

# Bladder & Bowel Assessment, and Light Incontinence Project

October 2021 & August 2022

Two related Quality Improvement projects were undertaken focussed around improving the assessment and treatment pathway for bladder and bowel patients, to reduce reliance on containment products, namely single use disposable pads.

Both projects are summarised in this case study and provide an **excellent example of how Quality Improvement projects contribute to our aim to develop low carbon care pathways, one of the key themes of the Climate Emergency Strategy, by reducing the use of single use items.**

Zero carbon = Zero waste, and this is the area where most clinical staff can have the greatest impact through introducing changes to models of care.



## Background

In 2019 it was identified that Newcastle Hospitals had a containment formulary with a wide variety of different products compared to other Trusts and national recommendations.

Two separate QI projects were undertaken, baseline data is provided below:

LiP—In October 2020 763 patients were in receipt of light incontinence containment products (products with absorbency of <300mls) Each patient was receiving between 1 and 4 products per day.

BBAP—In November 2021 there were 848 patients in receipt of containment products with an absorbency of <470ml.

## What was done?

Both projects involved patients having initial assessments and an individual treatment plan developed.

There were improvements in patient care through robust assessments, supervised treatment plans, flexible reviews and discharges and a reduction in containment reliance.

This was achieved through education and training on bladder and bowel healthcare.

## The outcome

LiP—In October 2021 no patients were in receipt of the light incontinence products.

BBAP—In July 2022 only 535 patients were in receipt of the containment products, a reduction of 295 compared to the year before.

In total that's a **removal of between 1,076 and 3,365 single use items per day—or up to 1.2 million items per year—from use**, contributing to the Trust's Zero Waste goal.

Patient impact—59 year old patient attended the clinic, an assessment and treatment plan was commenced consisting of fluid improvement, lifestyle advice, pelvic floor exercises regime and bladder re-training. The patient no longer receives light incontinence products and was able to resume activities such as completing a hike along Hadrian's Wall—*"I would never have dreamt of being able to do that before I came to see you."*

By removing the products from the formulary there was a financial saving of almost £60,000. Using a carbon factor we can calculate a carbon saving of 88 kg of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Detailed QI project reports are available upon request.

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