

GREEN IMPACT FOR HEALTH NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025

The toolkit is now used by more than 1,600 practices, roughly 16% of all UK general practices!

The Greener Practice Platform will replace the old website (but use the same [web address](#)) and, if all goes to plan, launch in late April/ early May.

Greener Practice was awarded a Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) Healthcare grant in 2024 to make it easier for general practice to implement environmentally sustainable practice

The Platform should have 2 big benefits:

1. Strengthen the Network

The Platform simplifies the sign-up process for Greener Practice and makes it easier to join local groups, special interest groups and connect with other members.

When given the go-ahead from the website developers, everyone in local groups and on WhatsApp groups will be asked to register via the new website (for free) to become Greener Practice Network members. This will enable better understanding of the strength, size and spread of the Network, connect people more easily, and link people to exciting opportunities (some of which may be paid) based on interest, expertise and geography. The existing number of WhatsApp conversation groups will be reduced to create WhatsApp communities, which will be more user friendly than the current set up.

New steps for joining the Greener Practice Network:

1. Everyone on the WhatsApp groups will be asked to sign up to Network membership via the new website.
2. Sign up questions:
Name, role, email, workplace post code, areas of expertise, plus options to join new WhatsApp communities/ join local groups/ receive newsletter.
3. Once registered, Network members will receive a welcome email with links to join the new WhatsApp communities.
4. If interested in local groups, their contact details will be sent to you as local group leads to add to your list.
5. If opted in, you will be added to the newsletter distribution list.

Map of Network Members

The Platform will show a map of Network members to help people connect, collaborate and share best practice. Members can **choose** to include their name +/- areas of expertise +/- email address if they would like. **Only other members** will be able to view names, areas of expertise and email addresses.

2. Projects, Tools & Resources (Network PLUS)

The Platform will have a wealth of helpful projects and resources including a GP Practice Green Plan, a carbon calculator and many off-the-shelf practical quality improvements projects to save money, time and carbon.

The Platform will contain many helpful tools and resources as well as a 'Project Library'. The library will have multiple practical, step-by-step quality improvement projects which make it easier and quicker for clinicians to practice more sustainably, with benefits including improving patient care, reducing costs, saving clinician time, ready-made trainee projects and aligning with CQC sustainability requirements.

Some items will be free for Network members e.g. webinars, and members can access all of them if they sign up for an optional paid Network PLUS membership.

Who will pay?

Greener Practice are asking large organisations such as ICBs to pay for access for practices. They have also created the option for organisations such as PCNs, practices and individuals to pay. They are aiming to keep Network PLUS fees as low as possible.

The income generated for Greener Practice will ensure that people do not have to pay to be members of the Greener Practice Network, which is the greatest asset. Greener Practice will be able to offer Network support and expansion and continue to build on the library of projects and website development as success grows. Of course, if people simply prefer to join the Network and not have Network PLUS access that's absolutely fine!

Publications & Useful Info

RCGP has a new policy report '[Towards Greener Prescribing in General Practice](#)'.

Specific recommendations put forward in the report include:

Reducing overprescribing and implementing 'realistic medicine and prudent health principles':

1. Governments and NHS bodies across the UK should adopt the principles of realistic medicine and prudent health to promote shared decision-making between healthcare staff and patients, and to minimise unnecessary medical interventions.
2. Governments and health system leaders should provide the support and resources needed for trained primary care teams to carry out 'Comprehensive and Structured Medication Reviews' (CMR & SMR) for every patient in need, improve quality of prescribing and improve patient safety and outcomes. This should help to ensure medications are effective and necessary, and that suitable alternatives or dosage reductions are considered where appropriate.

Expanding effective non-medical and nature-based interventions:

1. NICE and SIGN should update their guidelines to incorporate non-medical and nature-based interventions as a specialised category, where evidence of benefit is available.
2. Governments across the UK should ensure sufficient long-term investment in voluntary and community services which can provide access to evidence-based non-medical and nature-based interventions, with a focus on areas of high deprivation.

Reducing the environmental impact of prescribing:

1. NICE and SIGN should include information about the environmental impact of medicines in their guidelines and publications.
2. The 'Joint Formulary Committee (JFC)' responsible for the content of the British National Formulary (BNF) should support methods to include more information on the environmental impact of different medicines.
3. All NHS medical procurement processes should include an environmental impact assessment, requiring the pharmaceutical industry to provide standardised environmental impact information.
4. Medicines recycling and re-use schemes, with a particular focus on inhalers, should be expanded across the UK.
5. Electronic prescribing should be expanded across all UK NHS settings to reduce the use of paper prescriptions and unnecessary patient travel.

Supporting general practice to address green prescribing:

1. Governments across the UK should adapt existing GP funding incentive schemes to encourage a stronger focus on delivering quality improvement approaches to sustainable healthcare.
2. Health research funders and relevant NHS bodies should invest in research and evaluation of interventions aiming to reduce the environmental impact of prescribing.
3. Education and training providers that support staff working in primary care should develop more training on environmental sustainability.
4. Governments across the UK should allocate dedicated funding to support the recruitment of sustainability leads at practice network or cluster level.

A research paper on medical education in healthcare offices was recently published. It's the outcome of five years' work and concludes that, "the medical office waiting room appears to be an accepted, time-efficient, and effective site to communicate knowledge on climate change and health." [Here's the complete article.](#)

New Research Hubs

The NIHR and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) have joined forces to invest £42m into [7 transdisciplinary research hubs](#) designed to accelerate the UK's journey to net zero, based at institutions across the UK. The hubs are focused around 5 challenge areas, with opportunities to benefit people's health and reduce the impact on the environment:

- transport and the built environment
- the indoor environment
- sustainable diets
- extreme weather
- decarbonising health and social care pathways

The 7 research hubs are:

1. Healthy Low-Carbon Transport Hub

- Director: Professor William Powrie, University of Southampton.

- Core organisations: University of Southampton, University College London, University of Birmingham, University of Leeds.

2. Child and adolescent Health Impacts of Learning Indoor environments under net zero: The CHILI Hub

- Director: Professor Pia Hardelid, University College London.
- Core organisations: University College London, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Swansea University, UK Health Security Agency, University of Leeds, University of York, Imperial College London.

3. Indoor HABItability during the Transition to Net Zero Housing Hub (INHABIT)

- Director: Professor Zongbo Shi, University of Birmingham.
- Core organisations: University of Birmingham, Cranfield University, King's College London, London School of Economics and Political Science, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Oxford Brookes University, UK Health Security Agency, University College London, University of Cambridge, University of Edinburgh and University of Surrey.

4. THRIVING food futures (Transdisciplinary Health Research to Identify Viable Interventions for Net Zero Goals: food futures)

- Director: Professor Peter Scarborough, University of Oxford.
- Core organisations: University of Oxford, Queen Mary University of London, Sustain, University of Cambridge, University of Strathclyde, University of Warwick and City, University of London.

5. HEARTH: National Hub on Net Zero, Health and Extreme Heat

- Director: Professor Rajat Gupta, Oxford Brookes University.
- Core organisations: Oxford Brookes University, Forest Research, Greater London Authority, London School of Economics and Political Science, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Oxfordshire County Council, Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, University College London, University of Edinburgh and University of Leeds.

6. The UK Hub for One Health Systems: Creating Sustainable Health and Social Care Pathways

- Director: Professor Ed Wilson, University of Exeter.
- Core organisations: University of Exeter, Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT), Glasgow Caledonian University, Institute of Cancer Research, James Hutton Institute, NHS Highland, Queen's University Belfast, Royal College of General Practitioners, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, University of Aberdeen, University of Liverpool, University of South Wales and Volunteer Cornwall.

7. A transdisciplinary hub to decarbonise commissioning and delivery of healthcare

- Director: Professor Mahmood Bhutta, Brighton and Sussex Medical School, University of Sussex and University of Brighton.

- Core organisations: University of Sussex, Aston University, Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, Office of Health Economics, University of Brighton, University of Leeds, University of Nottingham and University of West London.

NIHR Climate Change and Health: Adapting Health and Social Care Systems - Development Awards (funding available: £100,000)

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) invites applications for research that addresses the challenges of climate change by building resilience into the delivery of health and social care services during severe weather events. Smaller development awards will be offered initially. Their purpose is to enable research teams to come together to develop ideas with potential to help UK health and social care services to operate efficiently during extreme weather events. After the development phase, holders of development awards will be invited to submit large scale and ambitious collaborative projects.

This call aims to:

- Bring diverse research teams together to develop plans for ambitious research and to catalyse future research capacity.
- Enable researchers to apply for larger Research Collaboration awards within this initiative
- Support teams who are seeking support from other programmes within the NIHR.

You can find more info [here!](#)

Kind Regards,

The Green Impact for Health Team