**Press Release**

**From: Centre for Sustainable Healthcare**

**For immediate release: Thursday 24th March**

**NHS ward staff taking action to green healthcare**

Staff at Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust and University College London Hospitals are today waiting to hear whether their projects will win the Green Ward Competition and secure £500 to spend on further green innovation.

Over the last six weeks staff from both NHS Trusts, with support from the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare and, at Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust also in conjunction with Low Carbon Europe, have designed and run projects to reduce the environmental, social and financial impact of their work. Projects include: instigating the use of dry powder inhalers (which have one eighteenth the environmental impact of conventional aerosol inhalers), reducing the waste of equipment in wound care and redesigning the management of staff records.

The NHS has a carbon footprint of 22.8 million tonnes CO2e per year. This includes emissions from building use, travel, purchasing of goods and services and commissioning1. Procurement for patient care, and in particular pharmaceuticals, is responsible for the bulk of these emissions. The Lancet commission found climate change to be the biggest threat to global health in the 21st century2, it is therefore vital that staff are equipped to reduce the carbon impact of delivering healthcare. Green Ward offers staff an engaging way to reduce the impacts of providing treatment and care.

Petros Antoniou who leads on sustainability at Darrent Valley Hospital said “Engaging staff is a critical element of Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust’s approach to sustainability. It’s been really valuable to use Green Ward to work with clinical staff to green up patient care”.

Rajnika Patel, sustainable development manager at UCLH, said “Sustainable healthcare is preventative, patient-centred, efficient and low carbon. This competition made it fun for colleagues to work together on something they have wanted to tackle for a while and were given the push by the Green Wards competition to take action”.

**-ends-**

**Notes for editors**

1. The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare (CSH) is an independent charity working on sustainable healthcare in research and practice. CSH has pioneered and is respected nationally for its Sustainable Specialties programme, which combines research with support for local change, underpinned by wider engagement with patients, and relevant industry and clinical bodies.

[www.sustainablehealthcare.org.uk](http://www.sustainablehealthcare.org.uk)
#SusHealthcare

1. The Green Ward Competition engages clinical staff in green projects. The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare has designed it especially for NHS organisations wishing to improve their environmental sustainability. Clinical teams taking part in the competition are supported to identify and take forward a sustainability project in their ward or department. At the end of the programme, a prize is awarded to the team whose project has had greatest impact on improving sustainability, or which shows the greatest potential for future impact.

<http://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/what-we-do/green-ward-competition>

#greenward

1. NHS Sustainability Day is a nationally recognised day for action on climate change, engaging everyone across the NHS and social care systems. The day crosses boundaries to engage local authorities, commissioners, local charities and brings together ministerial backing to support local leaders to create a groundswell of action, debate and best practice sharing and recognition through their annual awards.

[www.nhssustainabilityday.co.uk](http://www.nhssustainabilityday.co.uk)

#dayforaction

Media enquiries will be handled by the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare – please contact:

Dr. Frances Mortimer, frances.mortimer@sustainablehealthcare.org.uk 07967 581541

**References**

1 Sustainable Development Unit. Carbon update for the health and care sector in England, 2015

3 McMichael AJ, Woodruff RE, Hales S. Climate change and human health: present and future risks. Lancet. 2006 Mar 11;367(9513):859-69. Review. Erratum in: Lancet. 2006 Sep 2;368(9538):842