



RPS Greener Pharmacy Guide

FOR COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

**TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ROYAL
PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY'S GREENER PHARMACY TOOLKIT**

Contents

ABBREVIATIONS	2
INTRODUCTION	3
PURPOSE	4
SCOPE	4
RPS GREENER PHARMACY GUIDE	5
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE	6
Domain 1 People	7
Domain 2 Clinical Practice	15
Domain 3 Operations and strategy	25
Domain 4 Resource Use	29
Energy and water; Procurement and Supply Chain; Waste and recycling	
Domain 5 Information and communications technology	42
Domain 6 Travel	47

Abbreviations

CPPE	Centre for Postgraduate Pharmacy Education
CPD	Continuing professional development
COPD	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CSH	Centre for Sustainable Healthcare
DMS	Discharge Medicines Service
ICB	Integrated Care Boards
ICS	Integrated Care Systems
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
NHS	National Health Service
NHSE	National Health Service England
NMS	New Medicines Service
PPE	Personal protective equipment
PQS	Pharmacy Quality Service
RPS	Royal Pharmaceutical Society
SABA	Short-acting beta-agonists
SPS	Specialist Pharmacy Service
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds

Introduction

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) Greener Pharmacy Guide has been developed to raise awareness and capability of pharmacy staff to reduce the environmental impacts of the pharmacy sector, saving money and delivering more efficient services for patients and communities. The [RPS Greener Pharmacy Guide Scoping Review](#) document underpins the development of this guide, where it uses an evidence-based approach to offer insights into the rationale, content and structure. The guide was developed using the RPS Professional standards, guidance and frameworks process development [handbook](#). Its development was led by healthcare professionals with expertise in environmental sustainability with multi-stakeholder engagement and feedback.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted in accordance with the [RPS EqIA Guidance](#) as the guidance is committed to promoting inclusive, person-centred care as well as addressing health inequalities. This guide supports the rollout of the [RPS Greener Pharmacy Toolkit](#), which community pharmacies can use to self-accredit their sustainability status. Many community pharmacies are already reducing their environmental footprint through sustainability programs and annual environmental, social and governance (ESG) reports.

Purpose

The guide outlines a range of actions to reduce carbon emissions, save money and improve services that will help pharmacy staff to self-accredit the sustainability status of their pharmacy settings using the toolkit. The guide helps all pharmacy staff to:

- raise awareness and enhance understanding of the environmental impacts of healthcare, medicines and pharmacy practice;
- reduce the environmental impacts of healthcare, medicines (via waste reduction) and pharmacy practice to meet the NHS's commitment to net zero;
- explain the co-benefits of taking sustainable actions in pharmacy, including improving patient care, increasing efficiency, and unlocking cost savings;
- certify the sustainability credentials of pharmacy settings to demonstrate their efforts in reducing environmental impact;
- benchmark the current carbon hotspots of the pharmacy setting and estimate the potential carbon savings based on the outcomes of the implemented actions.

Scope

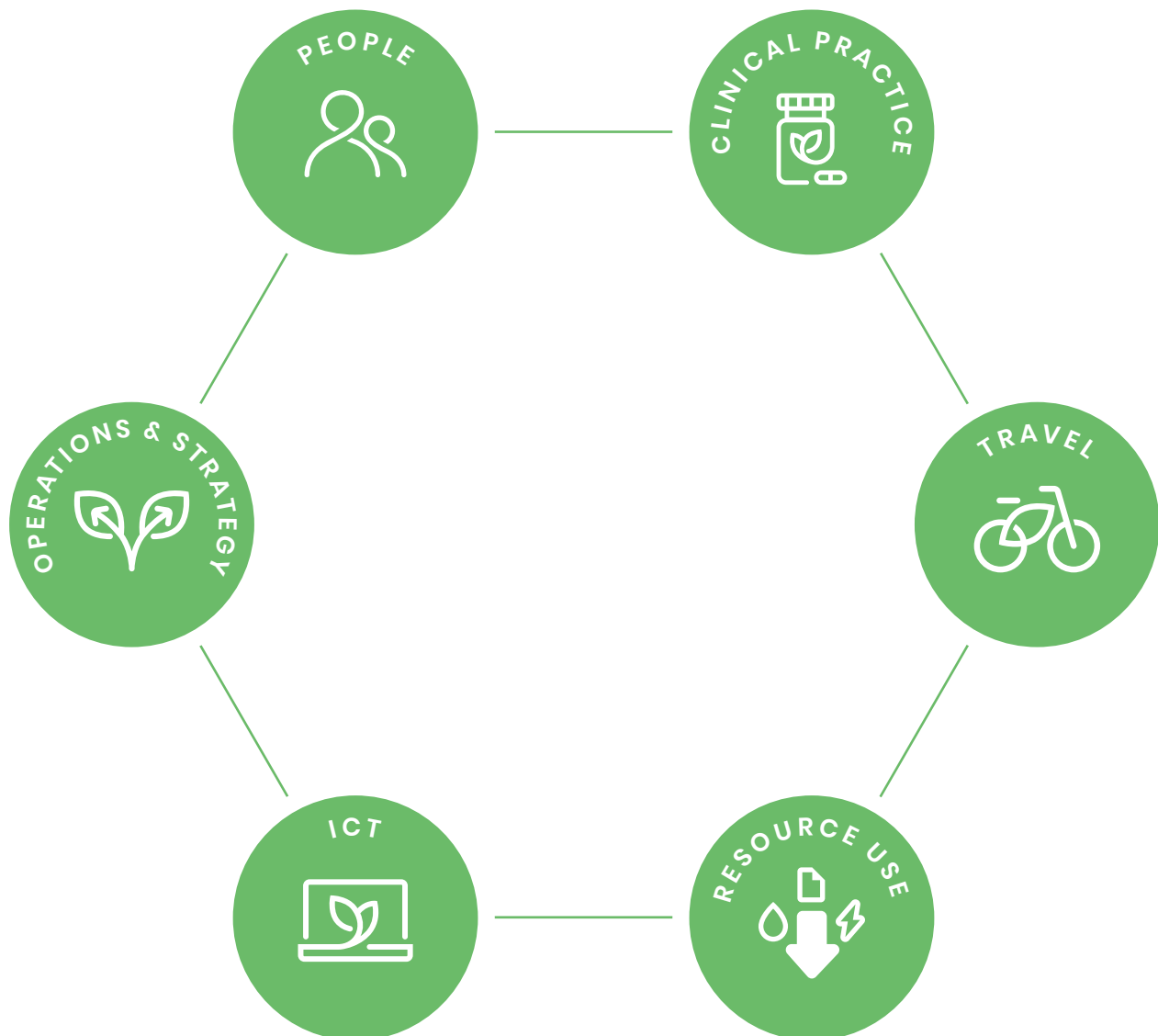
Since the project has been commissioned by NHS England, the guide predominantly focuses on services offered by community pharmacy settings of all sizes throughout England, including those located within large buildings. However, the guide can easily be adapted for use by community pharmacies in different countries. Pharmacy staff in **Wales** started their sustainability journey using the [Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme from Public Health Wales](#).

Pharmacy staff working in **GP practices** are using the [Green Impact for Health Toolkit](#). Greener Pharmacy guide for hospital pharmacy is available on the [RPS website](#).

Many community pharmacies affiliated with retail chains are already signatories to the British Retail Consortium's Climate Roadmap. It would be beneficial to start this toolkit in collaboration with sustainability managers within the respective organisations (e.g. head office) regarding the alignment with existing business sustainability policies and agendas. In England, where sustainability managers are present in the ICBs, they should be consulted to help with implementing some of the actions as part of the ICS green plans.

RPS Greener Pharmacy Guide

The guide contains six overarching domains:



Each action under the domains will list the environmental benefits and other co-benefits of completing the actions. This guide is less focused on clinical pharmacy practice (e.g. how to review polypharmacy to deprescribe medicines) and more about empowering pharmacy staff to take actions to decarbonise pharmacy settings. Simplified checklists of this guide are available on the [RPS website](#).

How to use this guide

We encourage all pharmacies to explore the RPS Greener Pharmacy guide to discover how simple actions can contribute to a healthier planet, helping the profession to [play its part in climate action and sustainable healthcare](#).

Each domain has three levels with actions that pharmacy staff can choose to accomplish to progress towards the target accreditation. The guide can be used to complete the [online toolkit](#) and help community pharmacies work consistently towards reducing their carbon footprint in order to save money and improve services. Should they wish to community pharmacies can display their accreditation status using the assets designed to showcase their progress towards a sustainable pharmacy.



Some actions may not be applicable to the community pharmacy setting due to its location and service provision. Actions that are not applicable to the pharmacy setting have been modified or will be excluded from the overall tally to ensure fair accreditation process.

Actions requiring higher level personnel (e.g. head office, superintendent pharmacist, local authority) involvement should be escalated to achieve the desired outcomes. Actions outlined in the guide and toolkit are encouraged to be distributed among as many pharmacy staff as possible to achieve the highest level of accreditation.

Individuals and organisations are encouraged to submit examples of good practice via the toolkit. Feedback on the greener pharmacy guides and toolkit for future developments are welcomed: greenerpharmacy@rpharms.com

Domain 1: People



All staff in the healthcare system play a crucial role in helping the NHS achieve its net zero ambitions. They directly influence emissions, help innovate technologies to address inefficient practices and deliver cost savings. Their collective efforts help mitigate the impacts of climate change and promote a healthier sustainable future for all.

LEVEL 1 (BRONZE):

PHARMACY STAFF

1.1.1 Provide holistic advice and support to patients, guiding them towards evidence based non-pharmacological treatments where clinically appropriate and directing them to relevant health and social care providers or support groups when appropriate.

Information: Community pharmacies are uniquely placed in the heart of communities to proactively support and promote behaviour change and improve the health and wellbeing of the public. Staff should be well equipped to understand public health needs, spread health and wellbeing ethos, demonstrate team leadership, and can communicate appropriate health and wellbeing information to patients and the public. e.g. Smoking Cessation Service, Hypertension case-finding service, Pharmacy Contraception Service, Flu vaccinations.

Through shared decision making and person-centred care, staff should guide individuals towards evidence based non-pharmacological treatments where clinically appropriate. Staff should also be able to refer individuals to local services addressing wider social determinants of health, empowering individuals to take charge of their own health management.

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) is an approach to behaviour change that uses the millions of day-to-day interactions that organisations and people have with other people to support them in making positive changes to their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Resources

- [Make Every Contact Count \(MECC\) programme](#) is for anyone that has contact with people, including staff from all NHS services.
- [CPPE – Healthy Living Pharmacies](#)
- [Healthy Living Pharmacy: resources – GOV.UK](#)
- [How to become an HLP or maintain that status – Community Pharmacy England](#)

Environmental benefits

Reduce overprescribing where appropriate and utilising prevention and health promotion programmes helps support a healthy population, reduces care needs and improves health outcomes – which moderates demand on healthcare services.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Tackling overprescribing will help reduce costs related to an overreliance on pharmaceuticals where there is no clinical need.
- 2 Health inequalities** – Enhancing access to support groups helps bridge gaps in health literacy. Amplifying voices of marginalised groups affected by specific health issues can lead to more equitable healthcare services and outcomes.
- 3 Time** – Potentially reducing unnecessary visits to healthcare settings while maintaining high quality care will result in freeing up appointments and reducing NHS patient waiting times.
- 4 Productivity** – Improving health outcomes for patients and reducing sickness-absence associated with managing long term conditions.
- 5 Governance** – Complies with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 [SCHEDULE 4 PART 2 Paragraph 19](#), [SCHEDULE 4 PART 2 Paragraph 21](#) and [SCHEDULE 4 PART 2 Paragraph 22](#).

Suggested evidence

Confirm all patient-facing staff have completed [Session 1 - What Is MECC And Why It Is Important](#) of the Make Every Contact Count (MECC) programme. This can be organised as a lunch and learn session for all staff to go through the module together.

PHARMACY STAFF**1.1.2 Share information with patients about initiatives they can support to reduce waste, and improve efficiency of services.**

Information: Staff raising awareness with patients of initiatives that they can support to reduce waste and improve efficiency of services.

Resources

- [Meds Disposal Campaign](#)
- [Show me your meds](#)

Environmental benefits

Education and raising awareness can lead to behaviour change and can inspire more individuals to engage in projects that have environmental co-benefits.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce costs related to waste and inefficient services.
- 2 Satisfaction, Productivity** – The public are generally supportive of the benefits that sustainability initiatives can bring (e.g. improved air quality and health, homes that are more affordable to heat). Stronger public engagement is important to shape policy design to maximise effectiveness, and further strengthen public trust and support.
- 3 Governance** – Complies with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 [SCHEDULE 4 PART 2 Paragraph 10\(i\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#) and [SCHEDULE 4 PART 2 Paragraph 18](#).

Suggested evidence

Outline how pharmacy has implemented campaigns that impact on waste reduction messaging in patient communication. E.g. talking to patients, display posters or leaflets, on drug labels, pharmacy bags, text messaging to patients, pharmacy website.

LEVEL 2 (SILVER):

PHARMACY STAFF

1.2.1 Sustainable healthcare forms a part of staff's on-going development e.g. Continuous professional development (CPD) for registered pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

Information: The climate-health sphere is ever changing considering new research and innovation. Pharmacy team should be informed and aware of the potential health impacts of climate change for their communities and be equipped with knowledge and skills to implement sustainable changes. Pharmacy staff can undertake CPD (planned or unplanned), peer discussion or reflected practice relating to environmentally sustainable healthcare.

Resources

- [Greener NHS](#)
- [Greener NHS Knowledge Hub](#)
- [Centre for Sustainable Healthcare \(CSH\)](#)
- [Green Health Wales](#)
- [Greener Practice](#)
- [NHS Hampshire Healthcare Library Service – Sustainability in Healthcare Bulletins](#)
- [The Pharmaceutical Journal Green Pharmacy](#)
- [UK Health Alliance for Climate Change](#)

Suggested Courses	Estimated time to complete
Greener NHS training hub	Login to Future NHS Platform required
Greener NHS Carbon Literacy	Step 1: e-learning (five 30-minute modules) Step 2: in-person or online workshop (half-day, with some optional homework tasks)
Building a Net Zero NHS	30 minutes
All Our Health Programme	Bite-sized introduction to wide range of topics
CPPE Environmental Sustainability Gateway	Varies
Sustainability Leadership for Greener Health and Care Programme by NHS Leadership Academy	21-week programme – Track 1: an online only programme OR Track 2: combines the online programme with face-to-face workshops
Centre for Sustainable Healthcare Courses NB (England): Ask your ICB Sustainability Lead for any voucher codes available	4-week self-study period followed by a 4-hour workshop of your chosen course

Environmental benefits	Foster awareness, inspire actions, promote sustainable behaviours and policies.
Co-benefits: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Research & Innovation – It can inform funding, education and training or careers opportunities. Allows sharing of good practice to improve health outcomes. 2 Workforce – Supports training and development of staff. Allows sharing of good practice and shape leadership skills. 	
Suggested evidence	Confirm 50% of staff have completed sustainable healthcare related courses.

PHARMACY STAFF	
1.2.2 Aware of the RPS Sustainability Policies and make a commitment in the RPS Climate Change Charter.	
Information: The RPS sustainability policies consists of four domains – improving prescribing and medicines use, tackling medicines waste, preventing ill health, and improving infrastructure and ways of working.	
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPS Sustainability Policies • RPS Climate Change Charter
Environmental benefits	Raises awareness about the urgency of climate change, its impact on health, and the actions individuals and organisations can take to address it.
Co-benefits: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Workforce – Supports training and development of staff. Allows sharing of good practice and shape leadership skills. 	
Suggested evidence	All senior management staff has openly commit to a sustainable action in the RPS Climate Change Charter . Upload a copy of the completed charter. E.g. Use reusable cups and avoiding disposable single use.

PHARMACY STAFF

1.2.3 Join a greener pharmacy network and/or their local sustainability network(s).

Information: Joining like-minded individuals who are passionate about the subject can foster a sense of community and support, allowing learning from one another, sharing of ideas and collaboration on initiatives. E.g. Since joining Pharmacy Declares, a pharmacist in Gloucestershire collaborated with other primary care colleagues to undertake the [Green Impact for Health scheme](#) in multiple GP practices.

Resources

- [Pharmacy Declares](#)
- [Greener PCPA](#)
- [CSH Pharmacy Sustainability Network](#)
- [Healthcare without Harm Pharmacists for Greener Healthcare](#)

Environmental benefits

Individuals in green networks are more likely to adopt sustainable behaviours, collectively influence decision-makers to implement sustainability measures, enhance community resilience to climate change and inspire broader societal change towards a more sustainable future.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Collaboration** – Groups forming outside areas of work foster workforce integration.
- 2 Workforce** – Improve staff morale, relationships, share good practice and develop leadership skills in this area.

Suggested evidence

List the green groups or networks some staff are a part of.

PHARMACY STAFF

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

1.2.4 Ensure all quality improvement (QI) projects consider environmental impact.

Information: Sustainable quality improvement (QI) projects consider the health outcomes of a service measured against its environmental, social and economic costs.

All pharmacy QI projects should consider environmental sustainability. The project impacts and/or outcomes should be shared with other primary care staff, local health boards or in sustainability networks.

Resources

- [Sustainable Quality Improvement \(susqi.org\)](#)
- [SusQI - elearning for healthcare](#) [30 minutes]

Environmental benefits

All projects delivered with environmental impact in mind should aim to achieve carbon reductions whilst delivering the best possible health outcomes.

Co-benefits: (Project dependent)

- 1 Cost** – Projects delivered with environmental impact in mind should aim to achieve cost savings.
- 2 Time** – Projects delivered with environmental impact in mind should deliver efficiencies that improve services.
- 3 Research and innovation** – Provides opportunities to share best practice through publications or conferences.
- 4 Workforce** – Supports development of staff in leadership and management skills.
- 5 Collaboration** – Allows staff to integrate with teams outside usual working areas and share good practice to improve health outcomes.

Suggested evidence

Outline the sustainable QI project undertaken, the overall outcomes or impacts, and whether it is sustainable in the long-term.

LEVEL 3 (GOLD):

PHARMACY STAFF

1.3.1 Demonstrating innovative sustainable practice.

Information: Staff can apply for or collaborate with organisations or local sustainability leads to secure funding for environmental sustainability research projects or pilot studies. This is often a larger scale project compared to simple QI projects. E.g. Use of technologies to improve patient's understanding and compliance of their medicines (e.g. translation services, medicines reminder apps) to reduce medicines waste.

Resources

- [Small Business Research Initiative Healthcare Funding](#)
- [UK Research and Innovation \(UKRI\) funding](#)
- [Climate, health and sustainability – NIHR](#)
- [Funding Opportunities – Greener NHS Knowledge Hub, FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)
- [Medicine Waste in Care Homes: Reducing Social and Environmental Impact. Q Community](#)

Environmental benefits

Continued research and innovation allow better understanding of global environmental sustainability challenges and seek to develop the solutions to address them.

Co-benefits: (Project dependent)

- 1 Cost** – The project should serve to inform stakeholders of health benefits, as well as carbon and cost savings based on evaluation.
- 2 Time** – Most projects aim to save patient and staff time.
- 3 Research and innovation** – Provides opportunities to share best practice through publications or conferences.
- 4 Productivity** – Most projects achieve more efficient care pathways that can alleviate burden on healthcare services.
- 5 Workforce** – Supports development of staff in leadership and management skills.
- 6 Collaboration** – Allows staff to integrate with teams outside usual working areas and share good practice to improve health outcomes.

Suggested evidence

Outline what innovative sustainable practice the pharmacy has implemented.

PHARMACY STAFF**1.3.2 Aware of their roles in promoting and achieving sustainable healthcare and influencing local or national sustainability strategies.**

Information: Sustainability should be considered by local/regional Medicines Optimisation Committees and medicines formulary discussions. **England only:** Staff should be aware of their ICS Green Plan and/or Primary Care Green Plan on how to incorporate environmental sustainability into pharmacy specific values and practices.

Resources

- [Greener NHS Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service](#)
- [NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan](#)
- [NHS Scotland climate emergency and sustainability strategy: 2022-2026](#)
- [West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Green Plan](#)

Environmental benefits

Using evidence to support organisations to prioritise sustainability for the benefit of health and financial savings. Staff feedback and insights can help higher levels refine strategies to ensure feasibility to address the impacts of climate change on health.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Governance** – Staff efforts and contributions are essential to translate strategic visions into tangible outcomes.

Suggested evidence

Outline what involvement or how does the staff influence their local health board or national sustainability strategies.

1.3.3 Principles of sustainable healthcare have been embedded into existing pharmacy training programmes within the business.

Information: Integrate the principles of sustainable healthcare (i.e. disease prevention and health promotion; patient education and empowerment; efficient service delivery; use of treatment options and medical technologies with lower environmental impact where appropriate) into internal pharmacy training programs. e.g. counter assistant, dispenser, pharmacy technician, foundation trainee and postgraduate pharmacist undergoing formal accreditations.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sustainable physician • Sustainability in Pharmacy Education |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

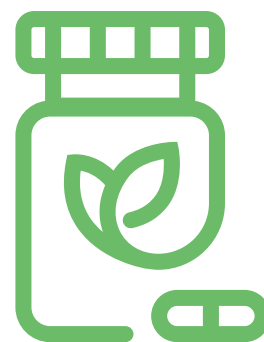
Environmental benefits	Giving teams the tools and resources they need to feel empowered to implement solutions and measure impact is key to supporting the health of their patients and save money through addressing their environmental impact.
-------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Workforce** – Supports training and development of staff to realise how sustainability is linked to existing job (reduce overprescribing and deprescribing).

Suggested evidence	<p>Outline how the existing pharmacy training program(s) have been revised to include the principles of sustainable healthcare.</p> <p>For large chain pharmacies, consult with dedicated educational lead(s).</p>
---------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Domain 2: Clinical Practice



Based on the Greener NHS [Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS report](#), medicines account for 25% of the NHS's carbon footprint in England (2% from anaesthetic gases, 3% from inhalers, 20% from all other medicines). Staff should aim to reduce emissions and pollution by reducing waste, ensuring that the right medicines are available for patients and enabling shared informed decision making.

LEVEL 1 (BRONZE):

PHARMACY STAFF

2.1.1 Instruct patients about the repeat dispensing system and its operation, including the importance of only requesting those items which are required.

Information: Appropriate clinical checks to ensure whether patients need repeat medication prevent over ordering or over supplying, and subsequently generation of medicines waste. Where a patient requests the supply of drugs or appliances ordered on a repeatable prescription (other than on the first occasion that the patient makes such a request), the pharmacy only provides the medicine if the supervising pharmacist is satisfied that:

- The patient is taking or using, and is likely to continue to take or use, the medicine appropriately,
- The patient is not suffering from any side effects of the treatment which indicates the need or desirability of reviewing the patient's treatment;
- The medication regimen has not altered in a way which indicates the need or desirability of reviewing the patient's treatment and;
- There have been no changes to the health of the patient to whom the prescription relates which indicate the need or desirability of reviewing the patient's treatment.

Patients should be encouraged to check their medicine bag(s) before leaving the pharmacy to prevent any unnecessary return of incorrect items which cannot be reused.

Resources

- [RPS Repeat Medicines Pharmacy guide](#)
- [CPPE – Repeat dispensing](#)
- [Repeat Prescribing Toolkit](#)

Environmental benefits

Reduce medicines waste and its associated ecological impacts in the environment from inappropriate disposal.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Improving health outcomes** – Ensuring patients are taking medicines appropriately.
- 2 Productivity** – Alleviate the burden on healthcare services when any medication issues are identified and dealt with at an early stage.
- 3 Costs** – Reduce overprescribing, medicines waste and dispensing costs for medicines not needed or required by the patient.
- 4 Governance** – Complies with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 [SCHEDULE 4 Part 2 Paragraph 10](#).

Suggested evidence

Case study of intervention(s) which resulted in changes to medication dispensation after consulting patients on their clinical need and preferences.

PHARMACY STAFF**2.1.2 Inhaler technique checks.**

Information: Staff should offer appropriate inhaler technique check to patients prescribed inhalers especially those who have chosen to move from a pressurised metered dose inhaler to a dry powder inhaler.

Resources

- [Inhaler Technique – OSCE Guide Geeky Medics](#)
- [How to use your inhaler | Asthma + Lung UK](#)
- [Inhaler technique for health professionals: getting it right – CPPE](#)

Environmental impacts

Poor inhaler techniques can result in poorly managed chronic respiratory conditions, which often require frequent medical treatments and healthcare visits. As well as promoting better respiratory health and improving patient outcomes, using inhalers correctly will mean patients will stay in better health and need fewer inhalers overall, which will have a positive environmental impact.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Health** – Improving inhaler techniques improves the management of respiratory conditions.
- 2 Workforce** – Supports training and development of staff to deliver counselling and inhaler checks.
- 3 Time, Productivity** – Potentially reduce unnecessary visits to healthcare settings while maintaining high quality care, freeing up appointments and reducing NHS patient waiting times. Reduce sickness-absence associated with managing long term respiratory conditions.
- 4 Cost** – Reduce overprescribing and NHS costs relating to need of inhalers to manage acute/chronic respiratory conditions (tackles overprescribing).
- 5 Satisfaction** – Better patient outcomes, more patient satisfaction without exacerbations of chronic illness.
- 6 Governance** – Complies with NHSE [PQS 2023/24](#).

Suggested evidence	Outline how staff support respiratory patients in correctly using their inhalers.
---------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

PHARMACY STAFF

2.1.3 Accept unwanted medicines from the public which will help reduce the environmental impacts from inappropriate disposal methods for unwanted medicines and devices.

Information: Staff should raise awareness among other healthcare staff and patients of the best way to dispose of unused, unwanted or expired medication. Medication waste including inhalers, topical products, eye, ear or nose drops, sprays, patches and injections should be discarded in the appropriate clinical waste bins. Any returned medicines or medical devices due to adverse effects or incidents should be reported via the usual [Yellow Card](#) site.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication Waste in West Yorkshire: Campaign Research
------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Environmental benefits	Reduce the presence of pharmaceuticals in the environment which can pose various ecological impacts including antimicrobials in wastewater that risks the development of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
-------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Governance** – Complies with environmental and waste management regulations. Promote reporting of any clinical patient safety incidences. Complies with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 [SCHEDULE 4 Part 2 Paragraph 13](#), [SCHEDULE 4 Part 2 Paragraph 14](#) and NHSE [PQS 2023/24](#).
- 2 Health** – Prevents potential redistribution, accidental ingestion, misuse, or abuse of medications.

Suggested evidence	Confirmation of action by all staff.
---------------------------	--------------------------------------

PHARMACY STAFF

2.1.4 Promote safe and environmentally friendly disposal of all unwanted, expired or empty inhaler devices.

Information: Pharmacy must be able to evidence that where possible and appropriate they have spoken (a verbal conversation rather than written communication) with patients, their carer or representatives, for whom they have dispensed an inhaler about the benefits of safe and environmentally friendly inhaler disposal. Staff can offer information about the environmental impact of different types of inhalers when asked.

Pharmacy can also implement ways to promote the return of inhalers e.g. reminder stickers when dispensing inhalers.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the climate change impact of inhalers: environmentally safe
------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Environmental benefits	Pressurised metered dose inhalers disposed inappropriately release greenhouse gases with global warming potential when the canisters are crushed in landfill.
Co-benefits: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Health – It allows for opportunistic interventions when patients return unopened inhalers, indicating non-compliance and therefore a potential opportunity for treatment review and improvement. 2 Cost – Patients returning unused medications can provide opportunity to identify and reduce oversupply. 3 Governance – Part of NHSE PQS Guidance 2023/24. 	
Suggested evidence	Confirmation of action by staff where possible.

PHARMACY STAFF

2.1.5 Reconcile medications utilising the Discharge Medicines Service (DMS).

Information: DMS has been established to ensure better communication of changes to a patient's medication when they leave hospital by referring patients to community pharmacy on discharge with information about medication changes made in hospital. It can reduce harm from medicines at transfers of care, improve patients' understanding of their medicines and how to take them following discharge, and reduce hospital readmissions.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHS DMS – CPPE
Environmental benefits	Improving patients' understanding of their medicines, how to take them, and any changes following discharge will improve patient outcomes and reduce hospital readmissions and adverse outcomes, which in turn will reduce the environmental impacts of healthcare.
Co-benefits: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Cost – Reduce overprescribing and cost dispensing medicines not required or where doses have been altered. 2 Time, Productivity, Satisfaction – Alleviate the burden on healthcare services to perform medicines reconciliation. Reduce time spent by patients, carers and pharmacy staff requesting the most up to date information post discharge. 3 Collaboration – Promotes workforce integration and collaboration between secondary and primary care settings. 4 Governance – In England, DMS became a new Essential service within the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework in 2021. 	
Suggested evidence	Confirmation of pharmacy compliance with DMS.

2.1.6 Optimise respiratory care to reduce carbon footprint related to inhalers and improve respiratory disease outcomes.

Information: Staff recognises SABA overuse via repeated prescribing (>3 SABAs per year) or emergency requests and refer patients back to their respiratory clinicians for review. Staff should offer NMS to patients presenting with a prescription for a new inhaler (i.e., for the first time or changed to a new inhaler device).

Linked to [PQS Guidance 2023/24](#) which aims to reduce morbidity and preventable deaths from asthma through targeted clinical surveillance and evidence-based interventions; optimise inhaler technique and outcomes in patients with asthma and/or COPD.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greener Practice High Quality and Low Carbon Asthma Care toolkit • Greener Practice Guide to reducing the carbon footprint of inhaler prescribing • NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint reports • MIMS Inhaler carbon emissions • NICE Asthma Patient Decision Aid • CPPE – Respiratory • Bulletin 295: Inhaler carbon footprint – PrescQIPP • Greenhouse gas emissions associated with suboptimal asthma care in the UK: the SABINA healthCARE-Based enviroNmental cost of treatment (CARBON) study
------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Environmental benefits	Optimising respiratory care will promote better respiratory health and improve patient outcomes, meaning patients will stay in better health and need fewer inhalers overall, which will have a positive environmental impact.
-------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Health** – Better patient satisfaction from improved health outcomes.
- 2 Time** – Potentially reduce unnecessary visits to healthcare settings while maintaining high quality care, freeing up appointments and reducing NHS patient waiting times.
- 3 Cost** – Reduce overprescribing and costs relating to need of medicines or healthcare contacts to manage acute/chronic conditions.
- 4 Productivity** – Reduce sickness-absence associated with managing long term conditions.
- 5 Governance** – Complies with NHSE [PQS 2023/24](#).

Suggested evidence	Case study of pharmacy intervention(s) which resulted in reducing excessive SABA ordering or switching to lower carbon inhalers.
---------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

LEVEL 2 (SILVER):

PHARMACY STAFF

2.2.1 Provide information where relevant to support patients to adopt a balanced and healthy diet, which prevents and treats chronic diseases.

Information: The [NHS Eatwell Guide](#) suggests most of the population are not eating at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day to achieve a healthy, balanced diet. Eating a balanced and healthy diet can help regulate blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure levels, reducing the risk of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and hypertension. Encouraging proper nutrition can reduce the incidence and severity of chronic diseases, lowering the burden on healthcare systems and complement medical treatments to better overall health outcomes and patient satisfaction.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition counselling tips for pharmacists
------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Environmental benefits	Supporting patients to adopt a healthy diet will improve health outcomes and support chronic disease prevention, which in turn will reduce the environmental impacts of healthcare.
-------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Productivity** – Alleviate the burden on healthcare services from risk of developing chronic illness due to poor diet.
- 2 Satisfaction** – Improve patient health outcomes.
- 3 Workforce** – Supports training and development of staff on providing nutritional advice and ability to link it to chronic diseases.
- 4 Cost, Time** – Reduce overall costs and resources in managing chronic illness.
- 5 Governance** – Complies with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 [SCHEDULE 4 PART 2 Paragraph 16](#) and [SCHEDULE 4 Part 2 Paragraph 17](#).

Suggested evidence	Outline how staff have adopted or are supporting patients in adopting a balanced and healthy diet. E.g. Catered events hosted by staff have taken this into consideration.
---------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

PHARMACY STAFF

2.2.2 Teach patients how to swallow solid oral drug formulations.

Information: Children with a normal swallow can be successfully taught to swallow solid oral drugs from the age of 4. Liquid medicines can be unpalatable, contain sugar and preservatives to improve their taste or texture and shelf life but these additives increase the risk of dental caries and erosion. Kidzmed is a programme developed for members of the multidisciplinary team to teach children and young people how to swallow pills, which can be extended to help adult patients.

Solid oral drugs formulations can sometimes be administered by dispersing or crushing tablets or by opening capsules. The use of medicines in this way may be outside the product licence and is thus "off-label". The use of licensed medicines is always the preferred option for most patients. Staff should also consult evidence-based resources (e.g. SPS website, NEWT guidelines) when considering off-label or unlicensed medication alternatives.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why learning how to swallow pills is good for patients, parents, and the planet • Kapsule Kids Case study |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Environmental benefits	Solid drug formulations have longer shelf lives (reducing medication waste), usually do not require refrigeration (larger carbon footprint associated with cold-chain medicines), easier to transport and are more readily stocked at pharmacies.
-------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Workforce** – Upskill staff on educating patients on swallowing solid drug formulations.
- 2 Cost** – For prescribers, less prone to errors when writing prescriptions for solid oral drugs compared to liquid and can prescribe larger quantities which saves money.
- 3 Time** – Reduce staff time to reconstitute and procure liquid medicines. Measuring out liquid medicines accurately also takes up patient's time for administration.

Suggested evidence	At least 50% members of staff has completed the KidzMed programme [15 minutes to complete].
---------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

LEVEL 3 (GOLD):

PHARMACY STAFF

2.3.1 Signpost patients to health and wellbeing coaches, social prescribers or link workers through their GP practices for a range of local, non-clinical services.

Information: Health and wellbeing coaches and social prescribers often focus on preventative care and lifestyle interventions to address underlying health issues and promote overall wellbeing.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Prescribing • Green social prescribing |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Environmental benefits	Reduces incidence of chronic diseases that require extensive medical and pharmaceutical interventions that contribute to healthcare carbon emissions.
Co-benefits: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Health – Improves patient health outcomes and reduce sickness-absence associated with managing long term conditions. 2 Time – Potentially reduce unnecessary visits to healthcare settings while maintaining high quality care, freeing up appointments and reducing NHS patient waiting times. 3 Collaboration – Promotes understanding of other professionals' roles and other non-medical treatments which can positively impact on patients' health. 4 Satisfaction – Reduce social isolation with community engagement. 5 Cost – Reduce overprescribing and NHS costs relating to need of pharmaceuticals to manage acute/chronic conditions. 6 Governance – Complies with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 SCHEDULE 4 PART 2 Paragraph 19 and Paragraph 20. 	
Suggested evidence	All staff are aware of social prescribing and knows how to signpost to a link worker where applicable.

PHARMACY STAFF	
2.3.2 Regularly review patient's need for multi-compartment compliance aids (MCAs) and explore other reasonable adjustments to improve medication compliance.	
Information: MCAs also known as pill organisers, pill containers, dosette boxes, nomad trays, pill cases or pillboxes. The need for compliance aids should be reviewed regularly by staff, taking into account professional guidance and whether the use of MCAs is the appropriate reasonable adjustment for the patient. The use of medication reminder charts or digital reminders for drug administration at home could be promoted to improve adherence. If necessary, patients should be encouraged to utilise refillable MCAs to minimise plastic use and potential wastage if the patient's medicine regimen changes.	
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPS guide on MCAs • Multi-compartment compliance aids (MCAs) in adult social care - Care Quality Commission • Medicines adherence: involving patients in decisions about prescribed medicines and supporting adherence - NICE
Environmental benefits	Medicines dispensed in MCAs can be difficult to identify when clinicians withheld or stop certain medications, leading to unintended waste. Weekly single-use plastic MCAs adds to existing pollution issues globally.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce overprescribing and NHS costs.
- 2 Time** – Reduce staff time spent dispensing and checking MCAs.
- 3 Satisfaction** – Different tablets in MCAs are often not easily identifiable. If medication regimens require changes to the MCA, the MCA must be returned to the pharmacy for adjustments before administration, which can result in unintended waste. This can be particularly challenging outside of regular pharmacy opening hours.

Suggested evidence

Outline pharmacy's efforts or policy in reviewing and reducing MCA use. E.g. use of biodegradable packaging for unit dose dispensing by third party organisation.

PHARMACY STAFF**2.3.3 Conduct any audits/reaudits that improve pharmacy practice and provide carbon savings.**

Information: Several other actions outlined in this guide offer opportunities for accomplishing this action. Some other suggestions of audits/reaudits are listed below:

- a. Conduct an audit on medicines waste which not only alleviate issues with drug shortages and better stock management, but they also highlight any patient safety risks e.g. expired medicines are inadvertently dispensed or reused.
- b. Conduct an audit on medicines waste returned by patients, carers, residential care homes or nursing care homes and the reasons for them.

Resources

- [Waste medicines audit toolkit - RPS](#)

Environmental benefits

Audit dependent, almost always related to environmental impacts of medicines and transportation.

Co-benefits: (project dependent)

- 1 Research & Innovation** – Can drive innovative practice, provides opportunities for publication in journals, poster competitions or abstract for conferences.
- 2 Cost, Time** – Reduce overall NHS costs and time spent performing unnecessary dispensing or waste disposal.

Suggested evidence

Briefly outline the main findings of the audit and recommendations or change implemented and sustained as a result.

2.3.4 Signpost, set up or enrol in available schemes that support circular economy.

Information: Successful implementation of these schemes is highly dependent on broader recognition of their accessibility and should therefore be actively promoted locally.

Resources

- [Inhaler return and recycling – South East London ICS](#)
- [East Kent inhaler recycling: NHS Kent and Medway](#)
- [Leicester Take AIR Pilot](#)
- [Insulin pen recycling – The Pharmaceutical Journal](#)

Environmental benefits

Reduce risks of environmental pollution from medicines or medical devices, reduces reliance on virgin materials and preserves natural resources for future generations.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Productivity** – Creates new business opportunities, stimulates innovation, and promotes job creation in sectors such as recycling, repair, and sustainable manufacturing.
- 2 Reputation** – Support business commitments to sustainable and ethical practices.

Suggested evidence

Outline what schemes has the pharmacy promoted, been involved in, or regularly signpost to. E.g. Reusable face masks, medication recycling schemes, blister pack recycling

Domain 3: Operations and strategy



Pharmacies should incorporate environmental sustainability into pharmacy staff's workplan, strategic initiatives, operating plans, and budgets to reflect its commitment to net zero aligned to national sustainability strategies. It supports the UK's transition to a greener economy by creating green jobs and upskilling staff in quality improvement work.

LEVEL 1 (BRONZE):

PHARMACY STAFF	
3.1.1 Nominated a sustainability lead(s) and recognises green champion(s).	
<p>Information: Recognition of leadership in this area and allow staff time to undertake formal/informal training. E.g. allowed time at work to perform activities relating to sustainability. They can be responsible for completing the greener pharmacy toolkit and track their pharmacy's progress towards Level 3 (Gold) sustainability accreditation. They can be the person that feeds into wider sustainability teams locally including the health boards to steer any strategies relating to sustainable pharmacy practices and medicines use.</p>	
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Champion's Hub - NHS Find Your Place • Green Champions in Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS
Environmental benefits	Resource (financial and time) is often cited as the main barrier for staff taking sustainable actions – formally acknowledging staff in this role may result in lower carbon initiatives.
<p>Co-benefits:</p> <p>1 Workforce – Staff can demonstrate leadership by utilising specialised knowledge and skills related to their roles and functions within their organisation.</p>	
Suggested evidence	State the name of the sustainability lead(s) or champion(s) and how they are recognised in the workplace.

3.1.2 There is a business continuity plan in place including climate change impacts.

Information: Pharmacies identified at risk should put in place climate change adaptation plans to ensure their service, patients and staff are protected from unnecessary harm due to increase adverse weather events (e.g. flooding, power cut due to storms, wildfires, ICT failure due to heatwaves). The business should be adequately insured against extreme weather events and signed up to [Weather-Health Alerts](#) in the UK.

Community Pharmacy England advises it is a Terms of Service requirement for all pharmacies to have [a business continuity plan](#) and from 31st July 2023, this must include arrangements for any temporary suspension of service (closure) due to illness or other reason beyond the pharmacy's control.

Resources

- [Managing temperature excursions – SPS – Specialist Pharmacy Service](#)
- [The London Climate Resilience Review – July 2024](#)

Environmental benefits

Climate adaptation plans aim to build resilience in communities, economies, and ecosystems to reduce to withstand and recover from climate-related disruptions.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Governance** – Enhances governance frameworks to facilitate informed decision-making and adaptive management. Ensure pharmacy service delivery and patients' health are not compromised.
- 2 Workforce** – Considers staff wellbeing at work and promotes ability to risk manage.
- 3 Productivity** – Forward planning can alleviate the burden on healthcare services.
- 4 Health inequalities** – Vulnerable and marginalised groups are often most impacted by business disruptions and impacts of climate change. Those living in poverty have limited resources to adapt and access essential services like healthcare in climate-related events such as floods or storms. Appropriate risk management and investments will ensure equity to reduce any inequalities.

Suggested evidence

Outline the section of the business continuity plan related to climate change.

England: It is worth checking with local ICB sustainability leads that this has been covered in respective green plans and [Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response \(EPRR\)](#).

LEVEL 2 (SILVER):

PHARMACY STAFF		HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL	
3.2.1 Displayed messaging visible to patients and wider staff members to raise awareness of how the pharmacy is involved in NHS or other initiatives to reduce waste and improve health.			
Information:			
<div>a. Display achievements of greener pharmacy accreditation in the pharmacy.</div> <div>b. Digital display screens in pharmacy setting can be utilised to communicate any relevant messaging to both staff and public including information on the health impacts of climate change I.e. extreme heat and air pollution.</div>			
Resources		<div><div>• Medicines waste – NHS Dorset</div><div>• Campaigns – North East and North Cumbria ICB</div></div>	
Environmental benefits		Improves awareness of commitments and actions being taken to reduce environmental impact.	
Co-benefits:			
<div>1 Research & Innovation – Share good practice to improve health outcomes. The campaign can form part of a sustainable quality improvement project.</div>			
Suggested evidence		Upload photos of how environmental sustainability messaging by the pharmacy are made visible to the public.	

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

3.2.2 Environmental sustainability is factored into the formation of new policies or the revision of existing ones within pharmacy aligned to organisation, local health board/ICB and national sustainability strategies where appropriate.

Information: Policies establish consistent standards and principles for environmental sustainability across different levels of governance or within organisations. Some [community pharmacies](#) are already signatories to the British Retail Consortium's Retail Climate Action Plan, part of the retail industry's pledge to achieve net zero emissions by 2040.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RPS Sustainability Policies• FIP Statement of policy – Environmental sustainability within pharmacy
Environmental benefits	Creates a framework for accountability and provides guidance and direction on environmental sustainability goals, strategies, and expectations.
Suggested evidence	Outline the policies the pharmacy has revised or implemented to include environmental sustainability.

LEVEL 3 (GOLD):

PHARMACY STAFF

3.3.1 Showcase commitment to environmental sustainability during the hiring process.

Information: Showcase existing sustainability culture, initiatives, and achievements during the hiring process, such as including in job advertisements. According to a Greener NHS YouGov survey 2023, 6 in 10 staff state that they are more likely to stay in an organisation or profession that is taking decisive climate action, rising to 7 in 10 in younger staff. This demonstrates that climate action aligns with workforce values and has the potential to support the wider recruitment and retention agenda.

Resources

- [Lead Pharmacy Technician – Sustainability](#)
- [Frome Medical Practice – Health care assistant](#)

Environmental benefits

Promotes awareness of potential candidates of the organisation's commitment to net zero leading to increased sustainability activity within the workplace.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Reputation** – Improve organisation's image and reputation.
- 2 Workforce, Satisfaction** – Attracts staff who are environmentally conscious and equally, make staff feel proud to be a part of an eco-conscious organisation.

Suggested evidence

Upload template job description or advert which references environmental sustainability or outline how this has been incorporated in interviews.

Domain 4:

Resource Use



ENERGY AND WATER

Energy production and consumption are the largest sources of global greenhouse gas emissions. Combustion of fossil fuels also emits air pollutants exacerbating the issues of global air pollution which is harmful to health. Resources to create this domain include [RCGP Net Zero Hub](#), [TUC Go Green at Work](#), and [UK Business Climate Hub](#).

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN

Many healthcare suppliers have recognised their corporate social responsibility to address climate change and environmental issues arising from the goods and services provided. With a global focus on sustainability, suppliers that do not have net zero commitments or carbon reduction plans may face reputational risks and market disadvantages. For England, please see [Greener NHS Net Zero supplier roadmap](#) to ensure that pharmacy contribute to the NHS Net Zero and Social Value goals and encourage suppliers to submit an [Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment](#). Pharmacy in other nations should equally check the sustainability credentials of their suppliers.

WASTE AND RECYCLING

To address the environmental issues associated with healthcare waste, it is crucial to implement proper waste segregation, collection, treatment, and disposal practices in healthcare facilities. Appropriate waste segregation has been a legal requirement since 2005 and, therefore, enforceable by the Environment Agency. For further information on management and disposal of healthcare waste, please see [HTM 07-01](#) and [NHS clinical waste strategy](#).

LEVEL 1 (BRONZE):

PHARMACY STAFF

4.1.1 Aware how to report leaks or water waste promptly.

Information: Regularly inspect and repair leaks in plumbing systems, taps and toilets in pharmacy setting. Small leaks can waste significant amounts of water over time.

Environmental benefits

Purifying, storing, heating, and supplying of water followed by sewage processing is energy-intensive.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce business running costs. Prompt reporting and repair minimises the risk of property damage, reducing repair costs and insurance claims.

Suggested evidence

Outline how staff report leaks or water waste and how it has been dealt with in the past. Staff working in shared buildings should also understand the procedure for reporting water leaks.

PHARMACY STAFF

4.1.2 Keep radiators free from obstruction and turn off air conditioning if window(s) or door(s) are open.

Information: Obstructed radiators reduce heat distribution and lead to uneven heating in a room. The heating system may need to run longer or at a higher temperature to maintain the desired room temperature as a result using more energy. If the room is overheated, turn down the thermostat instead of opening the doors or windows to cool the room down. Hot outdoor air can flow into the cooled indoor spaces causing the air conditioner to use more energy to maintain the desired temperature. If the room is overcooled, turn up the thermostat instead of opening the doors or windows to heat the room up.

Environmental benefits

Reduce energy consumption. Well maintained devices operate more efficiently leading to lower energy consumption and extension of the lifespan negating the need for product replacement.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce business running costs.

Suggested evidence

- Confirmation that staff regularly action this.
- Action might not be applicable to some community pharmacies.

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.1.3 Conduct annual maintenance of boilers and electrical items.

Information: Regularly serviced boilers and electrical items prolonged the lifespan of the product whilst ensuring they operate efficiently.

Environmental benefits

Well maintained boilers and electrical equipment operate more efficiently leading to lower energy consumption and extension of the lifespan negating the need for product replacement.

Co-benefits:

1 Governance – Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and safety standards. Allows for the detection and repair of potential hazards such as leaks, faulty wiring, or malfunctioning components that could lead to accidents or fires. Reduces the risk of unexpected breakdowns or failures, minimising downtime, and disruptions to operations.

2 Cost – Delay costs of replacement if needed.

Suggested evidence

- Confirm date of when boilers and electrical items were last serviced.
- Action might not be applicable to some community pharmacies.

PHARMACY STAFF

4.1.4 Reduce paper usage where possible and use recycled paper where practicable.

Information: Avoid unnecessary printing and set printer to print double-sided where possible. Recycled paper trademarked Forest Stewardship Council ([FSC](#)) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification ([PEFC](#)) certifications ensure that the paper comes from forests managed in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner. Some paper in pharmacy are provided by the NHS such as tokens, or for use with certain patient medication record (PMR) systems and may not be recycled. Any paper waste should be placed appropriately in paper recycling or confidential waste bins.

Environmental benefits

Reduce consumption of resources.

Co-benefits:

1 Cost – Reduce business running costs.

Suggested evidence

Confirmation of action by all staff.

4.1.5 Conduct a risk assessment of clinical activity and pharmacy standard operating procedures to ensure staff are aware of when PPE should be used.

Information: According to the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 [SCHEDULE 4 Part 2 Paragraph 15](#), circumstances where appropriate PPE including gloves, overalls and materials are required to deal with spillages or handling waste drugs to minimise risks. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated plastic pollution through [high use of PPE](#) in the form of single use items such as surgical masks, gloves, non-reusable gowns, and aprons.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why you don't always need gloves when giving vaccines
------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Environmental benefits	Reduce consumption of resources and wider pollution.
-------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce procurement and disposal of PPE.
- 2 Productivity** – Reduce time spent for staff procuring, wearing and disposing.

Suggested evidence	Confirm staff are informed, and pharmacy's SOP has been revised to discourage inappropriate PPE use.
---------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

LEVEL 2 (SILVER):

PHARMACY STAFF

4.2.1 Apply cooling, heating, and electrical devices to match operating hours where applicable.

Information: Where applicable, set all electronic devices to automatic standby, eco-friendly or low-power modes, and to power down after several minutes of inactivity. Considerations should be made for medicine storage areas that must adhere to the manufacturer's recommended room storage conditions. It is understandable that some cooling, heating and electrical appliances or devices such as security systems or lighting, fridges and other cooling systems in pharmacies have to be left on overnight.

Environmental benefits

Reduce energy consumption. Well maintained devices operate more efficiently leading to lower energy consumption and extension of the lifespan negating the need for product replacement.

Co-benefits:

1 Cost – Reduce business running costs.

Suggested evidence

Confirmation staff perform end of day checks to ensure cooling, heating or electrical devices in pharmacy setting are switched off where appropriate. E.g., lights, monitors, desktops, laptops, printers, scanners, photocopiers, automated dispensing machines, prescription endorsement machine.

PHARMACY STAFF

4.2.2 Optimise medical fridge or freezer spaces without overloading them and reduce the number of unnecessary fridges or freezers running in the pharmacy.

Information: When refrigerators and freezers are overloaded, air circulation within the appliance can be restricted reducing its cooling efficiency. Staff should avoid overstocking of cold chain medicines.

Resources

- [SPS guidance](#) on using, monitoring, maintaining fridges and freezers.

Environmental benefits

Overloaded appliances need to work harder to maintain optimum temperatures leading to increased energy consumption. Overloading can strain the compressor and other components of the appliance, potentially shortening its lifespan needing frequent repairs and replacements contributing to potential medicines waste.

Co-benefits:

1 Cost – Cost savings from power generation, delay costs of replacement if needed.

2 Productivity – Easier for staff to locate cold chain items for dispensing.

Suggested evidence

Confirm date when fridge and/or freezer was optimised.

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.2.3 Switch to renewable electricity sources in pharmacy setting, where possible.

Information: The continued reliance of fossil fuels affects global health through increased climate change impacts. The switch to renewable electricity can be considered at the next relevant contract break to avoid unnecessary costs.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2022 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: health at the mercy of fossil fuels – The Lancet • Carbon net zero funding and grants – CCS (crowncommercial.gov.uk) |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Environmental benefits	Reduce reliance on fossil fuels use which is the main driver of man-made climate change.
-------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Businesses are exempt from the Climate Change Levy for utilising renewable sources. Diversifying energy sources and reducing reliance on fossil fuels improves energy security by reducing pharmacy business vulnerability to price fluctuations.
- 2 Health inequalities** – The reduction of fossil fuel burning improves air quality and, in turn, reduces incidences of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Suggested evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm pharmacy has actioned this where possible. • Community pharmacies, as an integral part of the building, should outline the steps taken to advocate for change. |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.2.4 Switch all lighting in pharmacy setting to light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs.

Information: LED bulbs use less energy, last much longer and reduce maintenance costs compared with regular bulbs. It is understandable that a switch to LED bulbs may not be possible within an automatic dispensing system or as part of an inbuilt system so these can be excluded.

Environmental benefits	Less energy consumption, increased product lifespan reducing the need for replacements.
-------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Upgrading from conventional lighting to LED bulbs could deliver cost savings of up to 80% for a business.

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Suggested evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm pharmacy has actioned this. • Community pharmacies, as an integral part of the building, should outline the steps taken to advocate for change. |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.2.5 Ensure all windows in pharmacy setting are inspected and maintained, and doors are draught proofed to reduce heat loss. Maintain and optimise heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems in pharmacy setting (e.g. using programmable thermostats) to regulate the temperature based on occupancy.

Information: Where applicable, all doors and windows should be able to open and close properly. Closing curtains and blinds overnight can help insulate the pharmacy setting from unwanted heat gains or losses. Install double-glazed or triple-glazed windows to reduce heat escaping, external noise, and condensation buildup inside windows.

Turning down the thermostat by just 1°C can save 10% on heating costs and carbon footprint, but pharmacy setting must consider the optimum medicines storage conditions. The Chartered Institution of Building of Services Engineers recommends the temperature settings of 20°C for offices.

Environmental benefits	Reduce energy consumption.
-------------------------------	----------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce business running cost.
- 2 Workforce, Productivity, Satisfaction** – Create a favourable working environment that could impact on staff health, productivity, job satisfaction, and support people who might be sensitive to temperature changes (e.g. hypothyroidism, menopause). More comfortable environment for patients and customers.

Suggested evidence	Outline measures taken to optimise temperatures in pharmacy to ensure favourable working environment. Community pharmacies as an integral part of the lease building should outline the steps taken to advocate for change.
---------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.2.6 Reduce water consumption.

Information: Lower water consumption reduces the volume of wastewater generated, which in turn decreases the burden on wastewater treatment facilities. Installing a flow restrictor can save water dependent on the specific flow restrictor and staff's habits of water usage.

Environmental benefits	Conserve energy associated with water extraction, treatment, and distribution.
-------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce business running cost.

Suggested evidence	Outline measures that have been taken at the pharmacy to reduce water consumption. Action can be linked to raising awareness of reporting water leaks or water conservation. If the pharmacy already has low water usage in comparison to other pharmacies of similar sizes, outline the measures taken to achieve this.
---------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.2.7 Ensure effective segregation of all waste.

Information: Staff should avoid contaminating recycling bins as it may render the whole bin unrecyclable or reduce the quality of recycled materials. Use clear visual signage with images that reflect the waste streams to help staff segregate waste for disposal – landfill, clinical waste, sharps, cytotoxic, recycling, confidential waste, or compost.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace recycling – Welsh Government • Major crackdown on NHS waste – gov.uk |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Environmental benefits	Can lead to higher recycling rates and decreases carbon emissions associated with landfilling and incineration.
-------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Potential cost savings from reduce waste management.
- 2 Workforce** – Encourage employees to recycle more efficiently. Reduces risk of exposure to harmful substances and promotes workplace safety.
- 3 Governance** – Ensure compliance with waste disposal regulations and environmental standards.

Suggested evidence	Confirmation of action by pharmacy.
---------------------------	-------------------------------------

PHARMACY STAFF

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.2.8 Eliminate avoidable single-use items.

Information: Ensure pharmacy teams follow the waste hierarchy – eliminate, reduce, reuse, recycle or recover and dispose. Check with patients or carers whether they have oral syringes, measuring spoons or cups at home to accurately measure the correct dosage of liquid medications instead of dispensing the single use plastics automatically.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling pharmacy's reliance on single-use plastic • Single Use Plastic Product Bill (Wales) • Major crackdown on NHS waste |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Environmental benefits	Reduce use of products which all have a life cycle from production to use and disposal, which is associated with greenhouse gas emissions.
-------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits: (Dependent on items)

- 1 Cost** – Use electronics with rechargeable batteries which will save the cost of replacing batteries long-term whilst also reducing e-waste.

Suggested evidence	Outline how pharmacy has reduced avoidable single use items. E.g., cups, plates, cutlery, bottled drinks, bags, or envelopes with plastic windows.
---------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

PHARMACY STAFF		HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL	
4.2.9 Recycle or refill printer cartridges.			
Information: Manufacturing new printer cartridges involves processes that release VOCs into the air and water. Refilling cartridges eliminates the need for packaging materials associated with new cartridges.			
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recycle4Charity• How to recycle printers and printer cartridges - What to do with old printers• Printer cartridge recycling for you. The Recycling Factory		
Environmental benefits	Recycling reduces the amount of e-waste and its associated environmental impact.		
Co-benefits:			
1 Cost – Refilling printer cartridges save cost buying new ones.			
Suggested evidence	Confirmation of action by pharmacy.		

LEVEL 3 (GOLD):

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL	
4.3.1 Install motion sensor or timer-controlled lights in low-use areas.	
Information: Low use areas E.g., toilets, changing rooms, offices, education rooms.	
Environmental benefits	Reduce energy consumption. Prolong the lifespan of light fixtures and bulbs and reduces need for frequent replacements or maintenance.
Co-benefits:	
1 Cost – Reduce business running costs.	
2 Workforce – Enhance workplace safety and security by automatically illuminating areas when motion is detected.	
Suggested evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm pharmacy has actioned this. • Community pharmacies, as an integral part of the building, should outline the steps taken to advocate for installation.

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.3.2 Carry out an audit of energy usage.

Information: Benchmarking energy usage and setting targets to reduce the carbon footprint overtime helps identify resource and cost saving opportunities for pharmacy settings. It also allows comparison with other pharmacy settings of similar sizes for best practice recommendations. Where possible, install a smart meter for better monitoring of energy usage.

Environmental benefits	Reduce energy consumption.
-------------------------------	----------------------------

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Energy GB
------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce business running costs.
- 2 Workforce** – Raise awareness about energy conservation and fosters a culture of responsible environmental stewardship.

Suggested evidence	<p>Calculate the carbon footprint of annual energy usage using the greener pharmacy online toolkit. Set a target reduction of energy use.</p> <p>Community pharmacies, as an integral part of the building, should consult head office for this action.</p>
---------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.3.3 The pharmacy building has onsite energy generation.

Information: Look out for government, local council or energy company schemes that offer loans, grants, or subsidised energy-saving measures to help businesses reduce their environmental impact.

E.g. JDS Evans Pharmacy in Newport, South Wales installed solar panels many years ago which has reduced 60% of his energy bill.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change: What can community pharmacy do to become greener? Chemist+Druggist • Funding For Businesses, Local Community Projects & Charities
------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Environmental benefits	Reduce reliance on fossil fuels which is the main driver of climate change.
-------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Businesses who installed their own renewable electricity generators or low-carbon heating system on average, made their costs back in one to ten years.
- 2 Health** – Reduces harmful emissions from burning fossil fuels that can impact on health.
- 3 Research and Innovation** – Drives innovation in renewable energy technologies, energy storage systems, and grid integration solutions which can lead to improved efficiency, performance, and affordability of renewable energy systems.

Suggested evidence

- Confirmation of onsite energy generation.
- Community pharmacies, as an integral part of the building, should outline the steps taken to advocate for installation.

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL**4.3.4 Switch gas boilers to heat pumps, electric (and infrared) heaters, solar thermals, or district heating systems, if practicable.**

Information: Boiler replacement through the [Boiler Upgrade Scheme](#) should be explored in England and Wales where a grant can be secured to cover part of the cost of replacing fossil fuel heating systems with a heat pump or biomass boiler. [Grant funding](#) for energy efficiency improvements in Scotland is also available.

Environmental benefits

Reduced carbon emissions compared to gas boilers, and lower energy consumption due to more efficient technologies. Reduce noise pollution.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce business running cost.
- 2 Workforce, Health inequalities** – Reduce health risks associated with indoor pollutants produced by gas boilers, eliminate risks associated with gas leaks or carbon monoxide poisoning.
- 3 Research and innovation** – Drives innovation in renewable energy technologies and heating solutions which can lead to further improvements in efficiency and performance.

Suggested evidence

- Confirm pharmacy no longer use gas boilers..
- Community pharmacies, as an integral part of the building, should outline the steps taken to advocate for installation.

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

4.3.5 Include sustainability criteria in their choice of suppliers and purchasing decisions or explore all options to procure from socially and environmentally responsible vendors.

Information: Pharmacy shop fronts could reduce the sale of single-use items or environmentally damaging products. Pharmacies should consider selling items with biodegradable and recyclable packaging, refillable and reusable items, and certified sustainable care products. Priority to purchasing energy-efficient products, e.g. electronics, light bulbs, refrigerators, which have higher energy efficiency ratings. Pharmacy staff should also consider using refillable eco-friendly cleaning products that are VOCs free to reduce indoor air pollution and health risks.

Environmental benefits

Reduce consumption of products which all have a life cycle from production to use and disposal, which is associated with greenhouse gas emissions.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Research and Innovation** – Sustainable suppliers often prioritise innovation in sustainable technologies and practices. Partnering with these suppliers encourages knowledge sharing, collaboration, and the adoption of innovative solutions that benefit both the organisation and the environment.

Suggested evidence

Outline how pharmacy has included sustainability criteria in choice of suppliers and purchasing decisions.

PHARMACY STAFF		HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL	
4.3.6 Conduct a waste audit to quantify the amount and types of waste from pharmacy setting Alternatively, pharmacies have completed the pre-acceptance waste audit every five years.			
Information: This is particularly important for smaller pharmacy settings with inadequate waste storage spaces to minimise unnecessary waste generation.			
Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The pre-acceptance healthcare waste self-audit tool is produced by Community Pharmacy England, with the support of the Environment Agency and The Co-operative Pharmacy. It sets out the pre-acceptance requirements for waste disposal related to pharmacy setting’s provision of pharmaceutical services.	
Environmental benefits		Help identify materials that can be diverted from landfill and recycled.	
Co-benefits: 1 Cost – Potentially reduce waste-related costs. 2 Workforce, Reputation – Identify potential work hazards from inappropriate clinical waste disposals. 3 Governance – Waste audits ensure compliance with waste regulations.			
Suggested evidence		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Outline findings from waste audits and recommendations implemented by pharmacy ORConfirmation by pharmacy of pre-acceptance waste audit has been completed.	

Domain 5: Information and Communications Technology



10 – 15% of emissions across the healthcare sector coming from technology use. Technological advancement also leads to generation of e-waste which can lead to environmental contamination and health risks. See [Technology Code of Practice](#) on how to [make technology sustainable](#) and [Greening government: ICT and digital services strategy 2020 to 2025](#).

LEVEL 1 (BRONZE):

PHARMACY STAFF	
5.1.1 Keep equipment free from obstructions and clean filters and fans to prevent overheating and possible failure, especially during heatwaves.	
Information: Many ICT devices such as computers, servers and networking equipment generate heat during operation. Proper airflow is essential to dissipate this heat and prevent overheating. Obstructed equipment can impede airflow, leading to higher operating temperatures and a greater risk of hardware failures. It can reduce the lifespan and reliability of ICT equipment leading to unexpected system crashes and downtime.	
Environmental benefits	Reduce computer's internal components to work harder to maintain optimal temperatures resulting in lower energy consumption.
Co-benefits: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cost – Reduce risk of breakdowns and failures thus delay business cost to replace equipment. Productivity – Improve work efficiency. Workforce – Reduce indoor pollution. 	
Suggested evidence	Confirm action by all staff.

LEVEL 2 (SILVER):

PHARMACY STAFF

5.2.1 Optimise digital record storage by deleting unnecessary computer files, including those stored in the cloud.

Information: Pharmacy staff should recognise the retention requirements recommended in pharmacy practice for compliance with legal requirements in the NHS Terms of Service.

Set files to auto-delete at the end of retention period that aligns with [NHS England's Records Management Code of Practice](#).

Resources

- [Retaining and storing pharmacy records in England – SPS](#)

Environmental benefits

The storage and maintenance of digital data including online files and documents rely on data centres that require a substantial amount of electricity to power servers and cooling systems. Reducing the volume of unnecessary data can help lower energy consumption in data centres, decreasing the carbon footprint associated with data storage. Cloud migration can also greatly reduce carbon footprint and incorporate search engines that support environmental sustainability initiatives, such as tree planting programs with each search.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Productivity, Satisfaction** – Streamlines data storage and reduces data replication leading to improved performance and responsiveness of devices and cloud storage. May reduce patient waiting times at the pharmacy.
- 2 Governance** – Reduces the risk of unauthorised access to sensitive information. Promotes data security and privacy.

Suggested evidence

Confirm action by relevant staff.

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

5.2.2 Utilises digital apps or software to generate and maintain pharmacy staff rotas, eliminating the need for paper copies.

Information: Unexpected events frequently necessitate multiple revisions to the staff rota in order to maintain uninterrupted service provision. This often leads to the printing of numerous paper rotas in files or on notice boards.

Environmental benefits

Reduce resource consumption.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce costs procuring paper.
- 2 Productivity** – Implementing an electronic roster accessible to all staff would enhance communication and flexibility in staff management. Reduce misunderstandings or errors that can arise from outdated paper rotas.
- 3 Governance** – Easy identification of staff covering various sites when audited which can help with internal incidents analysis.

Suggested evidence

Confirm action by pharmacy.

LEVEL 3 (GOLD):

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

5.3.1 Deploy circular design practices and invest in ICT infrastructure.

Information: In the context of digital devices, circularity aims at achieving the best use of devices by maximising their lifetime. When the ICT infrastructure in pharmacy setting approaches the end of its operational lifespan, upgrade any outdated hardware, software, and network servers. Ensuring that devices are put in sleep mode when they are not in use can reduce battery consumption and avoid premature obsolescence.

Resources

- [Digital Net Zero – FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)

Environmental benefits

Most carbon emissions associated with a device is in its manufacture e.g. for a laptop this is between 75 – 85% of its overall carbon footprint, with transportation of the device representing a further 6 – 12%. Extending the lifetime of devices while they are in use in the pharmacy setting can lower ICT carbon footprint. Investing in all-in-one equipment enables the replacement of multiple outdated devices, thereby reducing energy consumption (e.g. multifunction printers can replace scanners, photocopiers, and fax machines).

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Purchasing remanufactured or refurbished devices can reduce business spend on technology.
- 2 Productivity** – Upgrading hardware and software can minimise staff time dealing with inefficient devices and enhance overall pharmacy productivity.
- 3 Time, Satisfaction** – May reduce patient time spent waiting for medications or receiving service from pharmacy.

Suggested evidence

Outline how pharmacy achieved this action.

5.3.2 Aim to meet the NHS's ambition to eliminate paper at the point of care and support its digital evolution.

Information: Switch to digital records where possible to minimise paper audit trails. E.g., private prescription records, controlled drug registers, e-prescribing, e-commerce for purchasing invoices and statements. As technology continues to evolve rapidly, the NHS aim to equip the health and social care workforce with the skills to confidently, effectively, and enthusiastically use digital tools in the workplace.

Staff should encourage patients to order their repeat medicines through the NHS App or other digital repeat prescription ordering systems. Where appropriate and desired patients who are not digitally literate should be offered assistance from pharmacy staff to effectively use technology. Patients who are digital literate should be given the option to scan QR codes or provided website links to access necessary information online. Text messaging or app services can be utilised to inform patients when their prescriptions are ready to collect with the opening hours to reduce unnecessary journeys to the pharmacy.

Resources

- Community Pharmacy England [Going paperless \(IT\)](#).
- Business Case Carbon Impact Tooling V3.2 is available on [Digital Net Zero](#) Future NHS platform to compare the carbon impact of paper vs whole digital system.
- [Improving the digital literacy of the workforce | Digital Transformation \(hee.nhs.uk\)](#)
- E.g. A [community pharmacy in Sheffield](#) has succeeded in adopting a paperless dispensing system which saves printing 16,000 paper prescriptions monthly. Medicines optimisation team at [Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley](#) has implemented an app-based prescription ordering direct scheme across some GP surgeries and identified cost saving of £650,000 in the first year which could be translated to carbon savings.

Environmental benefits

Reduce paper use and unnecessary carbon footprint.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Potential cost savings in long term.
- 2 Satisfaction** – Keeps patients informed when their prescriptions are ready for collection or if they have been ordered and signed off by prescribers.
- 3 Workforce** – Minimising effort to file paper copies and retrieve for audit trails. Reduce unnecessary miscommunications and travel when ordering prescriptions between GP surgery and the patient.

Suggested evidence

Case study outlining how pharmacy achieved this action.

5.3.3 Utilise digital technologies, (e.g. automated dispensing machines) to track and manage drug inventory levels, ensure optimal stock rotation and reduce the likelihood of medicine waste.

Information: Automated dispensing machines can optimise inventory management by tracking stock levels in real time to prevent overstocking and out of stock incidences. It can also easily highlight stocks nearing expiry dates without the need of manual checks on traditional shelves.

Environmental benefits

Reduce the likelihood of medicine waste and carbon footprint associated with its disposal.

Co-benefits: (Technology dependent)

- 1 Productivity, Satisfaction** – Improved work efficiency dispensing medications and redirect staff time for service provision to improve patient access.
- 2 Workforce, Time** – Using automated dispensing machine can minimise dispensing errors, optimise space within pharmacy, reduce patient wait times.
- 3 Research & Innovation** – Drives innovative practice.

Suggested evidence

Outline how pharmacy currently tracks and manages drug inventory levels to reduce likelihood of medicine waste.

Domain 6: Travel



Road travel from patients, visitors, staff and NHS suppliers account for 14% of the healthcare system's total emissions in England. Choosing active travel also reduces air pollution which disproportionately affects those with pre-existing health conditions, older people and children. The NHSE [Net Zero travel and transport strategy](#) outlines various approaches and methods to decarbonise healthcare related travels.

LEVEL 1 (BRONZE):

PHARMACY STAFF	
6.1.1 Promote active travel.	
<p>Information: Staff could provide information to patients about the health benefits of active travel on physical and mental health. Staff should explore their eligibility for discounted travel passes for public transport and car sharing options with colleagues. Staff can explore the possibility of switching to greener vehicles via the salary sacrifice vehicle purchase scheme if available. Encourage staff to walk, cycle, park and ride or take public transport to the pharmacy setting where possible.</p> <p>Consider conducting a travel audit whereby the results can be utilised in future policy and decision-making processes with local councils or health boards to improve public infrastructure to promote greener travel.</p>	
Environmental benefits	Reduce air pollution and carbon emissions.
<p>Co-benefits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Workforce, Satisfaction – Active travel improve overall health and wellbeing for patients and staff. 2 Health – Reduce the pharmacy's contribution to air pollution. 3 Cost, Time – Potentially reduce unnecessary travel costs, delays, or disruptions due to road closures or traffic jams. 	
Suggested evidence	Outline how staff promote active travel at the pharmacy and if any personalised travel plans for staff are created. Upload results of any travel audits conducted.

6.1.2 Provide adequate information to support patients to navigate health and social care systems and overcome barriers to accessing services. Share patient information for their direct care according to data protection legislations and display a privacy notice.

Information: All pharmacies must ensure that their Directory of Services (DoS) and NHS website profiles show accurate information for opening hours, contact details and services provided so that other healthcare professionals can signpost patients appropriately. They must verify and, where necessary, update the information contained within the pharmacy profile at least once each quarter of the financial year.

Consent patients to utilise shared patient records ([NHS Spine Web Portal](#), [NHS Service Finder](#) or the [National Care Records Service](#)) to avoid unnecessarily diverting patients to emergency services or NHS 111 (NHS24 in Scotland) for out of hours prescription requests. Confidential information needs to be shared between registered and regulated health and social care professionals who have a legitimate relationship with the individual for the purposes of the individual's direct care.

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHS Digital Section 7: Sharing information for direct care
------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Environmental benefits	Reduce carbon footprint of travel and resources required in different healthcare facilities unnecessarily.
-------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost, time** – Ensuring patients receive appropriate preventive care and timely interventions can reduce overall costs of emergency care and hospitalisation.
- 2 Satisfaction** – Facilitates better communication and trust between patients and healthcare providers when they are not subjected to a frustrating cycle of seeking care across multiple locations.
- 3 Health inequalities** – Address disparities in healthcare access and outcomes among underserved populations, promoting social equity and fairness.
- 4 Governance** – Complies with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 [SCHEDULE 4 Part 4 Paragraph 28\(2\)\(a\)\(i,ii,iii\)](#).

Suggested evidence	Confirm pharmacy profile and opening times are updated in all relevant public facing materials.
---------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

LEVEL 2 (SILVER):

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

6.2.1 Infrastructure available to promote active travel and green transport, as practicable.

Information: Pharmacies can support greener travel by offering enhanced cycling infrastructure, including fit-for-purpose bike racks, safe and secure bicycle storage. **England:** ICBs and ICSs are partnering with local authorities and local transport authorities to support delivery of travel infrastructure and services necessary to increase sustainable travel.

Resources

- The [workplace charging scheme](#) provides eligible applicants with support towards the upfront costs of the purchase and installation of electric vehicle charge points with potential savings on fuel, tax and road charges.

Environmental benefits

Reduce air pollution and carbon emissions.

Co-benefits:

- Cost** – Active travel options are often more cost-effective for individuals compared to owning and maintaining a car, leading to potential savings on transportation expenses. Pharmacy businesses can sign up to the [cycle to work scheme](#) where staff can purchase bicycles or cycling equipment through salary sacrifice arrangements, resulting in savings on income tax.
- Workforce, Satisfaction** – Encourage active travel that improves overall health and wellbeing. Public and new staff are better informed of their travel options to the pharmacy. Active travel improves health and wellbeing.

Suggested evidence

Outline what information is provided or what infrastructure is in place at pharmacy to promote lower carbon travel.

LEVEL 3 (GOLD):

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL

6.3.1 Review existing pharmacy business travel routes using the carbon footprint calculator and aim to consolidate external deliveries to enhance efficiency and minimise travel footprint.

Information: Medication deliveries to patient homes and home visits should be localised and optimised for efficiency using route planning tools to minimise travel and reduce the environmental footprint. This aligns with NHS Net Zero travel and transport strategy to maximise the operational cost savings and the health and societal benefits.

Environmental benefits

Reduce overall carbon footprints related to use of motor vehicles.

Co-benefits:

- 1 Cost** – Reduce costs for running motor vehicles.
- 2 Satisfaction, Time** – Reduce traffic congestion, unexpected delays, risk of accidents and smoother traffic flow in urban areas.

Suggested evidence

- Calculate pharmacy business travel carbon footprint using the greener pharmacy online toolkit.
- Outline how pharmacy is attempting to reduce its travel footprints.

HIGHER LEVEL PERSONNEL**6.3.2 Switch to greener business fleet.**

Information: Consider cargo bikes smaller, hybrid or electric vehicles to deliver medications or conduct home visits for any clinical services offered by pharmacy. This action will align with the NHS [Net Zero Travel and Transport Strategy](#) (2023) to fully decarbonise its fleet by 2035.

Resources

- The [plug-in grant scheme](#) offers discounts on certain vehicles.

Environmental benefits

Reduce use of fossil fuels which is the main driver of climate change

Co-benefits:

- 1 Health** – Reduce respiratory illnesses and overall healthcare costs.
- 2 Cost** – While the initial investment in greener vehicles or technologies might be higher, the operational costs can be lower. E.g. Electric vehicles have lower fuel and maintenance costs over their lifespan.
- 3 Governance** – Compliant with local environmental regulations (e.g. ULEZ, congestion charge zones).

Suggested evidence

- Confirm pharmacy has actioned this.
- Pharmacy that does not own any vehicles scores a point for reduced contribution of carbon emissions.
- Pharmacy that utilises a third-party organisation for transportation should outline carbon reduction plans or net zero commitments by the organisation.

