



Case Study

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**SUSSEX**

Sussex Community NHS Trust (SCT) aims to become one of the best “Good Corporate Citizens” in the NHS.

The Trust was newly formed in 2010 and provides NHS community health services in West Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

In 2010 the Trust’s Board approved a 5 year Sustainable Development Management Plan (SDMP). The cornerstone of SCT’s plan is to make sure the organisation is classified as excellent in the Good Corporate Citizenship assessment tool.

This aspirant Foundation Trust employs 4,000 staff across 77 properties, covering an area of 800 square miles.

It has a £190 million turnover and delivers 9,500 patient interventions per day.

In order to achieve this classification of excellence, the Trust has committed to the following targets for 2015:

- 25% reduction of carbon footprint
- 25% improvement in energy efficiency
- Zero waste to landfill
- Average scores of “excellent” in each of the GCC themes

Carbon and Financial Savings

In the first 18 months the programme has already:

- Reduced its carbon footprint by more than a 1,000 tonnes CO₂;
- Improved energy efficiency by over 30%;
- Boosted recycling rate to 60%;
- Reduced fleet vehicle emissions of 23%.

This has saved the Trust £135,000.

How did the programme improve sustainability?

SCT took systematic steps to measure and improve the sustainability of its activities. A comprehensive carbon footprint and carbon management plan was developed and the GCC framework was used to develop the Trust’s Sustainable Development Management Plan.

A number of qualitative and quantitative key performance indicators (KPIs) were agreed and progress reports submitted to the Trust’s Board every 6 months.



“Our aim is to deliver the best possible patient care in ways that contribute to the sustainability of the communities and places that we serve. We have a responsibility to use our resources and influence to support the health and wellbeing of our local communities, whilst minimising the financial and environmental costs.”

Nigel Burchett
Director of Estates and Facilities
Sussex Community NHS Trust



A cross-departmental steering group was established and actions were identified to reduce impacts and improve the GCC scores:

1. Buildings

Spend-to-save programme, focusing on low-carbon technology (e.g. boiler plant, LED lighting, voltage optimisation). An in-house cost model and Marginal Abatement Cost Curve MACC tool was developed to help construct business cases.

2. Facilities

Working in partnership with waste contractor Biffa to implement mixed recycling scheme, installing high efficiency hand dryers to cut paper towel costs and waste etc.

3. Workforce

Engaging staff at all levels through in-house communications and awareness programme and brand (“Do your bit for our CO2mmunity”) and a network of Carbon Champions recruited to bring about change.

4. Procurement

Established an Ethical Procurement Policy and a collaborative Supply Chain Emissions Project to quantify and reduce impacts with key suppliers.

5. Community

Founding member of local 10:10 Healthcare Group, sitting on the council’s City Sustainability Partnership, and engaging private sector partners through the volunteers service

6. Transport

Developing a robust Green Travel Plan and working with Civitas to embed healthy workforce agenda within the Trust.

What were the key challenges?

Organisational: the Trust was newly formed and undergoing structural change, making the implementation of a new programme very challenging

Financial: making a case for investment in low-carbon/sustainable technology and projects during a time of increasingly restricted resources

Geographical: the Trust is a diverse and dispersed organisation with a complex estate portfolio.

What were the success factors?

The Trust felt it was important that its outputs and processes were robust and stood up to scrutiny, so took the step of asking climate change consultancy AEA Technology plc to provide external verification of these outputs. This was completed in September 2011.

In recognition of its successes the Trust won the Health Service Journal Good Corporate Citizenship Award 2011.



A number of additional key factors made the programme a success:

1. Having a credible and robust plan and a senior officer to deliver it
2. Achieving genuine buy-in and commitment from the Trust Board
3. Being able to demonstrate the value of the programme quickly
4. Showing that the programme complements and supports a range of strategic objectives.

Further information

For more details contact Will Clark,
Environmental Manager:

will.clark@nhs.net

01273 242064

NHS Sustainable Development Unit

Victoria House, Capital Park
Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5XB

Tel: 01223 597 792

Fax: 01223 597 712

Web: www.sdu.nhs.uk

The NHS Sustainable Development Unit develops organisations, people, tools, policy, and research to help the NHS in England fulfil its potential as a leading sustainable and low carbon organisation.