

CONTRACTING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



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Abstract:

This article provides an insight into some of the measures and initiatives we've put in place to contribute not only to our own sustainability goals but also to support the NHS's net-zero targets. We're working with our NHS colleagues to identify opportunities to reduce our collective environmental impact, including facilitating reusable equipment and reducing single-use plastics.

At Abbott, we understand our responsibility to deliver sustainable technologies and products to improve our environmental impact. As part of our [2030 Sustainability Plan](#), we already have numerous measures and initiatives in place, which not only contribute to our own goals but also support the [NHS's net-zero targets](#). For example, in 2023, [we started to supply Sterifeed 500 ml reusable bottles](#), which could save, on average, 86,000 plastic bottles per month.

As part of our commitment to helping healthcare services achieve meaningful long-term impact for the people we jointly serve, we are continually looking for ways to help our NHS colleagues reduce the environmental footprint of the healthcare services they provide, in a way that also benefits patients.

Whilst our products and equipment are essential to our patients, we recognise there are opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of the equipment we deliver.

Supporting NHS Trusts with their sustainability targets

The big focus in 2024 is to optimise equipment usage in a way that will benefit patients, healthcare professionals and the environment alike.

Giving sets

Of course, we understand there are many reasons why patients may need to use multiple giving sets per day. However, where possible, we are working with the Trusts to help them review patients who receive more giving sets than required, with an aim to reduce overall giving set use, where appropriate. This also benefits patients because they receive fewer deliveries and, therefore, have fewer units to store.

Ancillaries

We are also working with NHS dietitians to review patients' ancillary use and identify where changes could be made, for example switching to reusable alternatives, or reducing the frequency of delivery of certain items, where appropriate. We are supporting them in reviewing the frequency of deliveries of ancillary items to patients – helping them understand precisely what patients need and how often – to prevent delivery of items that might not be required.

Sustainable manufacturing and distribution

Our [distribution facility in Sittingbourne, Kent, U.K.](#) recycles over 91% of their waste with the remaining 9% diverted for responsible incineration. None of the waste generated goes to landfill. We have also recently switched to paper bags and use paper-only void fillers, and we are actively collaborating with our logistics companies to ensure environmentally friendly order transportation. In fact, almost a fifth of our DPD orders are now delivered to customers in all-electric vehicles.

Helping trusts demonstrate their sustainability improvements

With all the Trusts that we are working with, we will be able to share data enabling them to showcase the outcome of the actions, demonstrating the impact within their Trust. Please reach out to your local Contract Manager for more details.