

# **Green** Nephrology

## Green Nephrology: A Model For Clinical Leadership

Sustainable healthcare may be defined as the use of resources to deliver healthcare today without compromising the health of current and future generations.

### Introduction

The NHS is committed to transforming quality of care, at a time of unprecedented financial constraint and increasing pressure for carbon reduction. Meeting this combined challenge demands a stronger role for clinical leadership and management throughout the NHS. Sustainability is an effective motivator for staff and patients to engage in service improvement, and has been described as the seventh dimension of quality in healthcare. Sustainable healthcare maximises the value from resources through the empowerment of patients and the elimination of waste. The Green Nephrology programme was founded in 2009 to improve the quality of care in kidney services with respect to cost, patient experience and environmental sustainability. It has already had a widespread impact in kidney care and offers a model for service improvement which can be applied to all specialties.

## Investing in people

Creation of a "Green Nephrology Fellowship" for a renal trainee has ensured that the programme is led from within the kidney care community, while developing expertise in leadership for sustainable healthcare in a future consultant nephrologist.

In turn, the Fellow's most important task has been the development of a network of local champions to lead change on the ground. The network has generated practical examples sustainable care, increased local capability for service improvement and provided a vehicle for knowledge

>80% of kidney units are now represented within the network.

"Thanks to Green Nephrology, sustainability is now regarded as an integral part of quality. The work over the past year has caught the imagination of the whole kidney community and has launched a social movement to provide better, greener and leaner kidney care."

Donal O'Donoghue, National Clinical Director for Kidney Care

### Creating the context for change

Endorsement from respected figures within the specialty has been crucial to Green Nephrology's visibility and public standing. This engagement of strategic partners was achieved through a multistakeholder Summit in 2009 and via ongoing participation on the Programme Board.

Next steps are to mainstream sustainable best practice via embedding in NHS reporting, procurement commissioning standards for renal services.

**Fellowship Model:** 

## **Knowledge and Resources**

The team has worked to establish a peer-reviewed literature in sustainable kidney care, accessible via the online knowledge portal, www.sustainabilityforhealth.org.

Research projects and resource development aim to:

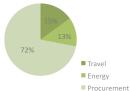
- 1. Empower local champions in engaging colleagues and deliver local change using website, surveys, journal and news articles www.sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/green-nephrology (1-7)
- 2. Carbon footprint clinical service to determine high impact areas for targeting (8,9)
- 3. Generate case studies & how-to guides in collaboration with local units to promote the spread of good practice http://map.greenerhealthcare.org/green-nephrology-projects
- 4. Demonstrate significant cost/carbon savings (>£90k, >70kC0<sub>2</sub>/yr)

## **Stakeholders** Local service National service **Fellowship** development development Education

### Conclusion

Green Nephrology has successfully engaged clinical staff in local service improvement. Case studies have demonstrated significant financial as well as environmental benefits. The programme's people-centred approach and positive agenda offers a model for clinical leadership which could be applied across all specialties.

The carbon footprint of Dorset Renal Service totalled 3,007 tonnes CO2e in 2008 (8).



The study identified the provision of dialysis consumables as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in renal services – leading to the prioritisation of waste reduction and sustainable procurement initiatives.

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