

Why Care about Sustainability in Dietetics

Louise Kirkham Rd,
BDA Sustainable Diets



Bit about me

- Dietitian since 2019
- Rotational Band 6 – 3 weeks into Critical Care at Cardiff.
- Community, Cancer Prehab, Hematology, Elderly Care.
- Prior to 2019 - Chef for 14 years.

- Sustainability
 - Member of the BDA Sustainable Diets Group
 - Currently completing Fellowship in Sustainability in Quality Improvement
 - Drive Sustainability in the Dietetics Department at work – Sustainable Champion

Why do I care about Sustainability in MY practice and the way I work?

Because of the multi-dimensional skills required to incorporate sustainability into our practice, it requires all skills and extends our patient centred care to be also about the planet.

Agenda

- Climate change recap
- Climate Change and Impact on Health
- Climate Change in the UK
- Climate Change and Healthcare
- What does this mean for Dietitians
- Evidence and Guidance Moving Forward
- What Does Sustainability Look Like in Practice



The aim of this presentation is to set the scene and give a bit more context to why climate change and sustainability has become part of our now daily (hopefully) day-to-day discussion or practice. I hope what I talk about today helps give some clarity of what we will be faced with and directly how the impact of climate change will affect our patients and their future needs.

Climate Change Fact Recap:

- Climate change is the long term shifts of change in earth temperature and weather patterns.
- Human activities (burning fossil fuels, industry, renovation of land, agriculture, fishing) is responsible for global heating in the last 200 years.
- Changes in climate = increase in longer and worsening: droughts, water scarcity, severe fires, rising sea levels, flooding, melting polar ice, catastrophic storms and declining biodiversity.

Just to have a refresh of actually what is climate change and what should we expect to see. Sometimes we do not connect the dots of the impact of climate change.

The changing of climate – or climate change is a natural occurrence, we have been known to have had an ice age – however, with human activities we have contributed and sped up this process. The natural balance of the world would accommodate and managed these changes in weather systems if on its natural path. However, with human activities since the industrial revolution we have contributed and sped up the process directly.

The way we see this now is – some foods (veg and fruit) are harder to grow, or are more sensitive to the quick and intense changes in the weather. Therefore, not as accessible to us when required.

Geographically, our houses are not designed to withstand big weather changes – intense heat or long and intense wet weather events.

Data and information used from: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/what-is-climate-change>

2015 Paris Climate Agreement – Limit global warming to 1.5°C (no higher than 2°C) above historic average (pre-industrial times).

Global avg. Surpassed 1.5°C

Projections – we will surpass 2°C in 5-10 years


Worst case scenario = 4°C

Ways we will see this:


- Food accessibility
- Housing degradation
- Sea level rises
- More erosion of coastline
- Air conditions getting worse.
- Change in our seasons and intensity of weather.



Paris Agreement Ref: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/paris-agreement>



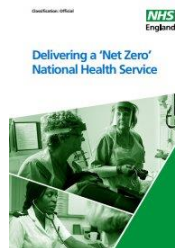
- 3 warmest years since 2020
 - Increase in heat related deaths
 - 55,000 –72,000 deaths due to heatwaves in 2003, 2010, 2022
- Flooding – 1.6million people affected
 - Displacement
 - Fatalities
- Wildfires
 - 50,000km² (London, Paris and Berlin combined) area destroyed
 - Largest = 960km² (twice size of Athens)
- Glaciers – 10% lost in the Alps in 2 years.



Ref: https://climate.copernicus.eu/sites/default/files/custom-uploads/ESOTC%202023/Summary_ESOTC2023.pdf

Climate Change in the UK

- Climate change was declared a 'Climate Emergency' in 2019
- Embedded sustainability in policy – Health Care Act 2022
- Greener NHS Hub
- Strategy - Delivering a Net Zero NHS.
- Net Zero by:
 - England by 2040, procurement by 2045,
 - Wales by 2030,
 - Scotland by 2040
 - Ireland by 2050

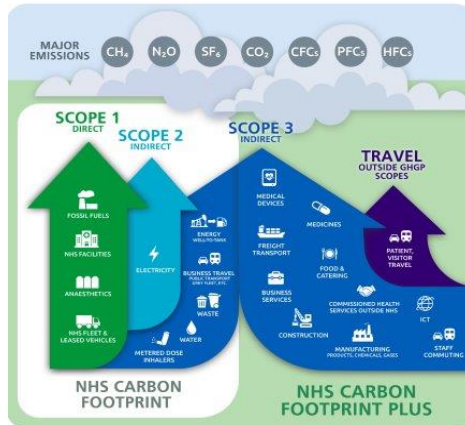


- Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2022/07/B1728-delivering-a-net-zero-nhs-july-2022.pdf>
- Greener NHS <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/national-ambition/>

Climate Change and Healthcare

4% of the UK's total CO² Emissions

Figure 1: GHGP scopes in the context of the NHS



- Estates and facilities,
- Travel and transport,
- Medicines,
- Supply chain,
- Food, catering and nutrition.

Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health

Service [https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-](https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2022/07/B1728-delivering-a-net-zero-nhs-july-2022.pdf)

[content/uploads/sites/51/2022/07/B1728-delivering-a-net-zero-nhs-july-2022.pdf](https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2022/07/B1728-delivering-a-net-zero-nhs-july-2022.pdf)

What does that mean for Dietitians

- Patients presenting conditions are changing/increasing
 - Population of aging population (cold and heat related deaths).
 - Respiratory - *'29,000 to 43,000 deaths a year in the UK'*
 - Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes
 - Mental Health
 - Malnutrition
- Resources may be more restricted – ingredients for products.
- Practicality
 - Access to healthcare from patient groups
 - Adaptability to weather events

A moment.....



A moment to breathe and absorb.

Evidence and Guidance moving forward

BDA's One Blue Dot
(2018)



- Toolkit for Dietitians for practice.
- Promotion of Sustainable Plant based diet.
- Reducing food waste.
- <https://www.bda.uk.com/resource-report/one-blue-dot.html>

EAT Lancet Report
(2019)



- Presents strategies to meet the UN Sustainability Goals
- Identifies the nutritional quality of The Planetary Health Diet and it's feasibility of meeting nutritional requirements.
- Targets agricultural practices, food practices and reducing waste.
- <https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/the-planetary-health-diet-and-you/>

National Standards for
healthcare food and drink
(2022)



- Strategies to provide nutritional food to patients, staff and hospital visitors.
- Reduction of food waste
- Reduction of single use plastics.
- Sustainable procurement.
- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/B0508-i-National-standards-for-healthcare-food-and-drink-Nov-2022.pdf>

Papers that helped to build this presentation.

Delivering a 'Net Zero'
National Health Service
(2022)



- Measures the carbon footprint of the NHS.
- Steps to decarbonise the NHS.
- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2022/07/B1728-delivering-a-net-zero-nhs-july-2022.pdf>

What a Waste
Bevan Commission
(2023)



- Identifies the meaning of waste in healthcare.
- Cost of waste in healthcare.
- Reducing waste to improve patient care.
- https://bevancommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/What-a-Waste_Final_Formatted.pdf



- Sustainable Quality Improvement
- Triple Bottom Line
- Collaboration of healthcare professionals
- Green Awards
- Since 2008 - Research
- <https://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/>

What does Sustainability look like in practice. Professional Development Framework



PRACTICE

- Incorporating sustainable principles within practice
- Electronic records
- Online patient consultations
- Reducing waste.



EVIDENCE BASED
PRACTICE
RESEARCH

- Sustainability in Quality Improvement
- Exploring available research
- Joining groups



FACILITATED
LEARNING

- Contribute to learning resources
- Student projects
- Bringing Sustainable learning into personal appraisals.



LEADERSHIP

- Sustainable Champion
- Engage department/team
- Work towards Trust/Health boards aims.

To Summarise...

Bringing Sustainability into Dietetics:

- Improves health outcomes for patients
- Improves processes and quality of care
- Reduces financial burden
- Expands opportunities in Dietetics
- Reduces impact on the environment.





Thank you

Louise Kirkham

Loulabelle1@hotmail.co.uk