

Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith /
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Chweched Senedd / Priorities for the Sixth Senedd
PR50

Ymateb gan Y Gymdeithas Fferyllol Frenhinol yng Nghymru / Evidence from Royal
Pharmaceutical Society Wales

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Annwyl Llyr

Priorities for the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is the professional body for pharmacists and pharmacy in Great Britain. We lead and support the development of the pharmacy profession to improve the public's health and wellbeing, including through advancements in science, research and education.

We are pleased to provide the following comments in response to the committee's call for evidence. As you will recall, the Senedd was the first parliament in the world to vote in favour of the declaration of a climate emergency. Following on from the work of previous Senedd's Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee, this committee has a crucial role in holding the government to account and ensuring effective action is being taken on climate change. Having recently made [our own climate emergency declaration](#), the RPS is committed to collaborating with Welsh Government and others to instigate action, as well as aiding the committee with its important scrutiny work.

Whilst we appreciate that the Committee's remit is widespread, there are two specific themes that we would encourage the committee to include as priorities for the next 12-18 months:

1. The impact of medicines on climate change

Medicines as the most common intervention made within the NHS plays an all-important role in healthcare. However, it must be noted that medicines do have a particularly high environmental impact, accounting for 25 per cent of emissions within the NHS.

At RPS we will shortly be publishing a policy that will include recommendations on steps that can be taken to reduce the carbon footprint of medicines. It will consider various issues including development and manufacturing of medicines, medicines appraisals, prescribing, recycling reducing waste.

Reflecting medicines contribution to climate change, we would encourage that at some stage the committee turn its attentions towards the steps being taken across the health service in Wales to limit its impact as much as is possible.

2. NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan

Published on March 24 2021, the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan sets out NHS Wales' plan for addressing the climate emergency. It includes a number of initiatives and targets for the decarbonisation across the health service.

Despite being in operation for only a matter of months, it is already leading to firm actions and positive changes, most notably the establishment of Green Health Wales.

As the largest public sector organisation in Wales, the NHS will need to play a central role if we are to meet the Welsh Government commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. It has also received significant Welsh Government resource with £38m allocated to decarbonisation plans and related priorities over the course of 2021-22.

Reflecting this importance, we would encourage parliamentary scrutiny of the plan and its delivery. Specific actions within the plan that we would encourage the committee to focus on are:

- Procurement, which currently accounts for 62% of NHS Wales's carbon footprint, close to half of which is as a result of procurement practices related to pharmaceuticals.
- Reducing the impact of environmental impact of medicines, especially medical gases and inhalers which feature prominently in the plan.
- Engagement with patients, pharmacists and other prescribers to reduce medicines waste and to develop better practice for disposal and recycling of medicines.

It should be noted that the opportunity for the Senedd to discuss and scrutinise the plan at the time of its publication was limited as it was published only a day before the pre-election period began on 25th March 2021. We would therefore recommend the Committee focus on the commitments made in this strategic delivery plan with a view to exploring progress in terms of its implementation.

We hope that this response proves useful. Please do contact us if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely
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Chair, RPS Welsh Pharmacy Board