



4e. How to: Re-home unwanted items

Why is it important?

Reusing, up-cycling or finding a new home for items a dental practice no longer needs (like furniture or computers) is a great way to save resources and reduce landfill waste. Donations can be made to dental charities, local charity shops, community groups and advertised online.

What does sustainable practice look like?

Modelled example

Jo is a dental therapist at a mixed NHS/dental practice, which recently decided to reduce landfill waste as much as possible as part of their **'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,'** policy.

As part of this policy, every effort was made to donate and repurpose any dental equipment, furniture, computer paraphernalia and other items, via charity shop donations, donations to dental aid groups and through advertising online through the app/website: www.iLoveFreegle.org.

The practice assessed all their equipment and made a stockpile of equipment that was dated or no longer used regularly, but still perfectly functional. They then contacted their local dental school, whose 4th year Dental Elective students were able to bring this equipment to Uganda, where it is now being used in a mobile dental unit.

Older chairs were donated to the local community centre and since introducing the recycling policy the practice has saved money, by paying less for waste disposal, as well as forging ties with community groups and local dental students.

Actions

KEY:

Implementation: Easy = 😊😊😊 Less Easy = 😊

Investment Cost: Low = 💷 High = 💷💷💷

Financial return on Investment (ROI): Low = 🐷 High = 🐷🐷🐷

Environmental benefit: Small = 🌍 Large = 🌍🌍🌍





Actions *continued*

- Create a Reduce-Reuse-Recycle policy 
- Check with a charity shop before throwing away reusable items 
- Donate dental equipment to charities and 'not for profit,' organisations 
- Use 'Freegle' to advertise unwanted items online for local collection 

You can calculate both the money saved and carbon saved

• **Money saved:** compare costs of waste collection fees and purchasing of goods costs each month before and after implementation

• **Carbon saved:** Carbon calculator
<http://c.environmentalpaper.org/home>



Resources

<https://www.ilovefreegle.org>

<https://www.gumtree.com/freebies>

<https://www.dentaid.org/overseas/equipment-donations/>

Duane B., Ramasubbu D., Harford S., Steinbach I., Swan J., Croasdale K., Stancliffe R. (in press). Environmental sustainability and waste within the dental practice. British Dental Journal.

Dental Susnet, online network for improving the sustainability of dental services:
<https://networks.sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/dental-susnet>