



Pioneering NHS Trust strides towards sustainability

Overview

East Cheshire NHS Trust was established in 2002 and provides services across a wide area of Cheshire. It operates three hospitals in Macclesfield, Knutsford and Congleton, as well as a range of community and outpatient facilities.

Macclesfield District Hospital has approximately 344 acute beds and six critical care beds. The emergency department is a Type 1 department, meaning it offers a consultant-led 24 hour service with full resuscitation facilities and designated accommodation for the reception of A&E patients. It treats approximately 50,000 new patients each year.

East Cheshire NHS Trust has led the way in transitioning to more sustainable practices. The Trust was an early adopter of services and products that helps them to achieve NHS England targets for increasing the use of reusable equipment and lowering carbon emissions.

The Trust's strategic Green Plan is a pioneering commitment and comprehensive strategy to deliver sustainable and high-quality services for the people of East Cheshire. The Plan highlights ways in which the Trust embeds sustainability within their organisations and works in partnership with system providers who positively improve sustainability to help reach net zero carbon targets.

Stericycle has been working with the East Cheshire NHS Trust for over ten years. One of the crucial actions taken by the Trust in pursuit of its environmental goals has been the introduction of Stericycle's Bio Systems reusable sharps containers to Macclesfield District Hospital. This represented the first step towards a successful change in practices across all three hospital sites.



Objectives

East Cheshire NHS Trust wanted to find a way to make sharps disposal more safe, sustainable and cost effective. The Trust's key requirements in selecting a new sharps disposal service provider were:



SUSTAINABILITY

- An ability to contribute to NHS England net zero and Greener NHS plans.
- An ability to contribute to the Trust's own Green Plan targets, including carbon and single-use plastic reduction; patient and staff safety; efficiency and cost-reduction.
- Support to increase the efficiency of how each hospital site segregates clinical waste, to reduce the amount of waste headed for landfill or incineration.



SAFETY

- Practical measures to reduce needle-stick injuries.
- Support to maintain and enhance patient and staff safety at the point of care.



EFFICIENCY

- One single provider with credentials aligned to the Trust's Sustainable Supplier Framework and able to offer a managed, end-to-end, traceable service.

Approach

The Trust chose Stericycle to provide a comprehensive Sharps Management Service. As a part of this service, Bio Systems reusable sharps containers were delivered and installed at Trust sites.

Prior to using Stericycle's Sharps Management Service, the Trust used multiple disposable sharps containers that had to be assembled by staff on site. When a container was full, the likelihood was that it would be incinerated.

Stericycle's Bio Systems reusable sharps containers arrive on site as part of the regular waste service collection, helping to reduce road mileage and the associated CO2 emissions. The containers are quality checked, assembled and delivered to site as a whole unit - limiting the time Trust staff need to spend checking and assembling new containers when they arrive.

All healthcare organisations must properly and safely dispose of regulated medical and hazardous wastes. Through appropriate segregation, NHS East Cheshire is working with Stericycle towards a compliant, efficient, safer and sustainable waste management process. Stericycle provides the Trust with a pre-acceptance waste audit to help make sure that all waste streams are appropriately segregated and packaged for transport and treatment.

Stericycle also provides the Trust with a personalised carbon savings report on a quarterly and annual basis, to help them keep track of progress towards their sustainability targets.

East Cheshire NHS Trust and Stericycle:
Partners for 10 years, pioneers in sustainability.



Results

During 2022, Macclesfield District General Hospital achieved the following results by using Bio Systems reusable sharps containers:

5,605 containers

saved from incineration

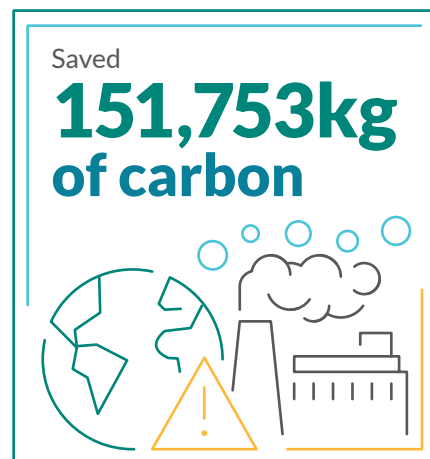
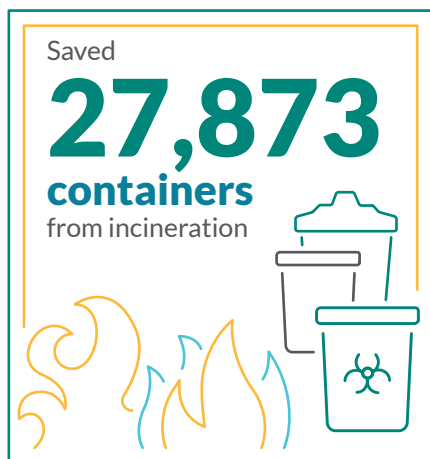
10.52 tonnes

of plastic saved

31,285 kg

of carbon saved

In the last five years, the Trust:



“Climate change poses a major threat to our health as well as our planet. We recognise this as a responsibility everyone must share, which is why we take a proactive approach to reducing our environmental impact.

Working with Stericycle over the last ten years has helped us to build sustainable practices into the fabric of our operations. We know we can depend on them to maintain consistently high service levels and their Bio Systems reusable containers support us to prioritise sustainability without compromising on the safety or cost-effectiveness of our sharps waste management.

It’s good to know that we’re making ongoing carbon savings to help meet our net zero goals and that we’re providing the highest quality healthcare possible to our communities.”

Sarah Haigh-Turner, Service & Performance Manager. East Cheshire NHS Trust