

# Evolutio Ophthalmology

## Carbon Reduction Plan

January 2024



**evolutio**

# Why is it **necessary?**

In accordance with the NHS pledge to a commit to sustainable development and long-term carbon dioxide emission reductions, the purpose of this plan is to formulate our specific policies and actions to enable Evolutio to become a national leader in the delivery and provision of sustainable community healthcare services, through the production and implementation of a Board approved Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP). Delivering high quality services requires us to make best use of the resources we have – by being efficient and innovative in everything we do. Our CRP is central to achieving this.

The CRP – Achieving Net Zero, establishes a set of principles and targeted interventions aimed at ensuring that the impact of care we are providing today is available for tomorrow, with 3 key aims in mind:

- Minimising our impact and having a positive effect on the environment
- Supporting staff wellbeing to enable a happy and healthy workforce
- Long term financial sustainability

In this Green plan we set out clear commitments to cut our environmental impact, reduce operating costs and improve wellbeing through promoting healthy, low carbon lifestyles.

## Carbon Reduction Plan

**Supplier name:** Evolutio Care Innovations Limited

**Company Registration Number:** 08099238

**Published date:** January 2024

**Commitment to achieving Net Zero**

Evolutio Care Innovations Limited is committed to achieving Net Zero for our directly controlled (Scope 1 and 2) emissions by 2035 and committed to Net Zero for NHS-reportable Scope 3 emissions by 2045.

## Baseline Emissions Footprint

Baseline emissions are a record of the greenhouse gases that have been produced in the past and were produced prior to the introduction of any strategies to reduce emissions.

Baseline emissions are the reference point against which emissions reduction can be measured.

# Background

Evolutio manages approximately 8% of all NHS England ophthalmology referrals and delivers community-based eye care services to a population of over 5.5M people through a network of modern corporate NHS Ophthalmology Diagnostic and Treatment Centres and over 160 subcontracted optometry practices across a number of NHS Regions including Doncaster, London, Suffolk and Berkshire. In total, we have over 130 staff, including contractors, and over 500 staff working within subcontracted practices. In each commissioned area, we have strong relationships with partners in health and social care.

With the wide geographical spread of our services across both urban and rural populations, we manage patients with ranging socio-demographic characteristics, with each service tailored to meet the needs of the local population.

In these healthcare systems and working alongside key partners, we take collective responsibility for all our resources, delivering effective services and improving the health of the populations we serve. We have acknowledged our responsibility to support delivery of a net zero NHS and are aware of and comply with all current and future legislation that will impact on our sustainability position. Through the adoption of a continual improvement approach with respect to sustainability, our performance will continue to develop incrementally.

## Our carbon footprint

Evolutio understands the impact we have on the local economy, society and environment. We are committed to continually work to integrate sustainability into our business, ensuring our future is greener and aligned to the delivery of a net zero NHS. We have a responsibility to maximise our contribution to creating social value and ensure efficient use of resources. Planning now will help to ensure critical care pathways remain accessible and demand in services can be resourced sufficiently.

As a national provider of NHS Ophthalmology services, we consume a significant amount of energy and water and produce a volume of waste. With a clinical network of 11 corporate NHS Ophthalmology Diagnostic and Treatment Centres and over 160 subcontractors, we have movement of staff and patients across multiple large NHS regions and purchase a wide range of ophthalmic equipment and back-office supplies. These activities generate carbon dioxide emissions and collectively make up our carbon footprint. The impetus to reduce our carbon emissions and associated costs is clear, and we recognise the urgency of taking action now in order to meet our commitments to reducing emissions and set the course to net zero carbon.

Success in delivering our CRP and Achieving Net Zero will demonstrate our commitment and achievements towards being an environmentally aware and responsible organisation, contributing to the minimisation of climate change and increased protection of natural resources. We fully understand that this is no easy task and cannot be done alone – we will be encouraging participation and commitment from all employees, subcontractors, and patients. We will work in collaboration with system partners, including other organisations such as other parts of the NHS and local councils, as they will be key to achieving some of these goals.

## Baseline emissions

Evolutio first measured carbon emissions in 2022 where we undertook to better understand our impact on the environment and allow us to undertake to implement an agenda of reaching Net Zero by 2045. To allow like for like comparison, we use an Intensity Ratio, measuring tCO<sub>2</sub>e per 100 patient appointments.

2022 Baseline	Total (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)
Scope 1	13.1
Scope 2	41.7
Scope 3	118.2
Company CO <sub>2</sub> Emissions (tons)	173.04
<b>Intensity Ratio tCO<sub>2</sub>e per 100 appts: 0.46</b>	

# Current emissions

In January 2024 Evolutio undertook to report on 2023 emissions to allow comparisons to baseline figures and gauge the impact of measures introduced to reduce the environmental impact of the business.

2023 M	Total (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)
Scope 1	13.2
Scope 2	41.8
Scope 3	160.0
Company CO <sub>2</sub> Emissions (tons)	215.0
<b>Intensity Ratio tCO<sub>2</sub>e per 100 appts: 0.45</b>	

At the end of 2022 Evolutio had 5 clinics and delivered 37,590 patient appointments with a carbon intensity ratio of 0.46 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per 100 appointments.

At the end of 2023 Evolutio had 11 clinics and had delivered 47,192 patient appointments with a carbon intensity ratio of 0.45 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per 100 appointments, showing that during the year 2023 we had become more energy efficient across our estate.

## Objectives

Our CRP and Achieving Net Zero aims clarifies our sustainability objectives and sets out a clear plan of action to achieve clear and measurable targets whilst aligning with central government's [PPN 06/21](#). To allow us to meet these requirements we will:

- Establish a Board approved Green Plan including considerations relating to; carbon reduction, climate change adaptation alongside a suite of actions covering the sustainability agenda
- Measure, monitor and report on sustainable development and adaptation performance
- Evaluate performance to ascertain areas of strengths and opportunities for development
- Engage staff, service users and the public to help support the development of a more sustainable and resilient health and care system.

Our approach to delivering sustainable services addresses 6 key elements including:

- Leadership
- Digitalisation and Innovation
- Estates and Facilities
- Travel and Transport
- Supply Chains
- Our Workforce

## Estates and Facilities

Evolutio has always had a clear vision for the reduction of energy and water across our estate, ensuring a move towards sustainable facilities management and understanding the large cost savings that can be made by establishing a robust and effective energy management policy. We are working towards the provision of an estate for low carbon delivery with wellbeing in mind through our commitment to:

- Reduce carbon emissions across our estate in line with our carbon targets and wider sustainability goals.
- Develop plans to reduce our energy and water demand.
- Develop robust data management and reporting systems to monitor and report on progress against our commitment.



We will work with staff and the estates manager to ensure that all buildings and services are managed safely and efficiently to reduce costs and limit the environmental impact of our estate. This will include (but not limited to) several actions:

- Setting energy efficiency targets for all new premises and refurbishments
- Develop a roadmap for becoming net zero carbon, in line with the NHS Long Term Plan and Net Zero National Health Service targets
- Develop a metering strategy to prioritise investment in Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) across our estate
- Review our building occupation and utilisation
- Utilise cost-effective, low carbon solutions when undertaking new build and refurbishment projects
- Review water saving technologies and implement where possible.
- Implement renewable technologies across the estate (where possible) to reduce carbon emissions
- Utilise funding options (grants) to implement renewable and low carbon technologies.

### **What are we currently doing?**

Evolutio uses employed building contractors to ensure maximum adherence and support for our sustainable building plans. All Evolutio corporate owned clinics are constructed using maximum use of sustainable materials, whilst minimising energy consumption. All new build clinics are designed to leverage maximum natural cooling, such as pressurised or natural ventilation, and do not use air conditioning. Equally, all floor vinyl's are 100% recycled plastics, and all lighting is LED.

In the design and build of our head office, we have maximised three key aspects to maximise our green credentials:

- Maximum energy saving through design initiatives such as LED lighting, solar reflective glass, natural ventilation and high insulation materials
- Maximum use of recycled and sustainable building materials, such as recycled plastic cladding
- Maximum on site energy generation through solar power, including electric car charging from the solar power plant

## **Travel and Transport**

Sustainable forms of travel, and the reduction in the number of journeys necessary, have a range of benefits including improving health from reduced air and noise pollution. Reducing single-person vehicle travel can help our sites that experience limits on car parking and congestion, as well as easing late or missed appointments because of lack of parking availability.

We will maximise the health benefits of our travel and transport activity whilst minimising environment impacts, including:

- Analyse expenses to better understand travel patterns
- Develop a sustainable travel plan to minimise non-essential travel for staff
- Implement an electric car scheme across the organisation
- Provide cycle storage points at each building
- Use technology for virtual meetings to maintain reduced levels of non-essential travel
- Use technology i.e. telemedicine to deliver highly effective and sustainable care.



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### What are we currently doing?

eVonnnect ensures patients can seek care closer to home, and therefore not only increase resource sustainability, but improved accessibility and vastly reducing travel impact and carbon footprint for patients attending their appointments. It is our target to maintain all patients journeys below 10 miles when accessing community-based care. In 2020, the UK Government anecdotally stated that approximately 1 in 10 cars in transit between 9am and 5pm, were related to the delivery of NHS care.

All patients visiting an Evolutio corporate owned clinic are encouraged to use public transport during appointment booking and all clinics have been built within 500m of a bus stop to ensure this is practical for patients.

In addition to the sustainability benefits of technology enabled care, Evolutio have commenced new company fleet management contracts and all company owned vehicles will be replaced with all electric or hybrids by the end of 2024, with the first vehicles being delivered in May 2023. With the inception of an electric company car fleet, it is proposed that all corporate owned clinics will be fitted (where possible) with a 'pod point' to allow patients to charge their own electric vehicles whilst visiting the clinic. This will be communicated through all social media and marketing channels, as well as directly to patients during appointment scheduling communications.

As an organisation, we are always promoting the benefits of exercise on mental health and wellbeing. We offer all staff the opportunity to take part in the 'Cycle to Work Scheme'. We have over 40% of staff working remotely with scheduled 'in-office' days to reduce unnecessary travel and maximise contact/meeting time when in the office.

## Our Workforce

The success of our Green Plan relies on everyone playing a part. All staff need to be conscious of how their choices and behaviour at work impact the environment. The health and wellbeing of our workforce is integral to the sustainability of our services and the care for our patients. Through the promotion of healthy and sustainable behaviours, we can improve the wellbeing and productivity of our staff. We are committed to finding innovative ways to drive efficiency and productivity across our services, including new agile ways of working that improve staff experience and maintain productivity. We will create a collaborative environment by communicating with our staff, patients, visitors, and local communities through social media outlets, giving everybody an opportunity to contribute so they will feel a part of our sustainability journey. Through informing, empowering, and motivating our staff to take ownership of sustainable healthcare, our aims are to:

- Inform, empower and support our staff to take the necessary action to deliver high quality of care that does not compromise our ability to deliver high quality and sustainable care going forward.
- Embed sustainability into our HR strategy to ensure inclusion of sustainability as a topic within induction, training, annual appraisals and continued development plans to support a shift to more sustainable and resilient models of care.
- Develop a new staff engagement strategy to facilitate dissemination of campaigns and communications relating to our sustainability plans.
- Develop internal communications and materials to promote this Green Plan and support implementation of action plans across the organisation.
- Recruit internal sustainability champions to help disseminate key messages within their teams.

- We will collaborate with our communications department to inform and engage our various departments in order to promote our progress towards our sustainability targets.
- Provide learning, development and training opportunities so that our workforce is highly aware of our organisation's sustainable development objectives.
- Reduce sickness absences and conduct staff health and wellbeing surveys to show our workforce wellbeing is improving.

### **What are we currently doing?**

Evolutio have already made progress in this area. Our organisation and estates are smoke free, with support given to staff looking to stop smoking. Flexible working and working from home have been established practices for a number of years, supporting and accommodating the personal needs of our staff to enhance wellbeing and promotion of positive mental health. Our HR policies promote and support healthy choices through inclusion of policies on absence management, promotion of health choices, alcohol and drugs management and managing stress effectively.

All of our workforce is involved with the organisational goals for becoming net zero, achieved through ongoing dialogue and staff engagement. Leadership is driven at every level of the organisation, identifying champions with passion and drive for the green agenda. Sustainability is a standing agenda item on our quarterly Quality and Improvement Team meetings, with the item and discussion led by our sustainability champion. The specific initiatives have laid strong foundations for the longer-term net zero strategy is seen as a continuum and everyone's responsibility.

Evolutio are committed to protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and contracted workforce. We recognise the importance of identifying and tackling the causes of work-related stress. We also recognise that personal stress, while unrelated to the workplace, can adversely affect the wellbeing of staff at work. We support the mental wellbeing of all our staff and provide appropriate support for staff who are suffering from stress or mental ill health, on a confidential basis where appropriate, regardless of its source.

Evolutio have made the Mental Health at Work commitment and proactively follow the six standards (below), to improve and support the mental health of our employees.

1. Prioritise mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity
2. Proactively ensure work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes
3. Promote an open culture around mental health
4. Increase organisational confidence and capability
5. Provide mental health tools and support
6. Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

Evolutio have a contracted Mental Health Counsellor to which all employees can access as and when required to confidentially discuss any concerns, worries or mental health issues, whether work related or not, with costs covered in full by the company.

Alongside our counsellor, we employ Health Assured to provide our Employee Assistance Programme, providing:

- Free 24/7 counselling, legal & information line
- Critical incident advice & telephone support
- Online health portal & access to the My Healthy Advantage app
- Relationship management support & usage reporting\*
- Management support line & counselling
- Manager support guides

On our next annual staff survey, we will look to identify the training needs of our staff so that we can help upskill our workforce and support succession planning.

Through our Cycle to Work Scheme, we are supporting our staff to become more physically active to improve their health and wellbeing and reducing carbon emissions.

Where possible, we will look to improve onsite green spaces to support staff wellbeing, including consideration of spaces for outside meetings and staff breaks.