

Date: 23/02/2021

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST FOI/015576 - Climate change/green strategy

We would like to better understand your trusts approach to climate change, sustainability, and planetary health. Specifically, we would like to know about any patient information your trust provides about environmental risk factors (e.g. air pollution) or the effects of climate change on health.

The Trust is developing its approach to environmental sustainability. A Green Plan was approved by the Trust Board of Directors at its meeting on 10th December 2020. This Plan sets out the actions the Trust will take to monitor and reduce its own carbon emissions in line with NHS requirements. The NHS has recently announced its intention to become carbon net zero by 2040 for emissions over which it has direct control and by 2045 for the wider carbon footprint <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/publication/delivering-a-net-zero-national-health-service/>

Information about our work on sustainability will be published on our website at <http://www.dgft.nhs.uk/aboutus/environmental-sustainability/> and we will be publishing the progress we are making on a regular basis.

No specific patient information is provided about environmental risk factors such as air pollution at the moment.

We would also be keen to hear about measures you are taking to combat carbon emissions, climate change, and practice more sustainable healthcare.

The Green Plan covers the period 2020 to 2025 and sets out the actions we intend to take. This includes making our buildings more energy efficient, purchasing items that have a lower carbon footprint to manufacture, increasing the amount of waste that is recycled and reducing what we send to landfill. We have already increased the number of recycling bins in our hospitals and are encouraging staff, patients and visitors to use these effectively. LED lighting has been installed in certain parts of our buildings and we are working with our PFI partners to extend this to other parts of the estate.

The way in which we deliver healthcare is changing rapidly as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The Trust now delivers over a third of its outpatient appointments virtually, either by telephone or video, which results in lower numbers of patient journeys to hospital. This will have a positive impact on local pollution although we are not currently in a position to monitor this. Similarly, more staff have been enabled to work remotely and meetings are being held virtually. This is reducing commuting journeys and work-related journeys.

The Trust has invited staff to engage in the sustainability agenda by initiating a 'green team' which is a forum for staff across the organisation to ask questions and contribute their ideas for how to make us more sustainable. The first meeting was at the end of November but further meetings are suspended whilst the Trust manages the surge in hospital admissions. We plan to re-start this forum as soon as we can