Projects on Green Endoscopy

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Conflict of interest statement

I herewith declare anything that may potentially be viewed as a conflict of interest during the past three years such as paid or unpaid consultancies, business interests or sources of honoraria payments:

Nothing to declare
“The moment we decide to fulfil something, we can do anything.”

Greta Thunberg
Background

- In the UK Endoscopy is the third highest emitting hospital department generating about 3.09kg of waste per bed day

- Which is equivalent to burning 39 million pounds of coal or 13,500 tons of plastic

- Each endoscopic procedure generates approximately 2kg of disposable waste
Climate change and health

“Climate change is a major threat to health and threatens to undermine the last 50 years of public health gains,” (Haddock et al 2021)

- Respiratory health due to pollution and smoke from wildfires
- Future pandemics like Covid-19
- Enteric pathogens due to raising water levels and flooding
- Malnutrition due to crop failure
What we need to do...

- Highlight the problem
- Engagement from your Teams
- Buy in from Management
- Close working relationships with local recycling centres
- Start with the simple things first

Small changes make significant impact
Making a change – how to start

• Change in Culture and Behaviour
• Creating a team of “Green Champions” or “Green Team”
• Sorting waste – separating clinical waste from domestic
• Recycling hard plastics & instruments
• Networking with waste management teams
• Work with local recycling centres
• Creating a sustainability promise
Appropriate patient selection & reduction in the amount of endoscopy could have the largest impact on carbon emissions

- Can surveillance procedures be reduced?
- Are there alternative investigations?
- Are procedures over used?
- Can we source reduced waste packaging
- Can we digitalize documentation

This will require a shift in behaviour patterns and attitudes
First steps

• Sort domestic, clinical and recycling waste streams
• Think about reducing paper
• Consider accessories recycling
• PC shut downs
• Motion sensor lighting
• Explore reducing alternatives to sterile water
• Explore Reusable PPE
• Reduce histology where appropriate
What’s next – A motivated team!

- Sustainability Champions
- Education and training
- Management support
- Clinician Input
- Challenge industry
- Engagement with policy makers
- Patient engagement
- Keep up the enthusiasm!
“What do you want to be when you grow up?”

“Still here,” said the Polar bear.
References


