

GREEN IMPACT FOR HEALTH NEWSLETTER

February 2025

GIFH Specific Updates

There are >1500 practice organisations, and >3500 individual users registered on the toolkit. [The 2024 Green Impact for Health Programme report is here](#). It includes all the 2024 awards. 232 practice organisations submitted themselves for awards. The awards were 50 Pioneer, 99 Bronze, 22 Silver, 37 Gold and 11 Platinum.

The Future of the Toolkit

The RCGP has confirmed that it will continue funding SOS to run the website and administer the programme until 31/12/2028. Exciting developments in the next few years are that the Warwick University GpNet0 study will complete in 2026 and inform the improvement of the toolkit. No major changes in the toolkit are planned until GpNet0 study reports. New clinical criteria may be added when available (see below), there are new bids being submitted to the NIHR programme [Decarbonising the health and social care system](#) that are specific to primary care that use the toolkit, that if successful could increase uptake and adoption of the toolkit.

Guidance on sustainable, low carbon high quality clinical care

Currently 20% of the toolkit criteria relates to clinical care, but >60% of the carbon footprint of general practices is caused by clinical care (investigation and treatments). This gap will be addressed by the new Greener Practice Platform that will give guidance on more clinical conditions. The platform will be launched in April but there is a webinar about the new platform on Tuesday, 25 February 2025, 12:30-1:00 pm. [Register](#) or email contact@greenerpractice.com for details.

Opportunities and Upcoming Events

Chief Sustainability Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme Greener NHS has announced the fifth year of this scheme, which offers clinicians with a passion for sustainable healthcare the unique opportunity to work directly on embedding net zero carbon principles into the delivery of care across the system. More information [here](#). Applications are open now and the 12-month scheme will begin on the 1 September 2025.

The CleanMed Europe Conference is June 10-13. Agenda is [here](#)

Sustainability in Healthcare News

NHS England's Green Guidance

NHSE has published (4/2/25) its [Green Plan Guidance for ICBs](#). All ICBs must update their 3 year plan 2025-28 by 31/7/25. General Practice and primary care do not get mentioned much but the guidance does say ICBs should:

- support primary care providers to contribute to system-wide emissions reductions - for example, by working with and through overarching structures such as primary care networks and primary care committees
- work with primary care to support high-quality, lower-carbon respiratory care in line with clinical guidelines for [asthma](#) and [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease](#), including:
- optimise [inhaler choice](#) (considering clinical appropriateness, the environmental impact of inhalers and patient preference)
- improving inhaler use and adherence
- encouraging patients to return their used or expired inhalers to community pharmacies for appropriate disposal
- address (in line with [National medicines optimisation opportunities](#)) overprescribing and oversupply while supporting patients in greatest need, taking a shared decision-making approach and personalising care
- identify opportunities to support primary care estates decarbonisation, such as through the [Boiler upgrade scheme](#)

RCGP has updated the GP Curriculum

The [updated curriculum](#) addresses and covers several areas in greater detail than before, including: climate change and other environmental factors, recognising their impact on health in sections like Allergy and Clinical Immunology, as well as in the Population and Planetary Health Topic Guide. The old capability of community orientation has been renamed as community health and environmental sustainability...and there are lots of new relevant word descriptors.

The Cornwall & SW & Climate Resilience Network has lots of resources including practical advice on [15 areas for action](#)

Nature Connection's [Handbook](#) is an easy to use guide in increase peoples connection with nature.

Public opinion about the NHS's role in addressing climate change

The NHS is a [significant source of emissions](#), contributing 4% of the UK's carbon footprint. The Health Foundation and Ipsos have tracked public perceptions of the NHS net zero ambition annually since [2021](#). In the latest [survey](#) 40% of the public remain neutral to the view that the NHS is contributing to climate change. Only 22% agree that it is, while a similar proportion (24%) disagree. Less than half of the public (44%) agree that the NHS has a responsibility to reduce its impact on climate change, while 25% disagree. Around half (49%) disagree that the NHS should make reducing its impact on climate change one of its top priorities, while only 17% agree - consistent with previous years.

Almost 4 years on from the NHS net zero commitment, only 18% of the public are aware of the policy. Over half (57%) support the net zero ambition once informed and only 15% oppose it. Support for climate policies has fallen in recent years. But [a majority of people in the UK support strong political action on climate change](#) and the net zero NHS ambition still commands majority support. The public's perceptions of NHS net zero have [not hampered progress](#) so far, but as the transition progresses - and tougher decisions become necessary - gaining public support will be increasingly important.

[Research shows](#) that support for climate policies can be shaped by how they are communicated to the public. Highlighting how [low-carbon health care](#) can support improvements on the public's priorities.

Policy changes needed to meet the NHS's commitment to become a net zero health service

The Health Foundation's [new analysis](#) focuses on these policy changes. Their briefing describes how major policy levers shaping health care in England are helping or hindering the net zero care transition and identifies four priorities for future policy.

Advancing and Integrating Climate and Health Policies in the UK

This [study](#) examines the integration of climate and health policies in the UK based on 42 expert interviews. Despite widespread acknowledgment of the growing significance of climate change impacts on human health, practical policy integration remains limited due to siloed decision-making, resource constraints, and short-term thinking, amongst other issues. Opportunities for improvement include emphasizing co-benefits, leveraging the scale of the NHS, and learning from approaches in the devolved governments. Strategies to deliver improved policies and outcomes involve enhanced cross-sector coordination, dedicated resources, development and use of fit-for-purpose evidence, and community engagement. A better resourced, holistic approach addressing wider health determinants and prioritising vulnerable populations could significantly improve UK climate and health policy outputs and outcomes.

Climate change and health: embedding ethics into policy and decision making

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics climate change, health and ethics project took place over 2024. They have now published their [report](#). This makes two key recommendations to ensure that climate change measures are fair and effective: (1) policy and decision makers should recognise, consider and address the intersections between climate change and health when developing and implementing all climate measures and (2) ethics should be embedded in this process from the outset.

What's the value of medical conferences?

BJGP Life [opinion piece](#) thinks High-quality GP conferences should raise their standards and report on their 'triple bottom line' – the economic, social, and environmental impacts and outcomes.

Kind Regards,

The Green Impact for Health Team