

EMBEDDING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN UK PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING

Update Report – November 2018

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Introduction

Climate change has been named as the biggest threat to global public health in the 21st century and tackling it as the biggest opportunity for population health improvement¹.

As current and future leaders in the field of public health in the UK and overseas, specialty registrars must develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to lead cross-agency action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and champion the pursuit of sustainable development in the health, public health and social care systems.

Reflecting the emergence of this training need, the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) added both an overarching statement that sustainability and carbon reduction are fundamental to all core competency areas as well as a specific learning outcome (Learning Outcome 5.7) to its specialty training curriculum in its review of the curriculum in 2015.

The UK Public Health Registrar Sustainable Development Network (SDN) is pleased to share examples of progress being made by public health registrars, supervisors, and training programme directors/heads of school, in embedding the principles of sustainable development into public health training policy and practice.

This report follows on from one produced by the SDN in March 2017. The work outlined in this report corresponds to a checklist² of recommendations produced by the SDN in 2013, to assist regions in identifying areas for further action.

The report aims to:

- Provide the FPH with an update on SDN activity and illustrate how registrars are providing leadership in environmental sustainability across the UK;
- Provide Training Programme Directors, Heads of Schools, and Educational and Placement Supervisors with examples of how environmental sustainability can be embedded into public health training including policy and practice;
- Provide Public Health Registrars with examples of how to demonstrate competence in environmental leadership.

Purpose

¹ Watts et al. <u>The Lancet, Vol. 386, No. 10006</u> 2015. Health and Climate Change: Policy Responses to Protect Public Health.

² See Appendix 1.

About the UK Public Health Registrar Sustainable Development Network

The SDN was formed in 2011 to bring together colleagues with an interest in environmental sustainability. The SDN has since established itself as a medium for training, professional development and advocacy around climate change and the environment.

The SDN believes that actions which aim to combat environmental degradation and bring people closer to nature provide significant opportunities for health gain. The SDN is committed to making sustainable development a core principle that cuts across all public health priorities.

UK Public Health Sustainable Development Network – Update

The SDN produces an annual work plan which it measures progress against. The 5 core objectives are to:

 Bring together public health registrars across the UK for professional networking and work around sustainable development.

- 2. Support sustainable training policies and procedures in the UK public health training regions.
- 3. Provide opportunities for placement and professional development on sustainable development and registrar achievement of learning outcome 5.7 (environmental sustainability).
- 4. Advocate on sustainable development issues.
- 5. Develop links and work in partnership with relevant organisations.

Since the last update report, the SDN has:

Held quarterly teleconference meetings with its members.
 The final 30 minutes of the meetings are reserved for presentations by SDN members and external speakers.
 Recent presentations include: Food Waste (Dean Pearce, SWRnewstar), Sustainable food systems including the work of the Soil Association (Kristin Bash and Amanda Donnelly), Fracking (Patrick Saunders), MedAct (Dave McCoy), and Sustainable Development Advocacy Tips and Hints (David Pencheon);

- Through online surveys, explored the knowledge, skills and attitudes of public registrars and their supervisors towards competence in environmental sustainability leadership, and collated examples of placement opportunities. A summary of the results is presented in Appendix 2;
- Published a comment in the Lancet Planetary Health on sustainable development in public health training³;
- Responded to several relevant consultations including: The Joint Select Committee Inquiry into Air Quality; The London Mayor's Draft Environmental Strategy; NHS England's Long-term Plan;
- Supported an audit to assess the extent of recognition and engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals among presenters and attendees at the Public Health England (PHE) Annual Conference in 2017;
- Supported Clean Air Day 2018 campaign, raising awareness of this within the FPH and with colleagues;
- Worked with and supported the FPH Sustainable Development Special Interest Group, including the development of a repository of briefings.

Membership and representation

As of November 2018, the network had 74 members from across the UK, with network representatives in all UK territorial training regions.



³ Quantz D, Jenkin D, Stevenson E, Pencheon D, Middleton J. Sustainable development in public health consultant education. The Lancet Planetary Health. October 2017, Vol 1, e260.

Regional Updates

East of England

- There is a Sustainability lead for PHREE (Public Health Registrars in the East of England).
- The Sustainability lead and other StRs actively participate in the network.
- There is a route to ensure updates on key sustainable development activities are communicated to TPDs and the Head of School via STC.
- An updated action plan for 2018-2020 has been developed. The
 actions relate to four key themes travel, events, education
 and induction, and advocacy.
- The action plan includes a follow-up travel survey which has recently been completed.
- Sustainability guidance and a checklist has been developed for PHREE training days and network meetings covering travel, printing, food and refreshments.
- Progress on the action plan is a standing item on the agenda for the bi-monthly registrar network meetings.
- A training day on sustainability was run for registrars in June 2017.
- Sustainable development is incorporated in monthly teaching sessions for FY2s on their public health placement. This teaching is delivered by StRs.

- There are opportunities for registrar placements at the Sustainable Development Unit in Cambridge.
- Registrars have opportunities to work on projects related to sustainability in their placements.

- Implementing a recycling policy at a CCG;
- Working on Social Value; using the Social Value TOMS tool to create an organisational baseline within the PHE Centre - which includes aspects of sustainability.

East Midlands

- There is a standing agenda item on sustainable development in the monthly StR meetings and a number of StRs engaged in related activities.
- StRs have completed a sustainability audit using the network sustainability checklist. Recommendations are being progressed by the Quality Sub-Committee of the Public Health School.
- A session on Sustainability and Health has been introduced to the new StRs' induction day in August each year.
- East Midlands PH StRs have adopted the SDU and PHE 'Guidelines and good practice for sustainable events' for training and events.
- Sustainability has been included as a consideration within the East Midlands placement rotation policy.
- East Midlands StRs have attended NHS Employers 'Sustainable Health and Care campaign' regional events to explore and disseminate information on embedding sustainable practice into the health and care system.
- A regular update on sustainability is provided to the Curriculum Standards Sub-Committee of the Public Health School, which is attended by the TPD and Chaired by the Head of School.
- A travel audit was completed in 2014/15 and a travel re-audit (including a carbon footprint) is planned for 2018/19. Car sharing and the use of public or active travel are promoted.

- Mobile phones are provided to all StRs on-call and teleconference facilities are available for many meetings.
- Some teaching on environmental sustainability and public health is available for StRs and further opportunities are being explored (e.g. through our local Environmental Health Training Course).
- Ad hoc teaching and research opportunities are available at the East Midlands Universities, some of which include sustainability. Further opportunities with academic institutions are being explored.

Case Study

The East of England and East Midlands training regions have been working with PHE to develop a sustainability fellowship for the East of England.

The post will be available to StRs and will provide protected time on placements to progress sustainability within the region. It will encompass strategic leadership for the region whilst allowing the registrar to complete one or two specific projects of interest in LA, CCG or a provider organisation.

London/Kent, Surrey and Sussex

- StRs have contributed to the SDN response to the London Mayor's consultation on the Environment Strategy.
- A StR in the region has helped to re-establish the FPH London Health and Transport SIG which gives registrars an opportunity to learn about, and advocate for, sustainable and healthy transport systems and healthy streets / environments. This group also responds to consultations on air pollution and transport at a local and national level, with opportunities for registrars to lead on pieces of work.
- StR placements in Local Authorities also include work with NHS Trusts to review their sustainability agenda and develop the sustainable element of the Sustainability and Transformation Plans.



North East

- Registrars (StRs) have been encouraged to access the 'Leadership on Climate Change' online course through Future Learn.
- A Sustainable Events policy has been promoted and shared with the training programme.
- Sustainability has been included in the 2018 regional training programme induction.
- The regional Part A exam preparation programme includes a revision session covering environmental sustainability. The session is delivered by two StRs and includes air pollution and climate change as key topics.
- The region held an education session dedicated to environmental sustainability at a 2017 StR meeting.
- All regional StR meetings are held in locations which are readily accessible by public transport.
- A 'sustainability' themed joint annual meeting was hosted in the region with Scottish Public Health StRs. Video conferencing facilities were used at this event to minimise travel.

- Developing a business case for an NHS building to improve facilities and support active travel;
- Conducting a community street audit of an urban area;
- Producing a briefing paper on air quality and pollution for a local councillor;
- Evaluating a 'holiday hunger' programme in a local authority area;
- Investigating the social, financial, nutritional and environmental potential of cookery classes;
- Producing a "State of the North East; Respiratory Health 2017 report" which included the impact of air pollution on health;
- Leading a project to increase clinical engagement in sustainability by addressing NICE guidance on fuel poverty.

Northern Ireland

- Despite being a small deanery with just 10 public health registrars, there is now a representative in place on the network and all registrars are invited to attend the network meetings.
- The Public Health Agency for Northern Ireland (PHA) (the StRs' employing organisation), released its first Sustainable Development Policy in 2015 which includes guidance on remote working. PHA partners with Sustrans to promote active travel as part of the working day.

- Exploring options to make recycling facilities more accessible in the workplace.
- A return on investment study of the Connswater Greenway, estimating the total monetary benefit of eight key areas which the CCG should impact upon, including: property values; biodiversity; flood alleviation; tourism; labour employment and productivity; quality of place; climate change and health.



North West

- The sustainability leads have been working with the Head of School, Training Programme Directors (TPDs) and School Board to embed sustainability in public health training, including developments to the sustainable travel and remote working policies. Sustainable development is a standing agenda item on the North West (NW) Registrar Network meetings.
- Sustainable development is now included in the induction programme for new registrars and will be updated with StR feedback for next year.
- A sustainable development session was held as part of the Cheshire & Merseyside Learning Hub for supervisors and registrars. This is expected to be taken forward and rotated between each of the 3 NW zones annually.
- The NW Registrar Network has adopted a sustainable events policy guideline for training events. The Registrar Network meetings include teleconferencing facilities whenever possible.
- Sustainability leads are working on reinstating the annual registrar survey, with extra questions on sustainability in training.
- An 'educational supervisor's toolkit' has been recently updated including workplace sustainability in training placements.
- A proposal for a NW Sustainable Travel Audit has been prepared, signed off by TPDs and distributed to registrars for expressions of interest. It is expected that a registrar or group of registrars will undertake this work in 2018/2019.

Individual registrars have been involved with:

- A health needs assessment including the relationship between air pollution and stroke;
- Compiling a local authority health and environmental protection annual report, including a section on air quality;
- Working with the regional health protection team alongside local transport networks to develop an action plan for Clean Air Day in Greater Manchester.

Case Study: Using the Sustainable Events Policy

The 2018 North West School of Public Health Annual Event was planned in accordance with the sustainable events policy guideline. Lunch was exclusively vegetarian, electronic programmes were used in preference to printed booklets and information was provided on sustainable travel options to the venue, including the promotion of car-sharing. An awareness-raising session was also presented by the sustainability leads. These initiatives were well received by event attendees.

Scotland

- A Climate Change and Health training day was held for StRs in August 2017 which the majority of StRs attended. The day covered a variety of topics including: extreme weather events; resilience; the NHS' role in mitigating and adapting to Climate Change in Scotland, including Scope 3 emissions, and the health co-benefits/dis-benefits of climate change actions.
- The Scottish Managed Sustainable Health Network (SMaSH)
 has been hosting one day workshops on Environmental and
 Social Sustainability Leadership in health and care. These
 days have been well attended by PH StRs in Scotland.
- Public Health in Scotland is currently undergoing reform. This
 includes the formation of a new national Public Health body –
 Public Health Scotland. There have been multi stakeholder
 events to identify national and local public health priorities.
 PH StRs have been involved in advocating strongly for
 sustainability and planetary health at priority mapping events.
- Public health registrars in Scotland have been participating in a travel audit monitoring work and training related travel mileage and exploring potential barriers and opportunities for greener and more active travel options.

- Supporting a "Train the Trainer" session which explored with supervisors the requirements for Learning Outcome 5.7, as well as highlighting potential local and national project and placement opportunities for accomplishing the learning outcome;
- Producing a National Housing Report overlapping with sustainability issues.
- Supporting Clean Air Day in a number of health boards.
- Developing a Student Selected Component (SSC) for 2nd/3rd year medical students on environmental sustainability.

South West

- A new StR working group and action plan for sustainable public health training is being developed.
- Environmental sustainability has been added as a standing item at the StR business meetings.
- All training placements support remote working (particularly important in a large region).
- The Deanery operates a default paperless system including expenses, annual leave and events.
- Events are planned according to the NHS Sustainable Events Guide, including car sharing.
- Teleconferencing has been successfully implemented and is increasingly used to save journey time. Skype and videoconferencing for training purposes are being trialled.
- Registrars receive teaching on environmental sustainability and health through the London School of Health and Tropical Medicine, University of West England and Cardiff, depending on their Masters placement. A joint tutorial on sustainability and health is planned with GP registrars.
- There are research opportunities relating to sustainability and health through the WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Urban Environments at the University of the West of England. The South West also hosts the European Centre for Environment and Human Health.

- StRs are seeking out opportunities to work on projects related to sustainable development within the Local Authority setting and meet learning objective 5.7 in the new curriculum. A selection of these projects was presented to Educational Supervisors at the recent training conference.
- The Deanery promotes national treasure placements relating to sustainability e.g. PHE and SDU. Registrars in the region are members of the PHE Air Quality Steering Group and are contributing to development of a regional strategy.

- Reviewing Local Authority work against recently published NICE air quality standards;
- Evaluating the Plymouth Healthy Homes programme (a holistic assessment of houses to address both environmental and health needs);
- A climate change chapter in a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment;
- A climate change adaptation plan for Devon County Council;
- A Local Authority Climate Local Pledge (national LGA initiative launched in 2012 to support councils to reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to a changing climate);
- An MSc dissertation 'Barriers and enablers to integrating the environmental perspective into UK Nutrition Policy'.

Thames Valley

- Sustainable development has been including in local StR business meetings and communicated to the TPD.
- The first sustainability audit has been initiated by two StRs.
 This included a questionnaire for all StRs on travel,
 education, training, research and enthusiasm for change to progress the sustainability agenda. Recommendations from the audit are due to be discussed with the TPD, training support officer and the workforce programme lead.
- Sustainability is due to be embedded in the StR induction guide.
- The SDU/PHE 'Guidelines and good practice for sustainable events' have been promoted for use at StR-led events.

Individual registrars have been involved with:

- Sustainability work in the context of human, animal and environmental health as part of a national treasure placement;
- Research projects on diet, sustainability and health;
- Developing plans for locally-sourced fruit and vegetable provision at an NHS Trust;
- Offering and supervising a medical school student-selected component project on climate change, health and the role of doctors;
- Developing a planetary health policy brief for ex-heads of government within a Commonwealth Secretariat placement;
- Working on healthy eating, air quality and active travel within Local Authority placements.

Wales

- A sustainability update is planned for the 2018 version of the Rough Guide to Public Health Training in Wales document.
- Plans have been developed to undertake a travel audit with the Health and Sustainability Hub – this will include review of active travel and car sharing.
- There is now a flexible working policy in place and teleconferencing facilities have been reviewed.
- The Sustainable Events policy has been shared and promoted.
- Actions have been agreed to develop education and research opportunities in sustainability and health.



Wessex

- Sustainability routinely features as an agenda item at the regional meetings endorsed both by the registrar chair and by the local training programme director.
- The new cohort of registrars had a distinct session on sustainability as part of their induction which will continue in subsequent years.
- An updated travel audit is due to be conducted again this calendar year.
- Teleconferencing and remote working is supported for the health protection on call rota. Given the large geographical size of the Wessex patch, StRs hope to continue work on the wider remote working policies for health protection placements.
- Car sharing for registrars is now facilitated via a WhatsApp group which is also used as a platform for StRs to support one another with sustainability project work.
- The inaugural Wessex Public Health conference, facilitated and led by Public Health registrars, had a strong focus on sustainability with a vegetarian only buffet and no bottled water. The event was deliberately hosted in a venue with excellent public transport links.
- To integrate and normalise sustainability within non-specialised placements, StRs are leading a series of sustainability related work streams which address topics such as food, travel and events. It is hoped that these could be embedded in a variety of host organisations throughout the patch.

West Midlands

- A sustainability incentives scheme is being developed to recognise the work of registrars to improve personal and workplace sustainability in the region.
- Sustainability has been embedded into the induction programme on an annual basis.
- An academic day on sustainability and health will be run biannually for all registrars in the region, so that all attend at least two such events during their training. To inform the content of the next study day a poll of Black Country registrars' learning priorities was conducted, this covered a range of SDGs as well as personal and healthcare sustainability.
- There is an active group of registrars working on a range of side projects to increase awareness of local environmental issues:
 - Engaging with local clean air community groups in Birmingham to help build support for action on air quality and sustainable travel. Examples include introducing community groups to university experts via a stakeholder workshop, and collaboration on a video for National Clean Air Day with the local Clean Air Parents Network.
 - Supporting the fossil fuel divestment movement, with successes including the RCGP's decision to divest its £10m investment portfolio, and supporting the local campaign to divest the West Midlands Pension Fund by running a workshop on health, climate change and divestment for local authority staff.

Yorkshire & Humber

• StR teaching sessions have included issues relating to sustainable development, including fracking.



- Considering climate change when advising on planning and development applications;
- Working on air quality improvement as part of a Local Authority Health Protection annual report;
- Research on the health impacts and risks of working with waste in the Kathmandu Valley, part of a project highlighting the problem of waste and working towards enhanced waste management systems in Nepal;
- Facilitating the North SD network, organising masterclasses, starting the ambassadors' programme, writing an action plan and facilitating a learning network;
- Increasing the sustainability of SRC meetings, training and events which now provide only vegetarian food and encourage public transport or car sharing.

Opportunities for the year ahead

- Continue professional development sessions through the Network;
- Strengthen advocacy role including responding to consultations and developing social media presence;
- Explore video as a means of highlighting the link between the environment and health;
- Re-view, adapt and expand SDN's checklist (Appendix 1);
- Explore how to engage with other speciality training programmes to heighten awareness of sustainable development.

The SDN welcomes comments on this report, including views on the opportunities for public health registrars to both broaden and strengthen their contribution to environmental sustainability.

Appendix 1

Core regional representative duties:

- Create a standing agenda item on sustainable development on their local registrar network meetings (if applicable) and engage with registrars in their region on SD activities/issues.
- Communicate to Training Programme Directors (TPD)/Heads of School (HS) on key activities of the registrar SD network.

The best sustainability practice checklist includes:

- Sustainability has been included in programme induction.
- A travel audit including carbon footprint has been conducted.
- Policies on remote working have been reviewed.
- Teleconference and/or videoconferencing are available for training. Mobile phones are provided where needed.
- Car sharing and use of public or active travel are supported.
- Training events are run in line with a sustainable events policy.
- Registrars receive teaching on environmental sustainability and public health.

- Registrars have opportunities to teach about sustainability and health.
- Registrars have opportunities to conduct research which relates to sustainability and health.
- Registrars have opportunities to work on projects related to sustainability and public health in a local setting and meet learning objective 5.7 in the new curriculum.
- Registrars can undertake specialist placements related to environmental sustainability.
- Registrars participate in the Public Health Registrar Sustainable
 Development Network.

Appendix 2: The experience of UK public health specialty registrars and their supervisors in developing competency in environmental sustainability leadership

Introduction

The SDN hypothesised that several factors will influence the quality of registrars' training in environmental sustainability, including registrars' and supervisors' own knowledge about and enthusiasm for the subject, organisational leadership in sustainability in their training settings and access to specialist training placements.

Methods

Two online surveys, one for PH StRs and one for their supervisors were developed by two public health registrars with input from the SDN to ensure internal validity and local applicability.

Web links to the surveys were sent out via the SDN's regional representatives. The surveys were open for 4 weeks in June and July 2017.

Summary of key findings

There were 152 completed surveys from PH StRs, and 99 completed responses from supervisors. There were responses from all UK public health training regions and registrars from all stages of training were represented.

Quantitative results

- In the context of environmental sustainability leadership, PH StRs on average rated their knowledge as good, motivation as very good, and their ability to apply this knowledge and motivation as reasonable.
- Supervisors rated their knowledge in terms of creating, supervising and assessing environmental sustainability leadership training opportunities and their ability to do so as good. They rated their motivation to create and supervise these training opportunities and assess registrar competence as environmental sustainability leaders as very good.
- In general, PH StRs rated training regions in the UK as good for obtaining knowledge relating to climate change and health, while supervisors rated training regions as reasonable.
- PH StRs and their supervisors rated training regions as reasonable in terms of both practising and demonstrating environmental leadership skills, as well as the range and quality of environmental sustainability placements and supervision available.
- Of the PH StRs that had fully achieved learning outcome 5.7, the majority (94.2%) had used a work report as at least part fulfilment of this learning outcome. Types of projects included:
 - Briefings, presentations, action plans and strategies relating to local air quality.
 - Climate change adaptation plans.
 - Reports/chapters for JSNA and DPH reports relating to climate change and health.

- Proposals to reduce waste from healthcare (e.g. pharmaceutical waste).
- Embedding principles of sustainability into public health programmes.
- Social value strategy development including environmental and social responsibility.

Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Results

 There was an emphasis on formal teaching or training as providing the knowledge base. This could be in MPH or through exams, CPD, one-off courses, regional training days. A need was expressed for more:

"As an educational supervisor I think I would need training on this area..." S98

 There was a lack of awareness of opportunities to apply this knowledge though, and a lack of confidence in what constituted achievement of the learning outcome.

"It would be helpful if opportunities for relevant projects were communicated across the trainee/trainer network" \$100

"Not sure what counts towards this outcome and ES/TPD [educational supervisor/training programme director] not clear so no-one seems to know how to meet it" R148

 Where people were aware of opportunities, there were conflicting views about how easily the knowledge can be applied.
 A range of specialist (or supralocal) organisations were identified as providing opportunities. Some felt opportunities to incorporate environmental sustainability in non-specialist placements were widespread

"ES [environmental sustainability] is core business for local authorities..." R115

"really this outcome should be achievable in any placement..." R89

Others felt the opportunities were very limited in local government or health boards

"Within the local authority placement there is very little awareness or willingness to engage in the sustainability debate" R126

 There was a strong view that SD was not yet mainstream in public health itself, let alone in the wider organisations where registrars work, and that this was a major barrier.

"Sustainability is given such a low priority compared to other considerations that it is rarely treated as important, and never given due urgency. Few ESs [educational supervisors] are really serious or knowledgeable about sustainability." R51

"...this [SD] is seen as an optional extra for many local public health teams" 591

 Several topics were cited as potential in-roads though, including air quality, transport and travel, physical activity, housing and planning. It was noted that they required working with colleagues from different teams or organisations.

- The need for supervisors to themselves be knowledgeable, motivated and act as role models for leadership in environmental sustainability was recognised.
 - "We need to develop the skills of consultants etc to be leaders themselves on this topic. Only then will they be really effective supervisors/trainers." S73
- That said, registrars recognised the need to be proactive, and some were already acting as leaders themselves, creating opportunities for themselves and others and driving the agenda forward
 - "...as StRs we have responsibility to lead on this agenda, we are not training to be leaders we should be leading now." R51
- Ultimately, to enable all registrars to meet the learning outcome,
 SD needs to be embedded into routine placements and projects,
 which is possible because it is broad and widely relevant.

"I'm particularly interested and engaged in this agenda, other trainers may not be aware or understand and are still providing the silo type training with specific "pieces" of work, which do not offer enough opportunities for collaboration and leadership in this area. ... People also need to recognise the SD components of their work, much related work probably goes unrecognised." \$58

Conclusions

Learning opportunities will become more apparent as sustainable development is embedded in all that we do in public health. However, public health registrars have a pivotal role in moving sustainable development into the mainstream and there are measures that the SDN can support to ensure registrars are confident in their ability to lead in this area.

Recommendations:

- Produce example placements/projects for achieving Learning Outcome 5.7, including local opportunities and specialist attachments.
- Produce a portal of recommended learning resources for supervisors to strengthen their own environmental sustainability knowledge, to enable supervisors to readily recognise opportunities for registrars to work towards learning outcome 5.7 and feel confident in assessing competence.
- 3. Empower registrars to be leaders in environmental sustainability through encouragement and providing the conditions for registrars to create their own opportunities.
- 4. Increase the visibility and recognised importance of environmental sustainability in relation to public health through the creation of a Public Health Sustainable Leader Award, in collaboration with national public health organisations.



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