



**Sustainable Healthcare** webinars, 1 of 3

# Climate Change & Healthcare

## SUMMARY

2 February 2024

2-3pm, via Zoom



## Welcome

Dr Amanda Young, Director of Nursing Programmes (Innovation & Policy) The QNI,  
[@DrAmandaYoung](#)

- Welcome everyone to today's first webinar in our sustainable series with the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare
- We'll hear from Dr Ayoma Ratnapuli, Education Fellow from the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare and discover the critical connection between our changing environment and its impact on public health.
- The next webinar in the series is taking place on 27 February, 'Sustainability in Quality Improvement' and the last one will be on 21 March, 'Sustainable Healthcare in Practice.' To book your free place, scan the QR code below.



## Climate Change and Healthcare

Dr Ayoma Ratnappuli, Education Fellow, Centre for Sustainable Healthcare

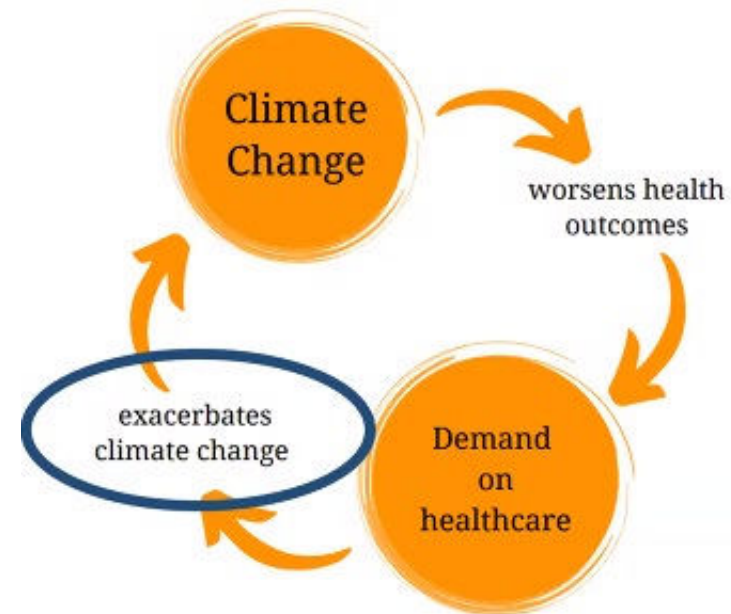
- Climate change is causing the Earth to heat up - we are emitting greenhouse gases (gases in the Earth's atmosphere that trap heat) and the effect is multifold.
- We've seen more droughts and wildfires, rising sea levels, thawing of the ice and all these have a knock-on effect on plants and human life.
- I like to think of it in terms of your life - you've seen this in your life time. In Yorkshire, for example, I used to live near the River Ouse, whilst I was there it flooded twice which was shocking.
- Planetary boundaries define 9 key Earth System processes and sets safe boundaries for human activities (climate change is just one of them). These are: climate change, biosphere integrity (functional and genetic), land-system change, freshwater use, biogeochemical flows (nitrogen and phosphorus), ocean acidification, atmospheric aerosol pollution, stratospheric ozone depletion, and release of novel chemicals.
- The 9 boundaries were first plotted in 2009, since then, all 9 have been breached, this means irreversible damage to our planet.
- There is no doubt that human activity has cause climate change. But climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable communities.



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- It's a vicious cycle: climate change worsens health outcomes, it exacerbates health inequalities, increases exposure to the pathways that cause illness, extreme weather events, heatwaves, water quality (etc) all related. Lots of London hospital for example, are on flood plains.
- The problems seen now with drought, water security, this will all get worse. Climate related migration will become more common.
- Malaria has been seen creeping more into Europe. Air pollution is another huge issue. Ella Kissi-Debrah, a 9 year old child from London, was the first person in the world to have air pollution listed as a cause of death. 40,000 deaths year are attributable to pollution.
- The richest 10% are responsible for almost half of total lifestyle consumption emissions.
- What can we do to break the cycle? We can try and limit climate change and reduce carbon emissions and what's good for the climate is good for our population too.
- 2% of plastic is related to medical use. We're finding more antibiotics in our waters.
- **Sustainable healthcare ensures the health needs of the current population are met, without compromising environmental, economic or social resources for future generations.**



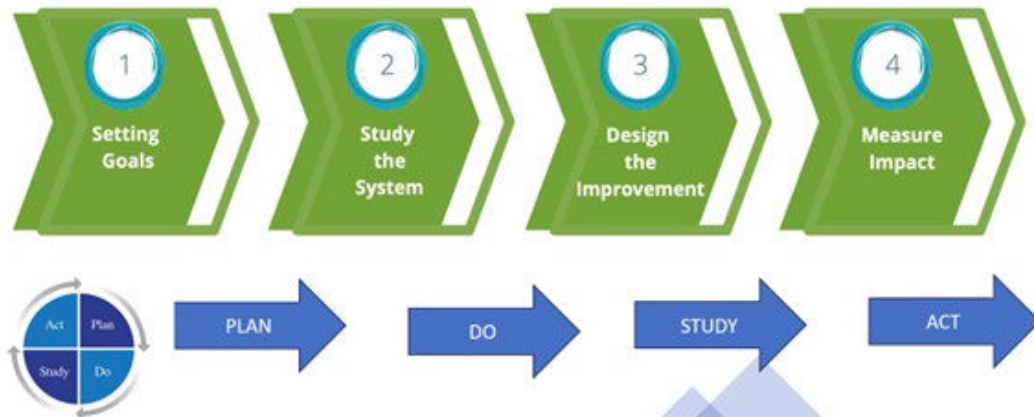
# Climate Change and Healthcare

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- Sustainability is a domain of quality and should run through all domains of quality. But quality isn't enough, we need to improve value, we don't have unlimited resources. The idea is to maximise outcomes whilst minimising environmental impact and add social value.



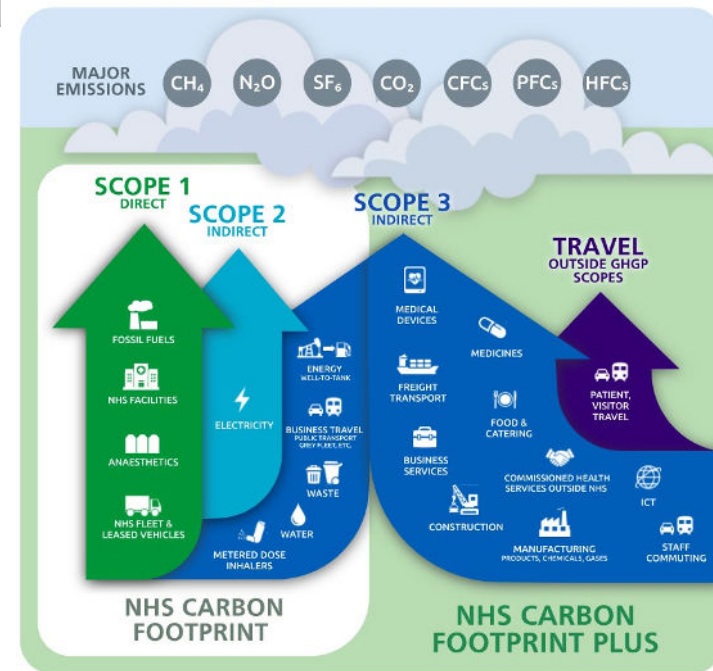
- Sustainability in Quality Improvement (SusQI) Framework:



# Climate Change and Healthcare

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- As nurses the power is in your hands: you're in education roles, research roles, all kinds of roles. You're using consumables, purchasing things. You have the power to make positive change!
- Telehealth is an example, smoking cessation is another.
- Healthcare is becoming greener, case study in South Warwickshire, the nursing team there switched patients from single use insulin pens to reusable 'Smart pens' and promoted uptake of 'pen cycle' recycling scheme for single use insulin pens (read more here: <http://tinyurl.com/38nzvn3p>)
- In 2020, the NHS set out its intent to support this ambition through its 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service' report. The report sets a clear target for achieving a net zero health service for direct emissions by 2040 and indirect emissions by 2045.
- To read the NHS report, go to: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/a-net-zero-nhs/>
- It's useful to know where all emissions are coming from and what's responsible for them.
- Prevent creating the waste, re-use and therefore use a more circular economy. As nurses we use a lot of consumables, you can make a difference.



Credit: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2021/02/NZR-Scopes.png>



## Climate Change and Healthcare

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- We all have a role in developing net zero, wherever we're working.
- 2022 saw the Health and Social Care Act and was the first legislation addressing the response of healthcare to climate change, made it a legal duty.
- So look into your Trust's green plans, see what you can help with. They often have a sustainability lead or officer or Green Champion and can be very helpful.
- Being here at this webinar is a great first step, there are 2 more, sign up: <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/events/sustainable-healthcare-webinar-1-climate-change-and-healthcare/>
- QNI has some great sustainability information: <https://qni.org.uk/sustainability/>
- We also at the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare, free resources, nursing networks, education networks, SusQI case studies, see more here: [www.susqi.org](http://www.susqi.org)
- People have the idea that sustainable options are expensive (for eg organic) but whilst you might have to invest a bit at first, it's about looking at the long term not short term and making that difference.
- Email me with your views, your case studies, we'd love to hear from you: [ayoma.ratnappuli@sustainablehealthcare.org.uk](mailto:ayoma.ratnappuli@sustainablehealthcare.org.uk).

# NEXT free SUSTAINABLE WEBINARS:

'Sustainability in Quality Improvement'

Tuesday 27 February 2-3pm

'Sustainable Healthcare in Practice, 21 March, 2-3pm

Thursday 21 March, 2-3pm

Find out more or book your free place scanning the QR code below:





**Thank you to the 100 delegates who attended today's webinar.**

A selection of comments from delegates:

Really interesting  
inspiring presentation,  
looking forward to the  
next one

Insightful!  
Thank you!

Thank you, just need to  
have voice and advocate  
for what we all have a  
passion for.

Great ideas on how we can  
contribute to reducing our carbon  
footprint and even our small  
changes can make a difference to  
climate change

excellent -  
thank you

Thankyou  
very good  
presentation

Excellent presentation - thank you - I'd like to  
share this with health students

