



## What does a NHS Active Travel Plan look like?

### Background

Reducing congestion and encouraging green or sustainable travel is a Government priority. It wants a balanced transport system in the UK and is developing Active Travel Plans. These plans should reduce single-occupancy car journeys, promote other modes of more sustainable transport and increase peoples fitness.

The NHS has an important role to play in leading by example and developing active travel plans, since moving our 1.3 million staff, patients and visitors each day accounts for approximately 5% of total road traffic in England. A large proportion of this travel is made up of single person car journeys. The sheer volume of the traffic we generate not only slows people down, it affects air quality, access times for the critically ill, numbers of road traffic incidents, encourages more sedentary lifestyles and makes up about a fifth of the NHS carbon footprint.

### Vision

The NHS vision is that every site has an Active Travel Plan which promotes sustainable transport facilities and encourages more active travel (walking, cycling or public transport). This leads to an increase in the physical and mental health of staff and the local population who use the NHS.

It also means less traffic, which gives rise to fewer road accidents, improved air quality, a fitter population and therefore a reduction on the demand for health services. The money saved can be ploughed back into the NHS.



### Core elements of an active travel plan will

- Set targets for reducing the number of single occupancy car journeys to your NHS site, in line with your Trust's overall sustainable development action plan.
- Encourage more sustainable forms of travel to the site, for example cycling, walking, car sharing or using the bus or train.
- Reduce the amount of travel undertaken for work by encouraging alternatives e.g. web, video and tele conferencing.
- Introduce a flat rate for business mileage - regardless of the mode of transport and encourage the use of Band A efficient vehicles.
- Provide the supporting infrastructure e.g. Lockers, showers, secure bike storage.
- Improve cycle and route safety by installing better lighting and signing.
- Collaborate with staff, local community, businesses and transport providers to develop a travel solution that is tailored to your area.
- Promote the new approach to travelling for all staff, patients and visitors via your communications department e.g. produce maps marked with active travel options.

## What should you do next?

- Lead by example.
- If it is not you, find out who is responsible for travel planning in your organisation and ask them what they are doing to promote 'active travel'.
- Encourage your organisation to work with others to maximise the potential for alternatives to car use.
- Promote the business case for staff. Increased physical activity and mental wellbeing leads to a decrease in sickness absence and reduces staff turnover, both of which are key economic issues for the NHS.
- Set up a steering group to promote active travel that has cross organisational representation and a senior level lead.
- Encourage your organisation to provide incentives for people to travel actively.

## Who is already doing this well?

**Addenbrookes Hospital**, Cambridge used to face traffic chaos as patients tried to get on site. It has now created a travel plan which has reduced the need for car parking spaces, cut congestion, made travel costs fairer and reduced its carbon emissions.

**East Kent Hospital NHS Trust** has introduced a free health hopper bus which saved the trust £50,000 in taxi and courier fares in the first year.

**Fife County Council** has produced a good travel plan focussing on ease, choice and overall wellbeing of its staff.

**NHS Norfolk** has teamed up with other businesses on the site to write a travel plan that suits all its varied needs. This has included an online car sharing scheme, encouraging flexible working at the PCT and bus service to the city centre.

**Nottingham City Hospital** has developed a travel plan with ring-fenced funding from car parking charges. This has enabled the Trust to develop a number of on-site facilities to improve security, pedestrian and cycling provision and measures to enhance public transport.

**Singleton Hospital** in Swansea has greatly improved its active travel facilities and take up. The hospital has successfully changed commuter travel behaviour by developing a targeted information campaign to encourage staff to try out the alternatives.

**Winchester & Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust** has set up a patient travel bus, saving 4000 patient journeys per year and a staff travel plan that is saving 1540 staff car journeys per week.

## Some academic background

Association of Directors of Public Health & Sustrans document '[Take action on active travel](#)'

Work by Professor Ian Roberts on the [co-benefits of active travel](#)

NICE Guidance on physical activity - [PH008 & PH13](#)



## Useful links

<http://www.sdu.nhs.uk/publications-resources/46/NHS-Carbon-Reduction-Strategy--Extended-chapters/>

<http://www.sdu.nhs.uk/publications-resources/48/Resources-for-carbon-reduction--Energy-Travel-and-Procurement/>

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/travelplans/work/>

<http://www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk/resources.php/221/htm-07-03-transport-management-and-car-parking>

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We welcome feedback or suggestions to improve this work.