group policies and procedures

# Net Carbon zero POLICY

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| Category | Corporate Governance  |
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**Related policies and guidance**

**Document revision and approval history**

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# **Aim**

Castleman Healthcare Ltd is committed to the UK’s national strategy to cut carbon emissions in just over thirty years, ensuring we are a company that is environmentally sustainable as soon as practical in terms of the safety of our patients.

**What is Climate Change?**

According to the [**World Meteorological Organisation**](https://library.wmo.int/index.php?lvl=notice_display&id=21522#.XkvWzDfgofE) **e**vidence shows that the warmest 20 years on record have been in the last 22 years, the warmest being between 2015 to 2018 and Global average temperatures are now 1℃ higher than in the pre-industrial era. The reality of this means that incremental warming has already started to have an impact on our planet such as erratic weather patterns (heatwaves; floods, severe storms) loss of polar ice; and rising sea levels. As global warming intensifies the negative impact upon our planet will worsen.

According to current research, temperatures look set to increase by 3-5 degrees by 2100.

**What is causing climate change?**

[**Scientists**](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg1/) and governments agree that climate change is being triggered by higher levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The gases trap the energy from the sun, heating the planet. The most common greenhouse gases are water vapour, carbon dioxide and methane.

Carbon dioxide, being the most dangerous and abundant greenhouse gas, is why many governments are actively seeking to cut carbon emissions, carbon footprints or trying to find low-carbon alternatives as a way to address climate change.

**How can we stop climate change?**

There are two ways in which we can reduce the amount of gasses in the atmosphere:

* **We can lower the emissions that are being sent into the atmosphere**, from activities such as industrial processes, power generation, transport and intensive agriculture
* **We can remove greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere**, for example by [**capturing carbon**](https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/andrew-benjamin-cutting-carbon-emissions) created during industrial processes before it’s released or planting more trees.

**What does it mean to be net zero?**

Net zero is when an organisation achieves the balance between the amount of greenhouse gases they put into the atmosphere and those that are taken out.

Reaching net zero, as a company requires us to balance the amount of greenhouse gases, we emit with the amount we remove. When what we add is no more than what we take away we reach net zero.

Additionally, businesses can no longer bid for government contracts over £5m without a demonstrable carbon reduction roadmap.

**Castleman’s Aim**

Castleman Healthcare aims to work towards Net Zero as soon as practical, ensuring the continued safety of its patients.

It has appointed a Net Zero Lead, James Leyland, who will assess new activities and current procedures, being mindful of Castleman’s Net Zero aims.

A whole system audit will be conducted yearly, looking at the company’s activity as a whole and assessing initially Castleman’s preparedness to start the process and then additionally working towards Net Zero, which is our ultimate pledge and goal.

Examples of activities and Net Zero aims include:

* Move meetings online to reduce the cardon footprint of those travelling to meetings
* Online documentation to reduce printing
* Working with local partners such as Clinical Commissioning Groups to reduce the use of non- CFC-free inhalers.
* Looking at company vehicles being electric.
* Looking at sustainable medical equipment.
* Looking at future projects to ensure sustainability in terms of real estate (using renewable energy, installing non-fossil fuel burning heaters, looking at water-recycling, using utility providers who rely upon renewable energy

These are only a small example of the business areas that the review will look at.

Additional areas of work will be to look at Frome Medical Practice’s “Choosing Wisely” project which looks to support patients in making healthier and greener choices regarding their own health and wellbeing. This includes doing things such as stopping smoking, being more physically active or moving more (including active travel), healthier eating, reducing stress and drinking less alcohol.

Castleman will look to work with clinicians delivering Castleman services to reduce the use of unnecessary medication within primary care, instead offering alternatives including switching to ‘greener’, low carbon asthma inhalers, reducing the over-prescribing of antidepressants and blood pressure medication, encouraging changes to lifestyles as an alternative.

Castleman will look to Health Connections Mendip (<https://healthconnectionsmendip.org/>) as a template to:

* Offer short sessions to the wider community, where people can learn more about how to take positive steps to make a difference to the planet and people’s wellbeing.
* Look to train Green Community connectors in accordance with the Mendip programme.
* Ensuring that digitally-excluded patients can get help to access this information.
* Engaging all Castleman staff to include signposting to activities that will improve health and reduce the environmental impact.
* Working with the town council and any partners or colleagues to share knowledge and learning.
* Additionally, Castleman will look to greener solutions for any medical supplies.
* Will collect used batteries and ink cartridges, which will be recycled.
* Will turn off electronics (instead of leaving on or on standby) and lighting after use.
* Will introduce a “think before we print” initiative.

Additionally Castleman will complete the Greener Practice Audit available from <https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/gifh-audit> which will start the process of putting Castleman on the road of becoming Net Zero.