff
		2. Encourage balanced plant-based diets and activity for maintaining a healthy weight and reducing car use, and improved physical and mental health.
			1. Free resources available from [Plant Based Health Professionals UK](https://plantbasedhealthprofessionals.com/free-resources).
			2. Free local [Educ-EAT](https://westcheshireway.glasscubes.com/share/s/gja3pg953cvrd5di1rkt50q66f) training sessions
		3. Engage with and promote green community schemes such as community gardens, tree planting, gardening, and caring for wildflower areas. Contact your local borough Council for more information and support – ICB colleagues will have best contact details.
		4. There are a range of organisations which have volunteer schemes running locally, including [Cheshire Wildlife Trust](https://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/), [Mersey Forest](https://www.merseyforest.org.uk/) and [The Conservation Volunteers](https://www.tcv.org.uk/).
		5. RSPB & NHS Scotland ran a [Nature Prescription pilot](https://www.rspb.org.uk/natureprescriptions) and have shared their results ([video also available](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=647UevRhzbk)) for evidence and testimonials about green social prescribing.
		6. [Nature on Prescription Handbook – European Centre for Environment and Human Health | ECEHH](https://www.ecehh.org/research/nature-prescription-handbook/)
	4. Include environmental rationale when prescribing treatment such as increased exercise, linking with [active travel](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/information-and-resources/clinical-considerations/active-travel/).
		1. [Ramblers Walking for Health](https://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/) have many local routes and social groups for patients and staff of all mobility levels.
	5. Promote self-care practices and education using [ICB resources](https://www.cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/your-health/winter-wellbeing/self-care/), to help improve overall personal and planetary health through [healthy living](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/information-and-resources/clinical-considerations/promoting-healthy-living/).
	6. For group education sessions, consider combining these with walking routes. A list of local walking routes/groups is available on the Ramblers website.
4. **Promote active transport for both staff and patients**Active transport, also known as active travel, is any type of transport method which involves physical activity. For example, walking, wheeling or cycling.
	1. Sign up to a [Bicycle Lease scheme](https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-bikes-for-employees) for staff and install bike lockers/secure shelters and changing facilities if required.
		1. To encourage patients to cycle, consider installing Sheffield cycle stands (metal ‘n’ shape stands typically seen outdoors) to allow easy access for short term use.
		2. [Cycle to Work Scheme – guidance for employers](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/845725/cycle-to-work-guidance.pdf)
	2. Encourage staff to walk or cycle to work where possible.
		1. 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.*
	3. Be aware of local Council for information on transport schemes available for residents.
		1. [Cheshire East](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport/public-transport.aspx)
		2. [Cheshire West and Chester](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/public-transport/public-transport.aspx)
		3. [Liverpool City Region](https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/transport/)
		4. [Warrington](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/buses)
	4. 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.
	5. Consider installing Electric Vehicle charging points for cars and bikes at the practice.
		1. Some funding is available through the government [Workplace Charging Scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/workplace-charging-scheme-guidance-for-applicants)
	6. Get involved with the CHAMPS [All Together Active](https://alltogetheractive.champspublichealth.com/all-together-active/) strategy
	7. Get involved with [Active Cheshire](https://activecheshire.org/) & [Merseyside Sports Partnership (MSP)](https://merseysidesport.com/) and use their resources for both patients and staff.
	8. Sign up to the RCGP [Active Practice](https://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/mod/page/view.php?id=12583&_ga=2.238171912.98362766.1640247990-1391283672.1640247990) Charter – assistance may be available from Active Cheshire & MSP for eligible practices.
	9. Review how well mapped your practice is on Google Maps – is the pin in the correct location, and are all cycle paths and pedestrian routes shown? If not, [request for them to be added](https://support.google.com/local-guides/answer/9157791?hl=en-GB).
5. **Embed the ‘3 Rs’ into Practice culture – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**The ‘3 Rs’ is a simple mindset to adopt to help prevent waste.
1 – **reduce** the need to buy something new.
2 – if you can’t remove the need for the item, **reuse** or repurpose what you
already have.
3 – at the end of the items life cycle, **recycle** it, and choose to buy easily recyclable
 items, or items made from recycled materials.

Reduce

Reuse

Recycle

* 1. Reduce – consider alternative options rather than buying new items. This can also apply to consumption of energy and other resources.
		1. Use scrap paper and paper clips instead of post it notes.
		2. 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.
		3. This can also apply to office snacks – try opting for naturally wrapped treats such as satsumas, or snacks with compostable or recyclable packaging.
	2. Reuse – consider how existing or second-hand items can be utilised. i.e., use an old projector stand as a standing desk.
		1. [Revolution Zero](https://www.revolution-zero.co.uk/) reusable IIR masks were successfully trialled and adopted locally in Winsford (Cheshire), and elsewhere across the country
		2. [Warp It](https://www.warp-it.co.uk/) offer a way to find, loan or give away office equipment and other resources
		3. Promote return and reuse of community equipment through local scheme, i.e. Trust schemes or Ross Care in Cheshire
	3. Recycle – sort your recycling in house or sign up to a company who can sort off-site for you.
		1. Waste contracts with majority recycling options are often cheaper as it is much cheaper to send items for recycling than for destruction with heat recovery.
		2. Consider how to recycle ‘hard-to-recycle’ items, such as:
			1. Lotion tubes or pumps ([Boots](https://boots.scan2recycle.com/faqs/) and [Superdrug](https://www.superdrug.com/maybelline-terracycle) offer recycling schemes).
			2. Medicine blister packets (Superdrug offer a [recycling scheme](https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/medicine-packet-uk)).
			3. Printer toners using existing schemes such as:
				1. <https://www.brother.co.uk/recycling> (For genuine Brother parts, high quality items can be refilled and directly reused)
				2. <http://www.zerowasterecycling.co.uk/faq.aspx>
				3. <https://cartridges4charity.co.uk/toner-cartridge-recycling/>
				4. <https://everycartridge.com/uk/alternatives/>
				5. <https://www.officexpress.co.uk/recycling/> (Requires purchase of toner through Office Xpress to become a customer)
1. **Use the Green Impact for Health Toolkit**Developed by the RCGP using the NUS/SOS Green Impact web platform, the toolkit answers the question ‘What can I do in my practice?’ It gives the reason for the suggested actions and tips about how to make the change.
	1. The toolkit is free to use at <https://toolkit.sos-uk.org/greenimpact/giforhealth/login>. You don’t have to complete everything at once (unless you want to) – you can dip in and out, and use the toolkits for useful examples and ideas for projects.
	2. 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! You may be surprised by how many things you are already doing.
	3. An example of a quick change from the toolkit is switching your default search engine (i.e. Google) to [Ecosia](https://info.ecosia.org/what), which uses ad profits to plant trees.
	4. 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](https://www.rcgp.org.uk/policy/rcgp-policy-areas/climate-change-sustainable-development-and-health.aspx)

[Centre for Sustainable Healthcare](https://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/)

[Greener NHS](https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/) & [Greener NHS Knowledge Hub](https://future.nhs.uk/sustainabilitynetwork/grouphome)

[UK Health Alliance on Climate Change](http://www.ukhealthalliance.org/)

[Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care System (ICS) Green Plan](https://www.cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/about/green-plan/)
This Plan brings 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.

[Video presentation](https://vimeo.com/754512318) from Karen Creffield, Practice Manager at Frome Medical Centre

[Cornwall Micro-Greens & Cornwall Greener Practice Network Trello Board](https://trello.com/b/bJWCLsSb/pcn-climate-resilience-crew-board)

**Version Control:**

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| **Approval Date** | **Version Number** | **Summary of Changes** |
| 18/02/2022 | 1.0 | Version 1 |
| 01/02/2023 | 2.0 | All points refreshed and additional examples and resources added |
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