

Climate change

Academy of Medical Royal Colleges statement

July / 2020

The Council of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, which comprises the Presidents of all the UK Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties and the Irish Colleges of both Physicians and Surgeons supports the urgent need to address environmental sustainability in health to help tackle climate change.

The Academy supports the NHSE /I [Greener NHS campaign](#) and similar initiatives in other administrations. As was said at the launch of, 'Greening the NHS':

- *'We know our own health and the health of our planet are inextricably linked.'* Professor Carrie MacEwen, Chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.
- *'The climate emergency is a health emergency. Climate change isn't something we can afford to delay acting on.'* Professor Andrew Goddard, President, Royal College of Physicians President.
- *'We have a responsibility to act for the health and wellbeing of future generations.'* Professor Russell Viner, President Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.'

The Academy and its member Colleges and Faculties recognise the urgent need for the NHS, the medical profession and Colleges themselves as organisations to play their part in tackling climate change and ensuring both a sustainable NHS and ultimately a sustainable planet

The Academy was among the first medical bodies to address the issue of climate change and sustainability. It published *'Facing the future: Sustainability for the Medical Royal Colleges'* in 2015. This assessed the sustainability initiatives taking place in medical specialties and provided guidance for colleges on steps they could take to reduce their carbon footprint.

Academy members actively support the [Centre for Sustainable Healthcare](#) (CSH), renowned for its work on sustainable healthcare research and practice and the [UK Health Alliance on Climate Change](#) (UKHACC) which brings together doctors, nurses and other health professionals to advocate for responses to climate change that protect and promote public health. We will work with them and other partner organisations committed to improving environmental sustainability within the health sector.

For Academy Colleges and Faculties, the focus of activity is:

- Exploring ways to improve sustainability and contribute to addressing climate change within the practice of their own specialty identifying what delivering a Net Zero Specialty would entail
- Contributing to the Greener NHS Campaign and similar initiatives in devolved administrations to help the NHS get to Net Zero
- Establishing how members can address climate change and sustainability themselves as organisations in terms of how they operate and run their estate.

Colleges and Faculties are already active in addressing issues of climate change both within their specialties and as organisations themselves. The Academy and Colleges will be considering in detail what further action they can take.