

Independent review of Sustainability Strategy and Action

Lead Organisation:

Sustainability West Midlands
Project Managers: Anna Bright (Chief Executive)

Partners:

University Hospitals Birmingham 
NHS Foundation Trust

Project Duration:

July – August 2015

The Project

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Trust (UHB) recognise that they are a contributor to CO₂ emissions. UHB has a Sustainability Strategy and a detailed Action Plan covering governance, energy, procurement practice, travel, waste minimisation, segregation and recycling; together with an overarching communications strategy. However, both the Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan were four years old and therefore due for review and updating.



Aims

UHB commissioned SWM to systematically review the current Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan with focus on:

- Any gaps or omissions
- How the documents could be improved
- Progress against milestone
- The way that opportunities could be captured
- Recommended future priorities in the short, medium and long term

SWM held discussions with various individuals from the Trust, including those responsible for regeneration, energy management, waste management, procurement and communications, in order to fully understand the approach to sustainable development taken by UHB.

Challenges

UHB is a large trust with over 8,000 staff and treating 800,000 patients every year. UHB sees carbon reduction as an integral part of delivering the best in care. By improving sustainability the Trust will also save money and improve efficiency, provide improved energy security and reduce reputational risk.

The Outcome

Results

On the basis of the review and discussions, along with SWM's wider understanding of sustainability in the NHS, UHB were provided with a concise and usable report which they will use to improve the Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan. Areas for improvement were provided, including focus on:

- Governance and leadership
- Strategic fit
- Resource efficiency including energy, waste and water management
- Adaptation and resilience to climate change
- Health and wellbeing
- Procurement
- Impact on local economy
- Transport
- Communications and behaviour change
- Presentation and showcasing



Using an independent organisation with considerable expertise in the health sector adds credibility to these documents, and gives UHB confidence that they are as comprehensive as possible.

The Future

We hope that the Action Plan is monitored annually with commentary provided against each Key Action showing progress and activity.

The impact of climate change is likely to be more extremes of weather including heatwaves, droughts and storm events. These weather events will have an impact on the infrastructure and operations of the Trust, and also on the health and wellbeing of the local population. Climate changes adaptation and resilience should be included in the Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan with links to the activity of the Emergency Planning Team.

The Extra's

Awards and endorsements

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham won Best Greener and Healthier Lifestyles (Food) Scheme for their Community Orchard and Gardens project at the Making Birmingham Greener and Healthier Awards in 2015.



Contact Details

For further information or help with strategy development, please contact the SWM team on 0121 237 5890 or enquiries@swm.org.uk.