

Actions to reduce the environmental impact of inhalers

The suggestions below can be incorporated into respiratory reviews and practice systems to enable future greener inhaler practice and a sustainable NHS.

Option	Example / info	Resource to support
Raise Patient Awareness		
Invite patients for a review, or send SMS, a letter or an email	Raise awareness with patients and encourage those who are interested in making environmental switches to book in for an inhaler review or attach information to their annual review reminder information. Example text message, AccuRx message and letter templates are available on the Greener Practice website. These templates contain concise information encouraging patients to switch to a lower carbon footprint inhaler. The include links to a leaflet and a short video explaining to asthma patients about different types of inhalers, inhaler techniques, environmental impact and correct method of disposal.	Greener Practice - Whole team approach to offering patients a low-carbon inhaler device - Resources
Switching Inhalers		
	Do NOT blanket switch inhalers - always discuss with the patient	
Switch pMDI's to DPI / Soft mist where clinically appropriate	PrescQIPP provides examples of possible switches with information about the carbon and cost savings (pages 18-20)	PrescQIPP Inhaler carbon footprint 2.0
	An example switch - Fostair pMDI to DPI (Nexthaler). The Greener Practice Asthma toolkit provides a step-by-step guide to switching including conducting the consultation, following up the patient, example AccuRx messages and a patient letter.	Greener Practice - Fostair pMDI to DPI (Nexthaler)
Ventolin pMDI/Salbutamol generic pMDI to Salamol PMDI or Airomir pMDI	Greener practice Asthma toolkit includes a how to guide, letter templates, patient information letters & AccuRx message examples.	Greener Practice - Ventolin Evohaler pMDI to Salamol pMDI or Airomir pMDI
	PrescQIPP patient information leaflet - simple one page letter to support the switch to Salamol.	PrescQIPP - Salbutamol pMDI to Salamol pMDI
Ventolin pMDI/Salbutamol generic pMDI to Salbutamol Easyhaler	Consider for patients that are already using a DPI preventer, or patients that are keen to address the green agenda. See pages 6-7.	PrescQIPP - Inhaler carbon footprint comparison tool
Medicines Optimisation		
Consider MART therapy ideally with a DPI	National and Local guidelines now recommend the MART regimen as the preferred treatment pathway for asthma in adults - no SABA required. Detailed guidance and choice of inhalers available are included in our LSCMMG guidance.	Asthma Treatment Guideline for Adults (lancsmmg.nhs.uk)
Dose optimisation - two puffs 100mcg to 1 puff 200mcg	Easy win - for example, consider switching a well controlled adult asthma patient on Beclometasone 100mcg pMDI 'two puffs twice a day' to Beclometasone 200mcg pMDI 'one puff twice a day'. Inhaler lasts twice as long and only one prescription charge every 100 days. Remember always prescribe inhalers by brand.	NA
Combine inhalers ingredients	Patients on a separate ICS and LABA- combine to an ICS/LABA. Patients on a separate LAMA and LABA - combine to LAMA/LABA product. Cost savings for NHS and patient. PrescQIPP interactive inhaler carbon footprint comparison tool helps patients and clinicians to quickly identify the 'greenest' inhalers in each group combination options available.	PrescQIPP - Inhaler carbon footprint comparison tool

Actions to reduce the environmental impact of inhalers

Option	Example / info	Resource to support
Medicines Optimisation cont...		
Use once daily (DPI's) inhalers	For example Relvar, Trelegy Ellipta, Budesonide Easyhaler. The Right breathe website is a useful interactive inhaler device resource.	Right breathe website
Identifying over use of SABA	Ordering 6 or more SABA's in 12 months indicates poor asthma control. Greener practice website has projects providing step-by-step guides to detect and tackle SABA over reliance. Templates for SMS messages and letters are included.	Identifying SABA over-reliance at prescription requests – Greener Practice
	Edit SABA duration to restrict the number of authorised supplies before a review is required and provide an appropriate duration for each inhaler. E.g. 3 inhalers a year - duration 120 days or 6 inhalers per year - duration 60 days (very severe conditions). Asthma Right Care has a useful visual aid for consultations addressing SABA overuse.	PCRS Asthma Right Care Tool
	PrescQIPP Inhaler Carbon Footprint bulletin contains a suite of EMIS searches. Use the NRAD searches to identify over use of SABA. Set 1: Search 1 - Very High SABA Use (>12 inhalers per year) and Search 2 - High SABA Use (>6 inhalers per year).	Bulletin 295: Inhaler carbon footprint PrescQIPP C.I.C
Disposal of Inhaler		
Returning inhalers to pharmacy for incineration instead of general waste	Inhalers in landfill are crushed releasing harmful unused gases into the atmosphere. Returning inhalers to pharmacy ensures they are either recycled or incinerated capturing and disposing of the gases appropriately.	Greener practice returning inhalers poster
	Greener Practice - Two minute video (5) explains how to help patients know when their inhaler is empty and how to dispose of it safely. Links to other resources to help with disposal also included in the video.	Greener Practice inhaler disposal video
	PrescQIPP - waste campaign, resources include posters, patient leaflets, bag labels, and email footers. Registration with PrescQIPP required.	PrescQIPP waste campaign