

## BASCD 2022 ABSTRACT 22

### **Raising sustainability awareness in a dental teaching hospital: a quality improvement project**

*Chhabra, H.,<sup>1\*</sup> Booth, A.J.,<sup>2</sup> Revert, B.,<sup>1</sup> Shehabi, Z.<sup>1</sup>*

*<sup>1</sup>Royal London Dental Hospital, UK; <sup>2</sup>Queen Mary University of London, UK*

#### **Background:**

The NHS has set a target to be the world's first 'net zero' national health service by 2040. Dentistry contributes to 3% of the carbon footprint in NHS England. As a profession we have a social and ethical responsibility to reduce our contribution towards this.

#### **Objectives:**

To raise awareness of sustainable dental care in a teaching hospital.

#### **Methods:**

A multifaceted quality improvement project (QIP) was registered with the restorative audit lead. Patients attending appointments at the Royal London Hospital completed a questionnaire measuring their perceived awareness of the environmental impact of dentistry, and its influence on improving their oral health. A sustainability showcase was hosted which was attended by staff groups including dental students, domestic staff and dental care professionals. The showcase encompassed multiple components including: student-led educational stands; sustainability focused dental organisations; interactive space to make personal environmental pledges. Using electronic questionnaires, 70 attendees offered feedback on their perceptions of the event.

#### **Results:**

The patient questionnaire showed that 42% of patients were unaware of the environmental impact of their dental treatment and 83% felt having this knowledge would motivate them to improve their oral health to reduce their carbon footprint. Almost all (99%) of those who attended the sustainability showcase wanted to see similar future events and 97% learnt something new about how their lifestyle impacts the environment. Of the attendees, 97% felt motivated to adapt their lifestyles to be more sustainable and 48 people made pledges.

#### **Conclusion:**

The project suggests that a cohesive approach to integrate clinician and patient perspectives is needed to create meaningful change. This QIP emphasises the need to integrate sustainability into secondary care settings and increase awareness of the environmental impact of dentistry, with an aim to reduce both carbon footprint and dental disease.

#### **Correspondence to:**

Himani Chhabra

Email: [himani.chhabra1@nhs.net](mailto:himani.chhabra1@nhs.net)

[https://doi.org/10.1922/CDH\\_BASCD22\\_Abstract22](https://doi.org/10.1922/CDH_BASCD22_Abstract22)