

Talk Green to Me!

Attitudes, behaviours and needs for sustainable practice within HIV/Sexual Health Services: results from a national workforce survey

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Sustainable Healthcare Specialist Interest Group



BACKGROUND

- In 2024, the BASHH/BHIVA Sus SIG was founded to promote best practice of environmentally sustainable healthcare within Sexual Health (SH) and HIV clinics across the UK.
- Little is known around staff knowledge or interest in climate-related health within SH & HIV. It was important to gather baseline staff data to inform the SIG of where their action would be best prioritised.

OBJECTIVES

- To explore current actions against climate change both in personal and professional areas in staff working within SH & HIV, using the theoretical domains of COM-B (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation-Behaviour) model.
- To explore staff views of barriers and enablers to improving the environmental impact of work within healthcare settings.

METHODS

- A 11-question (5 minute) Microsoft Forms survey was distributed to members of BASHH/BHIVA (~1000), as well as nurse, Pharmacy and Health advisor associations and networks within SH & HIV between January–March 2025.
- Demographic data, work details and current personal & professional climate actions were elicited. Participants were asked to self-rate their capabilities, opportunities and motivations for reducing their environmental impact at work.
- Barriers and enablers to implementing change were collected with suggested areas and free text options.

RESULTS

- 273 staff responded, most responses (56%) were from people working in SH.
- A large proportion (52%) of responses were from London & South-East England, followed by Scotland & Wales.
- Respondent staff groups were nurses (29%), consultants (23%), SAS doctors (10%), admin staff (10%) and other (28%).
- Over 80% of respondents either strongly agreed/agreed that motivation and responsibility were factors that influence their climate-related behaviour in the workplace.
- Lack of time, funding and support were key barriers to implementing changes in the workplace (see Figure 2).

Figure 1. Comparison of personal and professional climate change actions among respondents.

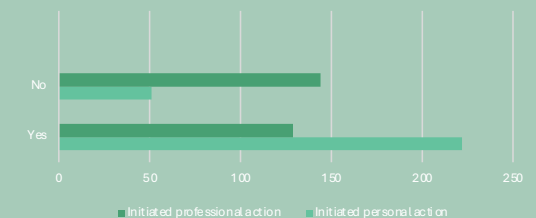


Figure 2. Barriers to implementing changes aimed at decreasing the environmental impact in workplaces.

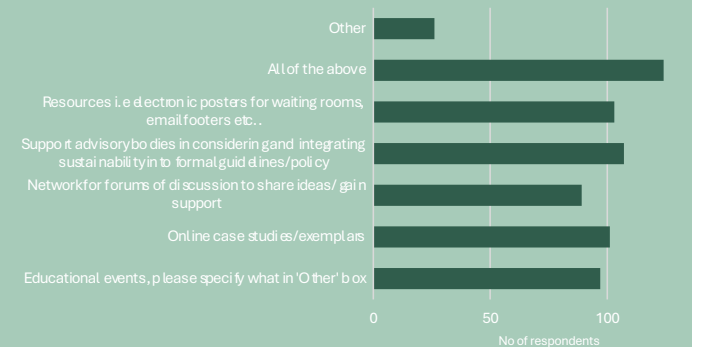
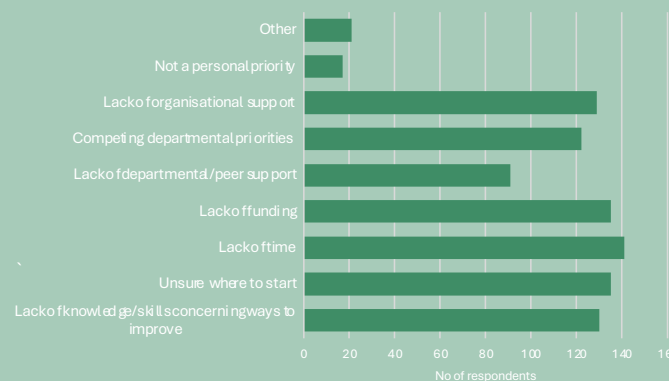


Figure 3. Enablers for implementing changes to decrease the environmental impact in workplaces.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Staff reported high levels of motivation and individual responsibility in wanting to make changes at work to mitigate climate change. Lower levels of capability, such as limited knowledge and skills, along with a lack of opportunity - such as insufficient organisational support and time - were reported as barriers to change.

Several specific recommendations arose: a specialty-wide approach in aim of promoting the most impactful interventions, encompassing aspects of sustainability into national BASHH/ BHIVA guidelines, calls for widespread recycling schemes to be available in all NHS Trusts and for the Sus SIG to provide more education in the area. Consequently, BASHH/BHIVA Sus SIG has produced a 10-step guide to support clinics, and a repeat survey will be performed in the future to assess impact.