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Sustainability in Nutrition & Dietetics: Where are we now?

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Sustainability in Nutrition & Dietetics

Where are we now?

Faye Telford-Penfount, Writer and Publisher
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CN Magazine, Complete Media & Marketing Ltd,
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With the topic of sustainability becoming a regular feature in all aspects of our lives, this year, the CN Team launched a new CN Award category focusing on sustainability initiatives. In turn, this got us thinking further about the nutrition and dietetic arena as a whole – not just about those of you on the frontline, but also organisations, groups, associations and industry – what action is taking place, and what roles are being developed to actively make nutrition and dietetics more sustainable? So, with this in mind, CN Team members Faye and Jodie sought to do a bit of investigating, in order to discover how the world of nutrition and dietetics is becoming more sustainable! As a result, within this article, we provide a snapshot of initiatives and developments that have, or are, taking place (this is by no means exhaustive), which we hope will further encourage and inspire us all to think more sustainably, and positively acknowledge and recognise what is being done to make an all important difference to the world we live in.

Background

Before we venture into nutrition and dietetics specifically, here's a bit of background on the National Healthcare Service's (NHS) current drive for a greener/net zero healthcare delivery service.

A net zero NHS

In 2020, the NHS launched the campaign 'For a greener NHS', which sought to mobilise 1.3 million NHS staff, develop an evidence-based route map and establish a date for the NHS to reach net zero. Following this, in 2022, NHS England produced the report 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service'. This report set out two distinct targets:


- 'For the emissions we control directly (the NHS Carbon Footprint), net zero by 2040, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2028 to 2032'
- 'For the emissions we can influence (our NHS Carbon Footprint Plus), net zero by 2045, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036 to 2039.'

Within this report, there is a section on 'Food, catering and nutrition', which confirms that food and catering services are responsible for approximately 6% of total NHS emissions, and states that: *'Healthier, locally sourced food can improve wellbeing while cutting emissions related to agriculture, transport, storage and waste across the supply chain and on NHS estate.'*¹ This correlates with the earlier (2020) Independent Review of NHS Hospital Food, which highlights that with regards to hospital food and environmental sustainability, the biggest difference can be achieved by focusing on: *'...procurement and supply chain sustainability, and on reducing food waste.'*²

With regards to sustainable models of care, the report highlights three key areas:

1. Principles underpinning models of care
 2. Prevention and health inequalities
 3. The role of digital in supporting low carbon transformation.
- Through the Health and Social Care Act 2022, the NHS has become the first healthcare system to embed net zero into legislation.³

References: 1. NHS England (2022). Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service. Accessed online: www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2022/07/B1728-delivering-a-net-zero-nhs-july-2022.pdf (Aug 2023). 2. Department of Health and Social Care (2020). Report of the independent review of NHS hospital food. Accessed online: www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-nhs-hospital-food (Aug 2023). 3. Health and Care Act 2022. Accessed online: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/31/contents/enacted (Aug 2023).



The BDA Sustainable Diets Group have posed the question: Could dietitians be influential in achieving sustainability?”

British Dietetic Association (BDA) Sustainable Diets Group

Sustainability in healthcare is an advancing field and an increasingly important topic among health organisations, whether they are government or industry. The resounding message from various sources is clear: with the food and agriculture industry responsible for one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions, immediate action is necessary to curb these emissions and prevent a temperature rise exceeding 1.5 degrees celsius.

As a collective, The BDA Sustainable Diets Group have posed the question: Could dietitians be influential in achieving sustainability? Our focus for the coming years, therefore, lies in education, networking and collaboration within the profession. We aim to upskill and instil confidence in dietitians, cementing their position as key professionals who can support this ambitious task.

Education

Numerous resources exist to support the profession in upskilling on sustainability and incorporating it into their everyday practice, including the One Blue Dot resources, Sustainable Diets Food Fact Sheet, Eat Lancet, and Green AHP. A sustainable diet does not have to differ greatly from a healthy diet, therefore just as dietitians are instrumental in educating individuals about healthy eating, they are also best placed to educate people about the impact of their choices on the health of the planet. While some dietitians may hesitate to include sustainability due to concerns about potential nutritional deficiencies, the One Blue Dot report addresses these concerns in detail and supports clinicians in exploring healthy options for both individuals and the planet in collaboration with their patients.

Networking

We have outreached across the country as a group, spreading the message about sustainability to various clinical settings, including acute care, community healthcare, industry and the NHS. We firmly believe that everyone has a part to play, and our goal is to act as the bridge between different organisations, providing support in achieving their sustainability missions.

Collaboration

We recognise that we cannot achieve our goals without the support of other groups, professionals and organisations that have already embraced sustainability in their strategic roadmaps and future planning. Our aim is to share best practices and inspire the profession by showcasing successful examples of how sustainability has been incorporated into everyday practice.

To this end, we are organising our first sustainable diets event on 12th September in Birmingham (<https://bit.ly/BDASDSGmeet>). This event will bring together both members and non-members, creating a space for discussions on the importance of sustainable eating for ourselves, and our patients. Attendees can expect a wealth of clinical and practical examples, empowering dietitians to actively participate in sustainable healthcare.

Find out more...

If you would like to find out more about the group, please visit our website: (<https://bit.ly/BDASDSG>) or our social media channels (Instagram: [bda_sustainablediets](#) or Twitter: [@BDA_Sustainable](#)).

If you would like to get in touch with us and get involved, share any good practice, please message us on: sustainablediets@bda.uk.com.

Globally the foods we choose can have a major impact on our planet. Sustainability is a complex topic with many facets, and so it is really important that food, nutrition and health are not forgotten among all the other considerations. The British Nutrition Foundation published our review on the current state of the evidence for healthy and sustainable diets in 2021, and the focus of our strategy as a charity is a future where everyone has a healthy and sustainable diet.

We aim to consider sustainability whenever we give advice on diet and health. The good news is that much of the existing advice on having a healthy diet also has benefits from an environmental perspective. For example, as a population, eating plenty of a variety of fruit, vegetables and pulses may help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support biodiversity. As with all health messages, it's key to try to find ways to make changes feel practical and doable. This is especially challenging at the moment as we know that the cost-of-living crisis is making it even harder for people to eat well. So, we aim to make healthier, more sustainable eating as accessible as possible by highlighting practical and affordable changes, for example, including canned pulses in favourite recipes and tips on reducing food waste.

Find out more...

Our website is a great place to start to find out more – our pages on healthy, sustainable diets (<https://bit.ly/BNFsust>) have lots of information about the challenges of eating well for people and planet, as well as key changes we could all make. Our twitter account [@NutritionOrgUK](https://twitter.com/NutritionOrgUK) is also a great follow for the latest updates and information on all our activities. For a more in-depth look at the science of healthy and sustainable diets, the review published in our journal *Nutrition Bulletin* (<https://bit.ly/3R09wEH>) provides a great overview of research in this area.

The British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN)

Advocacy and action towards greater sustainability in healthcare is crucial for the welfare of people and the planet. The NHS contributes 4-5% of total UK carbon emissions and is responsible for a significant proportion of the public sector's emissions. Health services have a responsibility to commit to more sustainable practices, due to the implications of climate change on both individual health and the environment.

BAPEN and its Core Groups understand the importance of sustainability and the role it plays within all elements of care, including nutritional care. BAPEN has affirmed its pledge to protect the environment by identifying sustainability as a strategic priority within the latest five-year BAPEN Strategy, launched in 2022.

BAPEN is measuring and adopting tactics to reduce its carbon footprint. We are committed to identifying and delivering a reduction in plastics together with our industry partners. Alongside these partners, we are also determined to look at ways of reducing the environmental impact of parenteral nutrition, enteral nutrition, and oral nutritional supplements.


Professionals working across nutritional care, in every care setting, are encouraged to consider environmental factors, alongside delivering the best possible care, when providing support and guidance to patients and the public. Professionals who are helping those experiencing, or at risk of, malnutrition are advised to provide advice on sustainable eating as appropriate.

The culmination of these commitments and practical considerations are essential to empowering people to make low-carbon choices about their nutrition. In the absence of national plans to support the public to shift to a lower-carbon diet, BAPEN is one of many organisations helping to ensure the transition towards widespread uptake of a healthy, sustainable and varied diet.

Find out more...

BAPEN Strategy 2022-2027: www.bapen.org.uk/pdfs/bapen-strategy-2022-2027.pdf





Lisa Ledger, Professional Lead Dietitian & Rhiannon Matthews, Operational Sustainability Lead

Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust (RCHT) and Cornwall Foundation Trust (CFT)

Sustainability and Food Group

Rhiannon and Lisa were introduced when, as a Dietitian, Lisa saw the potential for a Sustainability and Food Group to be created, not only within RCHT but among all Cornwall stakeholders to bring the integrated care system together as a whole. Lisa created a Sustainability and Food Community of Practice, which linked the local University of Plymouth, who have introduced a Sustainability module for their final year dietitians, RCHT and CFT sustainability leads, primary care greener leads and the voluntary sector to discuss the Greener Plan regarding food and to share good practice. Some initiatives have been to prescribe vegetable boxes to patients, for example, those with type 2 diabetes in primary care. The group also discuss ideas like catering initiatives, such as reducing food miles, food waste, items with less packaging (like a plumbed in drinks machine), bringing your own cup with money off, digital menus for more real-time patient food choice, staff food swaps, etc.

Talks to different AHP groups to share 'best practice' for green action within professional practice

As part of AHPs Deliver, one of the core areas of focus is on Greener AHPs (allied health professionals). Rhiannon has spoken to the dietitians about greener initiatives within the Trust, in addition to AHP-wide communication on what is happening.

Lisa is now on the programme for the RCHT Future Leaders Programme, which inspires registered AHP future leaders to consider sustainability within their practice and to share best practice. Lisa discusses initiatives such as the Apples and Pears project, remote consultations (having employed their first remote Dietitians and AHP posts) and digital advice delivery, such as webinars.

As service leads within RCHT and CFT, Lisa and her AHP lead colleagues are holding staff engagement sessions for all AHPs on greener topics, mixing face-to-face and digital sessions across Cornwall for maximum engagement.

Rhiannon and Lisa have spoken on the Sustainability Leadership module at Plymouth University to share good practice within NHS Trusts nationally, and also locally, for the budding graduates to think 'sustainability' as they emerge within the workplace.

Apples & Pears project

Apples and Pears is an initiative used at RCHT for patients with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), where it was felt most beneficial to treat patients within a non-medicalised model as much as possible. Rather than being offered medical appointments unnecessarily, patients were instead given a weekly vegetable box from a local supplier for 3 months to empower self-care and behaviour change. At the end of one year, patients could access a scan to see how much their own self-care had changed their medical condition. Patients opted into this, and early results show very good improvements to their condition.

Staff being placed on 'carbon literacy' training courses making them key contacts for Trusts

Rhiannon as Operational Sustainability Lead for the Trust is able to fund interested AHP staff to complete 'carbon literacy' training courses. These aim to educate staff about how the NHS contributes significantly to the climate, examples of good practice and change already, and how to measure a services carbon impact. The course encourages you to pick a project that you could complete to improve how your own service does things.

Key contacts across the AHPs within RCHT and CFT have completed this training and continue to be key contacts to share good practice.

Lisa, having completed this course, is now sharing the message and signposting, speaking with occupational therapists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, speech and language therapists, radiographers and more, about all things green – for example, change of traditional patient treatment methods where appropriate, their own work areas, travel to work and raising their own carbon awareness, also showcasing impact.

Cows' milk allergy group sessions

We established virtual group sessions for parents of infants and children with suspected/ diagnosed cows' milk allergy (CMA), in 2021, in order to reduce total contact time between dietitians and patients and to make cost savings. This has contributed to our sustainability initiatives by streamlining our services, reducing travel time, and reducing administrative impacts (e.g. paper for letters).

To facilitate our virtual group sessions, we collated evidence-based advice that has routinely been delivered in 1-to-1 face-to-face, video or telephone consultations into a 'one stop shop' solution. It is a 2.5 hour group session that comfortably manages 15 parents/carers at a time.

The impact has been widely positive, reducing dietitian's total contact time with patients by 75%. Furthermore, when considering savings based on a See-Do approach (to include all patient related admin time), we have seen a total cost saving of 81%. The groups have dramatically reduced waiting times, provided quicker symptom management and provided convenient treatment at home.

We are incredibly proud of our CMA virtual group sessions and have even won the 'Silver Award' within our Trust for Quality Innovation. The groups' success has encouraged us to develop sessions for children and parents of children with restrictive eating – this should make our team all the more sustainable and lead to further streamlining.

The virtual dietitian

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, much of our community work has become virtual (i.e. consultations, meetings and, of late, group sessions). To complement the virtual progress made, to encourage sustainable initiatives, and to support our expanding virtual caseload, we decided that we would recruit a Band 6 Virtual Dietitian, using telehealth technology.

Our Virtual Dietitian, Specialist Paediatric Dietitian Adele Barnes, has the same opportunity to access clinical supervision, relevant departments and training. We have weekly virtual catch-up/supervision sessions with her, along with frequent health and well-being chats, so she feels just as involved in our department as every other member of the team.

The virtual position encourages sustainability by saving around 2 hours per day in travel time, reducing the use of petrol and emissions.

We believe that remote working in dietetics is a revolutionary area that not only can open up the geographical constraints, but it can also help in tackling wider environmental challenges. Therefore, we continued this development by further recruiting 4.2 whole time equivalent remote dietitians in our Adult Dietetic Team at KCHFT.

Joanna Instone MA BSc (Hons) RD – The Net Zero Dietitian

Net Zero Food Programme Dietitian, NHS England

I am the dietitian in the Net Zero Food Team, NHS England, tasked with supporting NHS Trusts to deliver net zero food in hospitals, and so helping Trusts to meet their Green Plans. We aim to support Trusts to:

- Reduce food waste
- Implement electronic meal ordering
- Implement lower carbon, healthier meals
- Educate staff about sustainable eating.

I have been working with chefs to design lower carbon recipes and menus suitable for nutritionally well and nutritionally vulnerable hospital patients. The recipes and menus are based on local and seasonal fruit, vegetables and an increased use of beans, lentils, pulses and other plant proteins.

The lower carbon recipes and menus will be published in pilot format in the coming months for all hospital Trusts to access freely and implement locally. This is a new approach to food in hospitals and, so, I urge Trusts to measure the effect of implementation on patient nutrition, customer satisfaction and food waste.

The carbon emissions and nutritional content of each recipe were calculated. Care was taken to balance the nutritional needs with the need to lower the carbon impact of food, with a view to ensuring optimum nutritional intake and reducing length of stay – the latter being up to 20 times more carbon intensive (89.5 kgCO₂e)¹ than a traditional omnivorous diet (approximately 4.4 kgCO₂e).

We recommend that Trusts offer a vegan option at each mealtime. This is being done in some Trusts already (e.g. East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust). Evidence from hospitals in Florida² and New York indicates that 60% of patients are willing to try plant-based dishes as part of a choice of dishes that also include meat options.^{3,4}

What's next? I will be compiling healthier, lower carbon recipes and menus that are suitable for staff and visitors. I will also be designing educational resources for Trusts to use to educate their staff about healthier sustainable eating.

References: 1. NHS England (2015) Care Pathways: Guidance on Appraising Sustainability Inpatient Bed day module). Accessed online: <https://shcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Sustainable-Care-Pathways-Guidance-Inpatient-Bed-Day-Module-Oct-2015.pdf> (Aug 2023); 2. Saldivar B, et al. (2012) Successful Incorporation of a plant based menu into a large Academic Hospital. Accessed online: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/15598276211048788> (Aug 2023); 3. Public Sector Catering (2023) Eleven Hospitals go meat free. Accessed online: www.publicsectorcatering.co.uk/in-depth/eleven-hospitals-go-meat-free-new-york (Aug 2023). 4. Plant based news (2023) All New York City Hospitals Now serve Vegan food as default. Accessed online: <https://plantbasednews.org/lifestyle/health/new-york-city-hospitals-serve-vegan-food-default/> (Aug 2023).

I have been a dietitian for 21 years, and I have worked in acute, community, mental health and primary care settings. In 2019, I moved into a different role as Quality Improvement Lead in the community provider I worked at. Whilst in this post I learnt about the work of the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare and heard about environmentally sustainable healthcare for the first time. In September 2022, I started a 12-month secondment with NHS England, having secured a place on the Chief Sustainability Officer's Fellowship scheme. In this role I have worked on several projects relating to education, workforce engagement and, most recently, reducing enteral feeding plastic waste.

Project: NHS England want to find out how clinicians who support enterally fed patients in the community are changing their practice to reduce plastic usage. The NICE guideline CG139 Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care¹ currently advises that: *'The feed giving-set and feed containers must be discarded after each feeding session.'* This is interpreted differently with some patients advised to use several giving sets and feed containers per day and others to use one of each per 24 hours. NHS England are keen to understand what has already been achieved in clinical practice to reduce plastic use. They would like to use practice examples to inform their approach to reducing plastic usage and help drive change across the country. The aim is to reduce the usage of single use plastics in enteral feeding where clinically appropriate and influence national guidance on enteral feeding while continuing to deliver high quality care. This will be achieved by:

- Supporting systems to reduce plastics usage by shining a light on clinical practice examples and then sharing the methodology used to implement change
- Developing consistent guidance to ensure safe patient care & sustainable solutions
- Engaging with NICE to review guidance – based on evidence
- Wider system and clinical engagement.

In addition to reducing plastic usage, it is anticipated that this project will improve patient satisfaction, inform patients on the reduction of plastic in their care pathway, deliver cost savings and utilise learning to inform other practice areas.

The scope of the project includes:

- Reservoir containers, giving sets and universal adaptors
- Bolus adaptor
- Y Connector
- Single use syringes.

To date we have engaged with a number of dietitians working in this area via the BDA's Parenteral & Enteral Nutrition Specialist Group (PENG), but we are keen to hear from you if you support enterally fed patients in the community and have reduced plastic usage. Please contact the project team via:

England.supplyresilience@nhs.net.

Reference: 1. Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care. Clinical guideline [CG139]. Accessed online: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg139/1fp/chapter/enteral-feeding (Aug 2023).

to education, workforce engagement and, most recently, reducing enteral feeding plastic waste.”

Magdalena Kot, RD – The Sustainability Champion

Senior Dietitian, Royal Wolverhampton Trust

I've been interested in sustainability for a long time now. My interest and a passion for reducing waste and developing healthy communities led me to support charities like FoodCycle, The Bags of Taste and Eat.Make.Play. Anything that involves using surplus food, reducing waste, empowering clients with acquiring cooking skills, you can find me there!

In July 2022, we welcomed the greatly anticipated paper, *'Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service'*, which supports engagement of individual departments to help reduce the environmental impacts of our NHS services. I found out about the Sustainability Champions Network through our Trust's communication channel and, as I was already a member of BDA Sustainable Diets Specialist Group, becoming a Champion felt like a natural fit. To join the Network, I first discussed it with my Professional Lead for Dietetics and gained the support needed to start the additional role within my department. I am now just a couple of months into this new challenge, but already seeing the impact it has on my colleagues.

Key tasks of the Sustainability Champion are developed around improving the environmental performance of the Trust by supporting the delivery of the Trust Green Agenda, highlighting sustainable initiatives, looking into using our resources responsibly and raising an awareness of environmental issues in general.

As a Dietitian and a Sustainability Champion, I feel we, as a profession, are at the forefront of education and raising awareness about plant-forward diets, the EatWell Plate and diversity on our plates, which is in line with the BDA's One Blue Dot.

Currently, we are working on the project involving the recycling of enteral feed bottles used in our hospital and the community across the region. We are in the early stages at present, conducting a scoping exercise and gathering staff questionnaires. Several departments are involved in this. I am looking into the packaging of items delivered to our department and liaising with the companies trying to understand their own challenges.

Abbott

Abbott is working across our operations and with key suppliers to sustainably manage our water use and address climate change by reducing carbon emissions and expanding renewable energy. We're also reducing the environmental impact of our product packaging and minimising waste across our broader operations through reuse and recycling approaches.

Abbott has 36 sites in 16 countries, including three in the UK, that send zero waste to landfills. This has contributed to an almost 49% reduction in the total amount of waste that Abbott sends to landfill since 2010.

Additionally, in the UK, Abbott's nutrition business was the first to remove the plastic straws from all our adult and paediatric ready-to-drink products. Based on recent data, this equates to 155 million fewer straws or 82 tons less plastic used per year. Our ready-to-drink products can also be recycled in domestic recycling, ensuring we continue to further minimise the impact of our packaging.

Find out more...

You can find more about Abbott's sustainability goals in our 2030 sustainability plan: www.abbott.com/responsibility/sustainability.html.

Nutricia

Dairy ingredients account for more than 50% of our CO₂ emissions, so finding a way to continue to meet patients' medical nutritional needs using plant-based alternatives will make a big difference to our sustainability impact. Nutricia are part of Danone and, therefore, we are lucky that we can work closely with our Alpro colleagues when developing plant-based alternatives.

Earlier this year we launched a 100% plant-based oral nutritional supplement (ONS), Fortisip PlantBased 1.5 kcal, which meets the needs of vegans, vegetarians and those patients who prefer or need a plant-based ONS for religious, cultural or environmental reasons. Another first for Nutricia is that this ONS has been certified by the Carbon Trust, which means the carbon footprint of this product has been measured and verified.

Fortisip PlantBased 1.5 kcal is just the first of a number of plant-based innovations we have planned over the coming years.

Enteral tube feeding, whether in hospital or at home requires a certain amount of plastic. Over the last few years, we have worked closely with healthcare professionals and patients to identify ways to safely reduce overall plastic use and move from single use to reusable formats where possible.

Examples include moving away from single use Flocare containers to reusable Sterifeed bottles, Homeward Nurse support to ensure patients have the most appropriate ancillaries on their feeding regimens, and conducting research to demonstrate the safe use of enteral feeding giving sets over 24 hours.*

We communicate initiatives to patients and healthcare professionals in a range of way, including: local in person discussions, educational content on our website, newsletters and through opportunities such as this article.

Find out more...

We would encourage CN readers to speak to their local representatives and follow us on social media, Twitter: [@NutriciaHCPUK](https://twitter.com/NutriciaHCPUK), LinkedIn: Nutricia UK, as well as signing up to receive our regular newsletters at: nutricia.co.uk.

Nutrinovo

Very often people's interpretation of a products sustainability is defined solely by whether it is recyclable. Whilst this is of course an important factor, there are multiple other considerations which must be taken into account. Examples of these include (but are not limited to): the total weight of the packaging used, are additional single use ancillaries required to administer the product, and the prevalence of any recycling guidelines provided to the end user. Our goal at Nutrinovo is to continue moving towards more sustainable products and packaging, whilst ensuring that any end user communication encourages best disposal of any waste.

ProSource TF ENFit is an excellent example of a more sustainable product. Coupling a lightweight pouch with a direct ENFit connection, ProSource TF ENFit can be connected directly to the patients enteral feeding tube or giving set. This mitigates any unnecessary waste being caused as a result of having to decant product into a single use reciprocal, or the use of a single-use syringe for administration.

But it's not just across our product range that we are focusing our attentions. We have made numerous changes and investments throughout the entirety of our business, allowing us to become more sustainable. Whether it be the materials used to send samples to our patients, moving where possible to the production of digital information leaflets, using sustainable inks, or investing in carbon offsetting, our intentions and our actions are clear.

Find out more...

For more information about our sustainability action, readers can visit: nutrinovo.com/sustainability and follow us across both Instagram and Twitter at: [@nutrinovo](https://twitter.com/nutrinovo)

Nualtra

Since 2020, we have been able to reduce plastic in our range (by weight) from 70% to around 52% by focusing on more sustainable packaging.

This has been driven by making the choice to manufacture a number of our products in TetraPak, which reduces plastic production and waste – e.g. Altraplen Compact Daily uses 75% less plastic than the equivalent plastic bottles a patient would otherwise, which is a significant reduction in plastic usage.

TetraPak takes much less energy to produce than many other forms of plastic packaging, which is what makes them a great choice in terms of environment and sustainability as the carbon footprint is significantly reduced.

Nualtra plan to continue introducing more environmentally friendly packaging within their range of products in the future as the potential benefit is huge.

Find out more...

We have some great resources and dedicated website planned over the next 12 months, but right now, the best thing to do is follow us on social media [@nualtra](https://twitter.com/nualtra) or get in touch at: support@nualtra.co.uk if you would like to hear more from one of our account managers.

Fortisip PlantBased 1.5 kcal is a Food for Special Medical Purposes for the dietary management of disease related malnutrition and must be used under medical supervision.

*May not be suitable for all patients. The managing healthcare professional should always use their judgment to assess suitability.

Dr Clare Pettinger

Associate Professor, Public Health Dietetics, University of Plymouth

Food and nutrition professionals are 'perfectly placed' to interpret complex nutrition science and communicate national and international guidance to help the public understand what they need to do to improve their own health and that of the planet.¹

The climate crisis is also a health crisis, and our food system plays an important role in the causation and therefore mitigation of climate change. The link between food, health, and climate change is already clear.^{2,3,4} Since the publication of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)⁵ and subsequent Global Nutrition report,⁶ which stipulated the role of nutrition to 'nourish the SDG', this agenda has become a crucial emerging topic area for all nutrition professionals.

With their already established communication skills, nutrition professionals are very well positioned as key players to drive forward this agenda.⁷ But there is work to be done to optimally support them with this new role.

Research recommends the need for stronger leadership, learning and collaboration for nutrition professionals within this space.⁸ This requires a new kind of leadership⁹ to position nutrition professionals as one of the credible and professional voices advocating for environmentally sustainable diets and food systems. Dietitians are already championing the ambitious NHS net zero agenda with passion and expertise. They are using their skills and competencies and evolving collaborative leadership to direct transformational change towards greener healthcare.⁹

Professional bodies are supporting this agenda by driving membership-led changes and development of dietetic and nutrition training curricula to more consistently embed elements of sustainability.^{11,12} In this manner, nutrition professionals can be supported to gain the necessary environmental and sustainability literacy skills required to spearhead this vital emerging area of practice.

References: 1. Pettinger C (2023) Sustainable Diets – improving planetary and population health. Policy evidence briefing. Accessed online: <https://pearl.plymouth.ac.uk/handle/10026.1/20746> (Aug 2023). 2. BDA (2018). 'One Blue Dot - the BDA's Environmentally Sustainable Diet Project. Accessed online: www.bda.uk.com/resource/one-blue-dot.html (Aug 2023). 3. Eat Lancet: The Commission on Food, Planet, Health (2019) The Planetary Health Diet – EAT. The Planetary Health Diet – EAT (eatforum.org). 4. Gov.UK (2022). Government Food Strategy Government food strategy - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). 5. United Nations. SDG (2016). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Accessed online: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld> (Aug 2023). 6. Development Initiatives, 2017. Global Nutrition Report 2017: Nourishing the SDGs. Bristol, UK: Development Initiatives. Accessed online: https://globalnutritionreport.org/documents/822/Global_Nutrition_Report_2017.pdf (Aug 2023). 7. Pettinger C (2018). 'Sustainable eating: Opportunities for nutrition professionals' Nutrition Bulletin, 43(3): 226-237. 8. Carlsson L, and Callaghan E (2022). The Social License to Practice Sustainability: Concepts, Barriers and Actions to Support Nutrition and Dietetics Practitioners in Contributing to Sustainable Food Systems. Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition, 1-19. 9. Pettinger C, et al. (2023). Collaborative Leadership to Support Sustainability in Practice for Dietitians as Allied Health Professionals. Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics (in press). 10. AfN (2023) New Registration Competencies and Standards and Degree Accreditation Standards published. Accessed online: www.associationfornutrition.org/latest-news/new-registration-competencies-standards-and-degree-accreditation-standards-published (Aug 2023). 11. BDA (2022) BDA Strategic Plan 2021-2024. Accessed online: www.bda.uk.com/uploads/assets/0ad8979a-286e-448a-867c4f8e78c602d4/8f974379-7ade-41bd-9bbc753acacadc13/StrategicPlan21-24OnePageFINAL.pdf (Aug 2023).

our food system plays an important role in the causation and therefore mitigation of climate change.”

Conclusion

So, there you have it – a vast demonstration of the variety of efforts and commitments that have been made across the nutrition and dietetics arena by groups, associations, industry, organisations and those on the frontline.

Focusing on sustainability has changed the way we, Complete Media & Marketing, work as a business and will continue to do so. Over the last few years, we have reduced our office paper usage by approximately 75%, and we have adopted a hybrid working system to cut down on travel and, therefore, petrol emissions and time. With regards to the production of CN Magazine, the paper it is printed on is a mixture of materials from FSC-certified forests, our postal packaging is compostable, and we have ensured that CN Magazine is available digitally to all. If you would like to switch your print subscription to a digital one, this can be done by visiting our website: bit.ly/CNDIGITAL or by emailing: jodie@cm-2.co.uk.

Sustainability is an important topic across all aspects of our lives, now more than ever, and we look forward to continuing to develop our own initiatives and to witnessing and working with those of you in the field of nutrition and dietetics as you create and implement your sustainability goals.

On a final note, this month, the British Dietetic Association (BDA) run their Sustainable September campaign where they seek to: “...showcase the multitude of ways we can all be more sustainable in our shopping, cooking and eating habits to protect our environment and our health.” To find out more, visit: www.bda.uk.com/ or follow the BDA via their social media pages.

Useful resources:

- Delivering a Net Zero NHS: <https://bit.ly/NHSNETO>
- Greener Allied Health Professional hub: www.england.nhs.uk/ahp/greener-ahp-hub/
- One Blue Dot (BDA): www.bda.uk.com/resource/one-blue-dot.html
- Healthier and more sustainable diets: What changes are needed in high-income countries? (BNF): <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/mbu.12518>