

Impact of Primary Care in Tackling Climate Change and Improving Health Outcomes through the Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme

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Context and Approach:

The Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme has been developed in response to the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan and the Just Transition to Net Zero Wales commitment. It provides a national programme to engage, enable and motivate primary care contractors (general practice, community pharmacy, primary care dental, and optometry) to take environmentally friendly action.



The objectives identified as part of the Fellowship programme were:

- To describe the **engagement, and differences** of the four primary care contractor settings participation in the Scheme.
- Using mixed methods **identify enablers and barriers to engagement** and action.
- **To understand the system drivers that influence engagement and action to increase spread and scale** of the Scheme.
- Develop, test and measure a **revised strategy** for engagement based on the findings of objectives 1, 2, and 3.

Progress to date:

Research:

Activity data (2022–2024) reported as:

- **416** practices (2 corporate n=153)
- **167** awards presented (2 corporate)
- **4265** climate friendly actions
- **51,300** tonnes CO₂e reduction (**2760+ Scheme & 47,800 tonnes from inhalers**)

Insight into system drivers, enablers, barriers identified, analysed and reported via:

- Survey
- 4 uni-professional engagement events
- Expert group feedback

Publications and awards:

- Award Scheme to Engage Primary Care Workers ATACH, WHO
- Poster presentation x(n=2) @ PHW Research Conference Dec 24
- Research Matters TED-style session at HCRW conference Oct 24
- Behavioural Insights about Barriers and Facilitators to Returning Inhalers to the Community Pharmacy in Wales for Safe Disposal: Patient and Community Pharmacy Perspectives accepted for publication (April 25) in IJPP (date TBC).

Leadership:

Consultant lead for the Scheme.

- New Strategic objective in PHW IMTP.
- Presented at PHW AGM.
- PHW Board briefing & PHW intranet story about winning Awards x2.
- Chair - Co-benefits of Climate Change and Health at Wales Climate Week 24.
- Ongoing leadership to the National Inhaler T&F Group & Strategy to tackle climate change.
- Report progress via ATH board & Health and Social Care Climate Emergency Programme Board.
- Deputise for PHW MD at Health and Social Care Climate Emergency Programme Board.
- Sponsorship, judging and presenting awards(n=2) at NHS Wales Sustainability Conference June 25.
- Rewritten initiatives for revised NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan
- Editor for chapters in 5th Edition Oxford Handbook of Public Health Practice (due late 26) – inc climate change.
- Participation in Dragons Heart Institute Spread & Scale Academy (Nov 24) & presented at Leadership Day Jan 25.

Education/teaching :

Variety of presentations, workshops and training delivered to a range of audiences to raise awareness & action.

Examples include:

- Education webinars to mark relaunches
- Plenary, workshop and panel member at Chief Pharmacist Symposium (May 2024).Wales Climate week - pre-recorded case study Greener Primary Care Wales Award Scheme and Champions
- Supervised 4th Year MSc Pharmacy Student project on inhaler impacts (WSP)
- Workshops to GP trainees in SE and SW Wales
- Presented at the Welsh Government HSC Webinar; Adapting to Climate Change across Health and Social Care in Wales (Feb 24).
- Cardiff School of Medicines Sustainability Conference March 25
- Wales representative on 4 nations panel National Respiratory Medicines Optimisation Conference April 25

Future activity:

- To measure the revised strategy [2-year Scheme cycle '25 – '26] and separately evaluate 5 years of the Scheme since its inception.
- Publication of the impact of the Scheme in a peer review journal and apply for further awards (e.g. NHS Wales and HSJ 2025)
- Consider 'end game' or what next post 2026 and develop a business case for any changes and resources required for the Scheme to 2030.
- Define and gain agreement with system partners on what is meant by Environmentally Sustainable Health & Care to primary care.
- Consider hosting workshop to identify and describe greener low carbon medicine alternatives and systems.

Reflections:

- Being part of the Bevan fellowship programme has enabled a further platform for raising awareness of this work.
- Support may be needed to prepare publication – this could be joint with other GREEN Bevan projects.
- Inhalers accounted to much more CO₂e reductions than expected.
- Still a lot to do to reach Net Zero by 2030.