The King's Fund
Bold thinking for better health

CENTRE for SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE
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Achieving a low carbon, climate-resilient NHS

Chris Naylor
Senior Fellow in Health Policy – The King's Fund
Policy Lead – Centre for Sustainable Healthcare

Driving action on sustainability

Based on our research we developed 10 recommendations in two broad categories:

1 - Strengthening existing sustainability-specific accountability mechanisms

2 - Embedding sustainability into wider NHS accountability frameworks



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1: Strengthening sustainability-specific accountability mechanisms

1. Build on and reinforce the work of the Greener NHS programme, including through a new statutory duty for the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.
2. Define clearer responsibilities for board-level leaders in trusts and integrated care boards.
3. Introduce annual sustainability performance checks led by regional leads.
4. Make as much performance data as possible publicly available in a consistent and accessible format
5. Identify a small set of high-impact priorities to increase focus at the local level.
6. Work towards organisation-specific carbon reduction trajectories for each trust and ICB.

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2: Embedding sustainability into wider NHS accountability frameworks

7. Embed sustainability in wider performance management processes at the regional level.
8. Ensure national accountability mechanisms used for other priorities drive changes that are aligned with sustainability.
9. Ensure the Care Quality Commission’s new assessment frameworks lead to greater prioritisation of sustainability in providers.
10. Make sustainability part of the national vision for a high-quality NHS by communicating the benefits for patients, staff and public finances.

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Continued progress rests on three things

Alignment

- Shifting to a more embedded approach to national leadership and accountability

Prioritisation

- Enabling NHS leaders to place sufficient priority on medium/long-term impact

Narrative

- Adapting the language
- Clear message that sustainability is part of high-quality care

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“The financial and environmental sustainability challenges facing the NHS are closely connected. Both require achieving the best-possible outcomes from the resources invested, minimising activities that are of limited value to patients and prioritising prevention and early intervention.”

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Alignment with clinical priorities and 10-year plan delivery

1. PREVENTION

Promoting health and preventing disease by tackling the causes of illnesses and inequalities

2. PATIENT SELF-CARE

Empowering patients to take a greater role in managing their own health and healthcare



3. LEAN SERVICE DELIVERY

Streamlining care systems to minimise wasteful activities

4. LOW CARBON ALTERNATIVES

Prioritising treatments and technologies with a lower environmental impact

Mortimer, F. The Sustainable Physician. Clin Med 10(2). April 1, 2010. D110-111.

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Resilience and preparedness

Without resilience at multiple levels, climate change adds to the performance pressures facing the NHS

- **Resilient facilities**: ensuring health care facilities are resilient to heatwaves, flooding and other risks
- **Resilient supply chains**: in a context where there is increased political and economic volatility globally
- **Resilient population**: reducing vulnerability to the health impacts of climate change

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Thank you

c.naylor@kingsfund.org.uk

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