Perceived Sustainability of Hospitals by Resident Doctors in the Severn Deanery

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Background

- Hospitals are major contributors to global warming and climate change, with significant energy consumption, waste generation, material and water usage. It is therefore pertinent to assess their sustainability credentials
- Resident Doctors comprise a cohort of 'grassroot' employees across hospital estates, providing useful insights into the status of their workplaces
- Green initiatives not only offer environmental benefits but also economic benefits for hospitals themselves

Methodology

- A cross-sectional 'sustainability' survey was emailed to all Foundation Doctors working within the Severn Deanery with further promotion to its Resident Doctors via social media
- The survey focused on recycling facilities, water refillable sites, use of recycled paper and heating, including a 'white space' box for further suggestions
- Perceived environmental friendliness was assessed using a Likert scale (0-10) of each hospital

Results

- 71 Resident Doctors completed the survey (of whom 89% were FY 1/2) with representation from Bristol Royal Infirmary (30%), Yeovil District Hospital (13%), Gloucester Royal Hospital (13%), Royal United Hospital (11%), Musgrove Park Hospital (9%), Great Western Hospital (9%), Cheltenham General Hospital (7%), Western General Hospital (6%), Southmead Hospital (4%), Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust (3%)
- Median environmental friendliness was 5/10 (IQR 4-7) **(fig.1)**
- 69% felt there were inadequate hospital recycling facilities **(fig.2)**, with poor proximity preventing 80% from recycling correctly **(fig.3)** and 41% throwing recyclable waste into general waste bins daily **(fig.4)**. This was most pronounced in the wards (58%) and communal areas (51%)
- Only 51% reported that all wards used recycled paper for patient lists **(fig.5)**
- Subjective overheating in hospitals was experienced by 39% daily **(fig.6)** and was most frequently encountered in the ward environment (85%). Notably, 44% noticed open windows with radiators turned on **(fig.7)**
- Inadequate refillable water stations were reported by 56% **(fig.8)** with purchase of single-use plastic water bottles in just under a quarter (22.5%) **(fig.9)**

Conclusions

- Overall, the perceived environmental friendliness of Severn hospitals was low, with inadequate recycling facilities, paucity of refillable water stations and overheating of the workplace
- Implementing additional recycling facilities to improve hospital waste management, encouraging recycled paper use and ambient temperature control merit further consideration

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Subjective environmental rating of Severn Hospitals

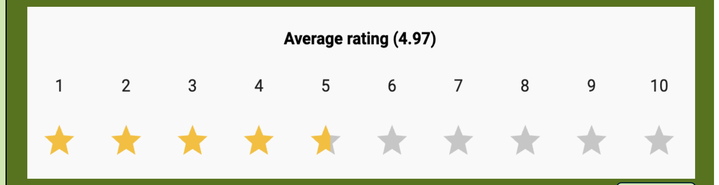
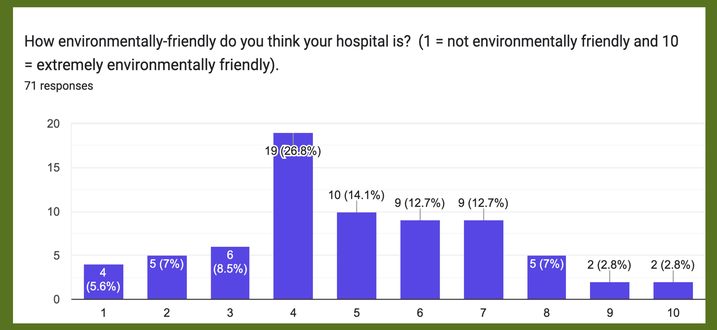


Fig.1



Recycling

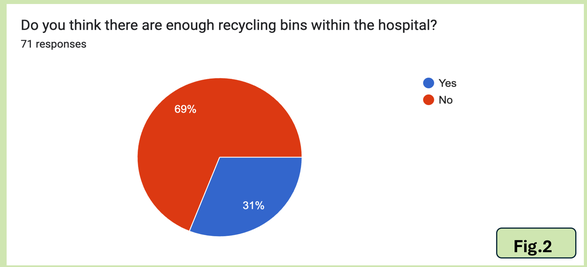


Fig.2



Fig.3

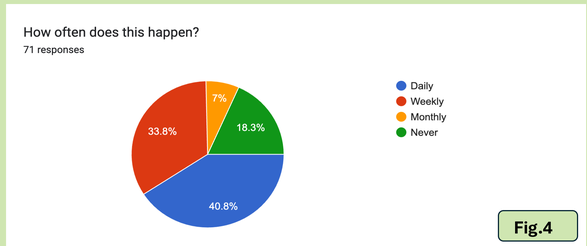


Fig.4

Paper use

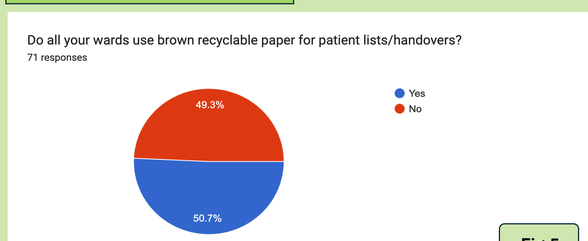


Fig.5

Overheating

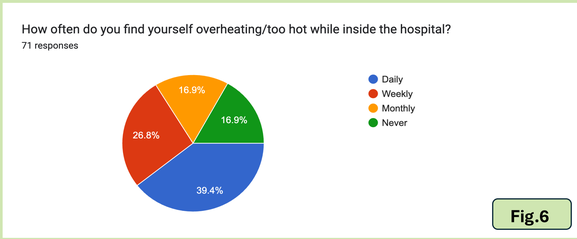


Fig.6

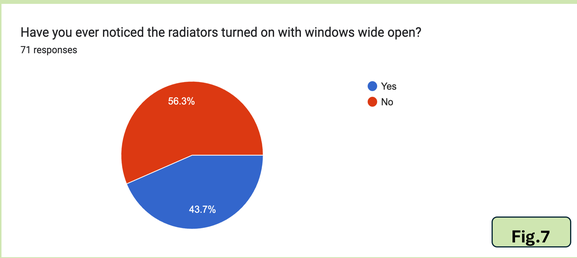


Fig.7

Refillable water

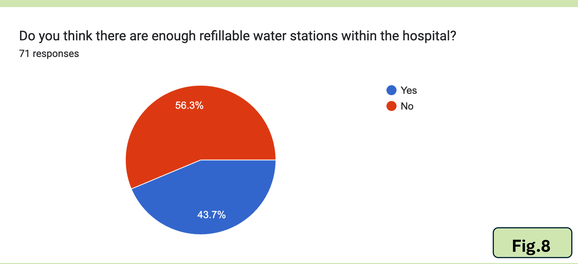


Fig.8

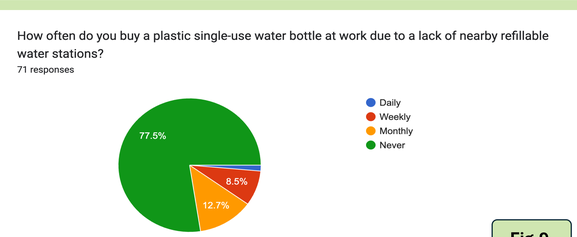


Fig.9