Press release

From: Centre for Sustainable Healthcare

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**New Sustainable Dentistry e-learning resource launched today**

A new session on sustainable dentistry has been released on the award winning e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LfH) platform.

Released today, on NHS Sustainability Day 2016, the resource provides an introduction to climate change and explores the main principles of sustainable practice and their application in dentistry. It encourages clinicians and managers to make sustainable choices and identifies practical tools and resources to support this.

The material can be accessed by the dental team free of charge on the e-LfH website which provides 24/7 access to nationally quality-assured materials on a wide range of topics in health and social care including dentistry. These sessions utilise an engaging and interactive presentation style using images, video and animation as well as self assessment to help build knowledge and understanding.

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. Dentistry contributes 3% to this footprint2 which equates to 0.9 million tonnes CO2e per year. With climate change reported to be the biggest threat to global health in the 21st century3, sustainable healthcare is more relevant now than ever. Training in this area is becoming increasingly valuable as the need to improve value from finite resources and move towards low carbon, high-quality models of care becomes more apparent.

The e-learning resource has been developed by dentists, Dr Devika Vadher and Dr Divya Verma, working with the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare (CSH) as Sustainable Dentistry Scholars – part-time roles funded by Health Education England’s Kent, Surrey and Sussex team.

The launch of the e-learning resource coincides with NHS Sustainability Day 2016 on 24th March which is a nationally recognised day for action on climate change, engaging everyone across the NHS and social care systems.

Quotes –

Dr Divya Verma (KSS Dental Public Health Sustainable Dentistry Scholar) – ‘there is no doubt that climate change will impact health, the delivery of healthcare and access to services in the UK. As health practitioners, who are concerned with the well-being of patients, it is imperative that we consider the environment whilst providing healthcare. Although it can seem insignificant, every action we take is helping to make a difference and there is great potential at the moment to bring about change and empower dental teams to integrate sustainability in their practice as well as create change makers in dentistry for the future.’

Dr Mark Johnstone (Managing Director of Dental Services Kent Community Health Foundation Trust, Chair of Special Care Dentistry Managed Clinical Network, Programme Board member for the Dental Public Health Sustainable Dentistry Programme ) – ‘I am delighted to be involved in the  sustainable dentistry project.  We all have a role to play in reducing our carbon footprint and dentistry is no exception.  Raising awareness and training are the first steps in ensuring quality dentistry includes our impact on the environment.’

**-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)   
<http://twitter.com/sushealthcare>

1. In 2015, a Dental Public Health Sustainable Dentistry Programme was established, funded by Health Education England’s Kent, Surrey and Sussex team. The programme aims to develop dentists and dental care professionals as leaders for sustainable, high value healthcare, and to promote sustainable practice among dental teams in KSS and beyond. This is achieved through the creation of part-time scholarships, hosted and managed by CSH. Scholars are trained in sustainable healthcare and undertake projects to develop sustainable best practice and educate and engage colleagues across the specialty. As well as developing the Sustainable Dentistry eLearning session, the programme has created Dental Susnet – a network for dental professionals to discuss sustainability challenges:

<http://networks.sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/network/dental-susnet>

1. The Sustainable Dentistry session will be included within “e-Den”, the interactive learning resource for dentistry on the e-Learning for Healthcare platform (Module 12 Leadership and Management, Professional Practice folder)

<http://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/dentistry/>

Direct access link: <http://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Component/Details/424027>

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)

Full references below

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

Dr. Frances Mortimer, [frances.mortimer@sustainablehealthcare.org.uk](mailto:frances.mortimer@sustainablehealthcare.org.uk) 07967 581541

**References**

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

2 Carbon modelling within dentistry. Public Health England and Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, 2016 (in press)

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