

June 2021

## Paediatric Critical Care Society Statement on Climate Change

Climate Change is a global health emergency<sup>1</sup>. There is an urgent need to address the contribution of human industrial activities on Climate Change. The healthcare industry is a major contributor to Climate Change<sup>2</sup>: NHS emissions are equivalent to 4% of England's total carbon footprint<sup>3</sup>.

In October 2020, the Greener NHS Plan was published<sup>4</sup>, stating the ambition for the NHS to be carbon-neutral by 2040, making the NHS the first carbon-neutral health service in the world.

PCCS recognises the role it has to play in action against Climate Change:

- Paediatric Critical Care is a significant contributor to the healthcare industry's carbon footprint
- The health impacts of Climate Change disproportionately affect children's health

As child health professionals, PCCS members have a duty both to mitigate the health impact of climate change and to advocate for the wellbeing of children.

We aim to support the NHS Greener Plan through the following actions:

1. To create a PCCS subgroup responsible for the production and monitoring of a PCCS Green Plan: a mechanism to take a coordinated, strategic and action-orientated approach to sustainability.
2. To support research into the prevention and mitigation of the impact of Climate Change on child health.
3. To advocate for policies that reduce the impact of Climate Change on child health through liaison with relevant bodies such as HM government's Sustainable Development Unit (SDU).
4. To educate our members and patients / families about the science of Climate Change and how it impacts on child health.
5. To reduce our carbon emissions as a professional society through actions such as facilitating meetings through virtual platforms and recognising exemplary practice.
6. To support our members to reduce their own carbon emissions as well as those in their NHS organisations.
7. To listen to our patients and their families about what matters most to them.
8. To promote attendance at educational events that do not require air travel.
9. To collaborate with other societies and professional organisations to support progress to achieving the Greener NHS aims.
10. To ensure our financial investments are held in sustainable funds.

### References:

1. World Health Organization. *Quantitative Risk Assessment of the Effects of Climate Change on Selected Causes of Death, 2030s and 2050s*. Geneva: World Health Organization. (2014)
2. HS Sustainable Development Unit. *NHS carbon footprint(2018)* Available online at: <https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/reporting/nhscarbon-footprint.aspx>
3. Owen A, Giesekam J, Barrett J. 2019 Data release of material footprint and resource efficiency for the UK. 2019.
4. NHS Greener Plan: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs>