



**Northeast Health Wangaratta**

**Environmental Sustainability Plan**

**2022-2024**

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## 1. CEO's message

Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) sees improving the environmental sustainability of its operations, planning processes, policy and procedural development as a key strategic and operational commitment. Implementing a formal environmental management program and an environmental management policy, along with a range of clear strategies, provides our organisation with the framework to achieve improved environmental outcomes.

The benefits that NHW has already achieved will continue through the implementation of current environmental management actions – for example, reduced operational costs, reduced energy and water consumption and effective risk management.

Meeting the challenge posed by climate change and other environmental issues is our responsibility, and it is critical that a well understood and embraced strategy must guide the growth of NHW if the challenge is to be met.

NHW is committed to the principle of continuous improvement in environmental management and this strategy provides a basis from which to build into the future. NHW recognises the links between environmental sustainability, climate change and human health.

## 2. Executive summary

NHW promotes a sound awareness of, and positive attitudes and behaviours towards the environment among all staff, patients and visitors. This will be accomplished by reducing the adverse impacts of NHW's activities on the local, national and global environments.

Supporting NHW's Environmental Plan, the following principles have been developed to provide additional direction on specific issues. Conserve energy (produced by non-renewable resources and by methods which pollute the environment)

- Conserve water resources and minimise wastewater disposal
- Minimise and, where possible, eliminate the use of harmful substances
- Ensure the correct and safe disposal of all substances
- Minimise waste generation through reduction, reuse and recycling
- Minimise pollution – noise, visual electromagnetic radiation, and odour
- Address environmental concerns in all planning and landscaping decisions
- Encourage procurement procedures that adhere to the principles of the environmental policy

Empowerment and resourcing of the NHW Environmental Sustainability Committee will support the achievement of the following goals:

- Sustainable Development
- Waste Minimisation and Prevention
- Water Conservation
- Effective Energy Management Reduction Strategies
- Compliance with our Environmental Legal and Reporting Obligation
- Training and Educating our Staff on Environmental Issues.

### 3. Introduction

#### Background and Victorian Government commitments

All Victorians have a role to play in making Victoria a more sustainable state for future generations and protecting our reputation as one of the world's most livable places.

Victorian public healthcare services are subject to state and Commonwealth regulatory environmental and sustainability programs: the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme and the National Pollutant Inventory. These programs require services to have appropriate environmental and sustainability management planning processes, and to publicly report on their environmental performance.

Responding to this challenge, NHW has made a commitment to reducing our environmental impacts through adopting an environment policy, setting key objectives and targets, developing an environmental management strategy to achieve our goals, and monitoring and reporting our achievements. And in line with the Department of Health's three broad themes relating to [sustainability in health](#):

- sustainable environments for a healthy lifestyle
- implications of a changing climate and
- sustainability in health system performance

This strategy describes the policy, objectives, actions, communications, monitoring and review processes that we adopt to reduce our environmental impacts. The actions have been developed to:

- be simple to understand and implement
- clearly delegate responsibility
- commit to times for achievement
- integrate with our existing procedures and activities.

#### About Northeast Health Wangaratta

Wangaratta is situated in the north east of Victoria, about 230 kilometres from Melbourne along the Hume Highway, with Benalla 44 kilometres to the south west, and Albury Wodonga 72 km to the north east.

Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) is a 247 bed (including 72 bed Residential Aged Care) sub-regional health service and major referral hospital for the communities of North East Victoria. It is also the largest employer for the Rural City of Wangaratta, serving a catchment of around 90,000 people. It was established in 1872 on the site of the present facility. Demographic data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) shows a population that is primarily Australian and English speaking. The main group which speaks a language other than English at home is Italian (2.26 per cent), followed by German (0.54 per cent). The proportion of our population identified as of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent is 1.2 per cent.

NHW provides a 24/7 Emergency Department service and an extensive range of inpatient (acute medical, surgical, obstetrics, critical care, subacute rehabilitation and paediatric), community and aged care services.

NHW works collaboratively with other health care organisations in the provision of a number of services. Seven chairs for renal dialysis are provided on site under the Melbourne Health Renal Unit program. Twelve chairs for medical oncology are provided in conjunction with Border Medical Oncology based in Albury/Wodonga. The Community Midwifery Program is nationally recognised and our Telehealth program is well regarded for supporting Urgent Care Services within our catchment. The organisation also provides a range of visiting medical

officers in specialty areas such as Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT), Urology and Urogynaecology.

Allied Health services are provided to acute, subacute, residential aged care and community programs and include speech pathology, diabetes education, continence services, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work and dietetics.

Home Based programs include District Nursing, Hospital in the Home (HITH), Palliative Care, Post-Acute Care (PAC) and Community Rehabilitation. Residential aged care is provided in a fully accredited 66-bed nursing home ( additional beds will come on line when the redevelopment is completed during 2022 - 2023).

NHW also contracts Corporate Services to other healthcare organisations within the region. The Medical Imaging Department provides services to Alpine Health, Beechworth, Alexandra and Corowa. Health Information Services provides services to Beechworth and Yarrawonga. Information Technology services are provided to Alpine Health, Beechworth, Yarrawonga and Benalla. Finance services are provided to Yarrawonga, Alpine Health, Beechworth and Mansfield hospitals. Payroll services are provided to Beechworth, Indigo North, Alexandra, Tallangatta and Alpine hospitals. The Supply Department provides procurement services to Beechworth, Yarrawonga, Benalla and various Community Health and Residential Aged Care facilities in the northeast region. Food Services provide meals and Meals on Wheels to local municipalities and health services. The Lactation Clinic provides assistance and education to mothers and babies from NHW, Alpine and Wodonga regional health services. NHW continues to experience high demand for inpatient beds.

## Scope

This strategy addresses all relevant aspects of the operation of NHW across several campuses, including clinical and non clinical activities and the delivery of services, but not limited to:

- acute hospital services
- aged care facilities
- allied health and other outpatient services
- mental health services
- support services (catering, cleaning, supply and education)
- the range of general day-to-day activities we carry out
- planning for infrastructure / development and new capital works
- facilities operations.

## Achievements 2018--2021

Achievements	2018 - 2021
Insulation is now in the roof area of Day stay & CSD – assisting with improved temperature control	Complete
Reflective roof paint on main Ward block to assist in reducing the internal temperature over summer	Complete
LED corridor lighting and exit and emergency lights around Medical, Surgical, Thomas Hogan Rehabilitation and Maternity units	Complete
LED exit and emergency lights in kitchen	Complete
LED highbay (warehouse style) lighting in Supply Department. Also improved brightness of lighting in supply by 33%	Complete
LED external security lighting on WJ Smith building and in Dixon Street this allowed us to remove an electricity account with old inefficient lights saving over \$1,600 per year in electricity costs	Complete

LED lighting in Docker Street staff car park which also improves security	Complete
LED office lighting in Facilities & Maintenance	Complete
All 680 odd halogen downlights replaced with LEDs	Complete
External lights along Green Street, Docker Street and front entrance are now LED	Complete
Reprogrammed the building management system to turn off more areas after hours when they are not in use. This included a more extensive switch off program over Christmas 2016 in Community Care Centre, the library, Facilities & Maintenance, Health Information Services, the Boardroom, Executive corridor and Education & Research Unit	Complete
Optimising the chiller sequencing to run out most efficient chiller (the power pax) first before the other two turn on	Complete
Automatic door closes on the Facilities & Maintenance office to reduce cold air drafts and air conditioning costs	Complete
New toilet in Volunteer & Creative Services that reduces water consumption	Complete
Stopped a major air leak in our medical breathing air system that was causing our medical air compressors to run more than required	Complete
Printer toners and cartridge recycling program in place – avoiding disposal general waste destined for landfill - ongoing	Complete
Battery recycling program in place – avoiding disposal general waste destined for landfill	Complete
Green Leaf Award – recognising NHW wards and departments efforts in sustainable practices	Complete
Reporting progress against targets to the Board of Management every quarter	Complete
<b>To be completed</b>	
Reusable coffee cup available for sale in the café – reducing disposable coffee cup use avoiding disposal general waste destined for landfill. Due to COVID this was not enacted	To be completed
Established targets for reducing clinical and general waste streams and increasing recycling initiatives as part of the NHW Sustainability Plan – to be achieved by 2018. Due to COVID this was not actioned	To be completed

#### 4. Environmental Policy

##### **Purpose:**

Before planning any environmental strategy, an environmental policy document is necessary to help guide efforts for improvement. This general policy attempts to cover all environmental concerns.

##### **General Aims:**

To promote through Northeast Health Wangaratta's activities, a sound awareness of, and favourable attitudes and behaviours towards the environment among all staff, patients and visitors. Reduce the adverse impacts of Northeast Health Wangaratta's activities on the local, national and global environments.

##### **Policy Outcome Statement:**

- Northeast Health Wangaratta's Environmental Policy recognises its environmental obligations, both locally and globally, to present and future generations.
- Northeast Health Wangaratta as a health service, accepts its responsibility for environmental protection.

- Northeast Health Wangaratta will operate in a manner, which protects the environment, especially the health of staff, patients and visitors.
- Northeast Health Wangaratta will be aware of, monitor its environmental legislative obligations, and strive for best practicable methods.
- Northeast Health Wangaratta will endeavour to ensure that visitors are made aware of the health service’s environmental values and the types of behaviour, which might be detrimental to those values.
- Environmental policy will establish a framework for setting and reviewing environmental goals.

**Environmental Principles:**

To support Northeast Health Wangaratta’s Environmental Policy, the following principles have been developed to provide additional direction on specific issues.

Northeast Health Wangaratta will employ the best practicable methods to:

- Conserve energy (produced by non-renewable resources and by methods, which pollute the environment).
- Conserve water resources and minimise wastewater disposal.
- Minimise and, where possible, eliminate the use of harmful substances.
- Ensure the correct and safe disposal of all substances.
- Minimise waste generation through reduction, reuse and recycling.
- Minimise pollution – noise, visual electromagnetic radiation, and odour.
- Address environmental concerns in all planning and landscaping decisions.
- Encourage procurement procedures that adhere to the principles of the environmental policy.

**5. Environmental performance**

**BASELINE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE**

Environmental Stream	2022-2024 Baseline	2022 -2024 Baseline target
Clinical Waste	6500kg per month	4714 kgs per month
Recycle Waste	23,000kg per month	7624 kg per month
Landfill Waste	27,600kg per month	15,953 kg per month
Comingle Waste	3000kg per month	2500kg per month
Cardboard Waste	5000kg per month	5000kg per month
Energy – Electricity	0.85 GJ per bed day	0.765 GJ per bed day
Water	0.74 kL per bed day	0.666 kL per bed day
Renewable Energy (Solar)	To be confirmed	To be confirmed

**6. Environmental objectives and targets**

NHW key objectives and targets have been set to improve our environmental performance. The following section identifies how these targets will be met.

Objectives and targets relate to six (6) key commitments below:

**Note:** *this is dependent on the growth of NHW business activity remaining constant.*

## **6.1 Management and Communications**

- 6.1.1 Continue to revise targets for improving environmental performance for waste, energy and water reduction over 5 years against the 2022-2024 baseline.
- 6.1.2 Integrate environmental assessment into all NHW decision-making processes and operations.
- 6.1.3 Increase our stakeholder and client awareness of our environmental sustainability commitments.
- 6.1.4 Report on internal and external achievements every 6 months via the Environmental Sustainability Committee.

## **6.2 Energy Consumption**

- 6.2.1 Lead by example through reducing greenhouse gas emissions from our operations by between 2 & 5% annually.
- 6.2.2 Reduce energy consumption from our key activities from the existing baseline continuously over the three years to 90% of 2018-21 baseline by 2025.
- 6.2.3 Consider options for obtaining electricity from renewable sources.
- 6.2.4 Ensure that 10% of passenger vehicles in the fleet are a combination of battery electric vehicles (where suitable in consideration of distance travelled) ,low emission (hybrid or 4-cylinder) or diesel by June 2025.

## **6.3 Water Consumption**

- 6.3.1 Reduce water consumption to 90% of 2018-22 baseline by 2025.

## **6.4 Waste Generation**

- 6.4.1 Increase proportion of waste recycled by 10% of 2018-22 baseline by 2025.
- 6.4.2 Schedule annual waste audits to assess contamination of waste streams ongoing.
- 6.4.3 Reduce clinical waste generation by 50% of 2018/22 baseline by 2024 (2357Kgs)

## **6.5 Purchasing**

- 6.5.1 Continued commitment that integrates environmental specifications into purchasing policy.
- 6.5.2 Continue to support suppliers who will take back their products and packaging for recycling or reuse.

## **6.6 Transport**

- 6.6.1 Complete Fleet operations review every two years to evaluate efficiencies
- 6.6.2



## 7. Action plan 2022-2024

7.1 - Management and communications	Timescale	Responsibility	Progress	Funding
Review environment policy targets every 2 - 3 years for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>energy consumption</li> <li>water consumption</li> <li>waste generation</li> <li>purchasing</li> <li>reducing greenhouse emissions from energy consumption and fleet vehicles.</li> </ul>	In place	Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC)	Ongoing	
Appoint an Environmental Sustainability Officer (look for funding to pay for the position, part time in the first instance)	2023	ESC and Executive	Emerging	
Make sure environmental sustainability issues (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions and climate change) are considered in reviews of the corporate and/or strategic plans.	2022-2024	Executive	Established	
Regular communication and education to all staff – promoting and reporting progress against key actions	2022-2024	ESC	Emerging	
Incorporate regular updates in newsletters, staff updates and other relevant communication	2022-2024	ESC/Communications	Emerging	
Annual or bi-annual staff surveys based on current and future environmental sustainability considerations	2022-2024	ESC/Communications	Emerging	
Environmental Sustainability Committee membership annual update – call for new Committee members interested in these topics in December prior year	2023	ESC Chair	Emerging	
7.2 - Energy	Timescale	Responsibility	Progress	Funding
<b>1. Audits</b>				
Undertake an energy audit of the facility to benchmark performance and identify key opportunities for improvement in HVAC, lighting, IT and office equipment.	Reinforce	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
<b>2. Lighting</b>				
Replace lighting with more efficient technology (fittings and lamps) where appropriate (consistent with Australian Standards).	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Make sure replacement lamps are energy efficient and that maintenance staff understand which technologies must be used when conducting reactive maintenance.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	

<b>3. Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)</b>		F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Continue to install timer systems to make sure HVAC are switched off after business hours across site.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Adjust temperature settings to limit space heating to 20°C where possible.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
<b>4. IT and Office Equipment</b>	2022-2024			
Continue IT rollout of electronic document management system, flat screens and electronic access to information.	2022-2024	Director of Information Management	Ongoing	
Make sure energy efficiency settings (i.e. energy star) are enabled on all relevant office equipment (computers, monitors, printers, photocopiers, etc.).	2022-2024	Director of Information Management	Ongoing	
Conduct a printer rationalisation review with a view to maximising the efficiency of internal printing and copying services. (This should include consideration of multi-function devices.)	2022-2024	Director of Information Management	Ongoing	
<b>7.3 - Water</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>1. Reduce</b>				
Continue to improve water-efficiency of cooling towers (e.g. reducing losses through evaporation and drift).	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Install check meters, where possible, to enable accurate monitoring. Conduct a water balance to identify major uses of water and leaks.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Install and retrofit water-efficient plumbing at all facilities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• flow restrictors hand basins &amp; sinks</li> <li>• low-flow shower heads</li> <li>• Dual-flush toilets.</li> </ul>	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Review fire equipment testing regime for potential opportunities to reduce associated water consumption.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
<b>2. Recycling and Reuse Opportunities</b>	2022-2024			
Continue to improve on existing water capture and reuse systems within buildings from dialysis R/O waste and roof water harvesting.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Consider Open Space Irrigation and Landscaping for new developments across site.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	

Recycle this equipment where possible – to charities or organisations in need an unable to afford this sort of equipment	2022-2024	Management	Ongoing	
Encourage staff to provide their thoughts on innovative ways to recycle and reuse	2022-2024	Management/ Staff	Emerging	
<b>7.4 - Waste</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Investigate options for reducing green waste from food services.	2022-2023	ESC	Emerging	
Investigate the possibility of on selling green waste that can be used for composting	2022 - 2023	ESC	Emerging	
Investigate options for recycling of PVC products	2022-2023	ESC	Emerging	
Explore improved segregation of landfill waste streams	2023-2024	ESC		
Continue printer cartridge recycling program.	2022-2024	Environmental Services	In Progress	
Compliance with Coronavirus (COVID-19): Disposing clinical waste Publication 1901 August 2020	2020-2022	ESC	Ongoing	
Trial options for reducing consumption of single-use or disposable materials.	2022-2024	Clinical Services/ Supply	Ongoing	
End use of polystyrene WPS use	2023-2024	Management	Ongoing	
Compliance to e-waste disposal requirements effective 1 <sup>st</sup> of July 2019	2022-2024	Environmental Services	Ongoing	
Improve recycling opportunities to ensure safe disposal of light bulbs and tubes.	2022-2024	F&M Manager	Ongoing	
Continue to Install recycling facilities and information programs in public access areas throughout the organisation.	2022-2024	Environmental Services		
Include requirement for waste contractor to provide a monthly/quarterly/six monthly/annual breakdown of waste and recycling collected, to allow for quarterly review of progress and annual reporting of waste generation.	2022-2024	Environmental Services	Ongoing	
Incorporate use of general waste and cardboard compactor	2022-2023	Environmental Services	Ongoing	

Reduce packaging waste by seeking agreements with suppliers of products without wrapping, or being boxed where possible.	2022-2024	Procurement/Supply	Emerging	
<b>7.5 - Purchasing choices</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Ensure that environmental specifications are incorporated into key service contracts, including cleaning.	2022-2024	Procurement	On-going	
Garden maintenance contractors preferably use battery powered equipment to reduce air and noise pollution and fossil fuels.	2022-2024	Procurement	On-going	
<b>7.6 - Transport</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Continue to improve the fuel efficiency of the fleet (including 4-cylinder vehicles, hybrid and diesel technology).	2022-2022	Corporate Services	In Progress	
Continue to monitor fleet fuel consumption and regularly report on vehicle efficiency in terms of CO <sub>2</sub> -e emissions per 1,000km travelled.	2021-2024	Finance	Emerging	
Provision of electric vehicle chargers for fleet plug-in and staff, volunteer, visitors	2024-2024			

## 8. Communications plan

### 8.1 Background

NHW has been committed to sustainable environmental practices since 2004 with the inaugural formal waste and water management programs. These have developed and spread throughout NHW to include individual energy, purchasing and IT programs.

This communications plan has been prepared to promote the environmental commitment of NHW to its staff and stakeholders. The key messages of the communications plan are:

- the environmental achievements to date,
- the future environmental direction and commitment, and
- that environmental sustainability is everyone's responsibility.

The plan will be delivered by the Environmental Sustainability Committee.

### 8.2 Objectives

This plan will provide the desired outcomes from the objectives as defined in the NHW sustainability strategy

- Conserve energy (produced by non-renewable resources and by methods which pollute the environment).
- Conserve water resources and minimise wastewater disposal.
- Minimise and, where possible, eliminate the use of harmful substances.
- Ensure the correct and safe disposal of all substances.
- Minimise waste generation through reduction, reuse and recycling.
- Minimise pollution – noise, visual electromagnetic radiation, and odour.
- Address environmental concerns in all planning and landscaping decisions.
- Encourage procurement procedures that adhere to the principles of the environmental policy.

### 8.3 Target audience

It is intended that all staff patients, visitors and contractors will participate in the program.

NHW will use all means available to disseminate information including; meetings, the intranet / internet and visual aids.

### 8.4 Key messages

- Reduce, reuse, recycle.
- Let's reign in our water use. Save water.
- Play your part. Save paper.
- Shut it down whilst not around. Save energy.
- Reducing our environmental footprint.
- Walk, ride and take public transport. Travel smart.

## Communication & Implementation plan

Theme	Activities	Timing
Website & intranet	Website: Promote environment policy and achievements. Intranet: Inform staff of who's who on Environment team, positive results obtained, upcoming activities, actions they can take at work and home, and where they find more information.	On-going
Waste	Waste activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of waste used per bed-day</li> <li>• Cost of waste per bed-day</li> <li>• Top tips for reducing waste to landfill</li> <li>• Importance of proper waste segregation</li> </ul>	On-going
Water	Water activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of water used per bed-day</li> <li>• Cost of water per bed-day</li> <li>• Top tips for water efficiency</li> </ul>	On-going
Energy	Energy activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Switch off' signs/Top tips for energy efficiency</li> <li>• Amount of energy used per bed-day</li> <li>• Cost of energy per bed-day</li> </ul>	On-going
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Switch to more green products</li> <li>• Inform staff of green purchasing options</li> </ul>	On-going

## 9. Monitoring, review and continuous improvement

What	How	How often	Records	Who
Electricity use	Invoicing	Monthly	DoH AIMS Reporting	F&M Manager
General waste	Contractor Data	Monthly	Spreadsheet	Environmental Services
Water use	Invoicing	Quarterly	DoH AIMS Reporting	F&M Manager
Paper use	Purchase records	Monthly	Reports from invoice system	Supply
Fuel use	Monthly bills and vehicle fleet log records	Monthly	Spreadsheet	Finance
Green purchasing	Recorded through purchase order forms	Monthly	Spreadsheet showing % of total purchase	Supply
Recycling	Contractor Data	Monthly	Spreadsheet	Environmental Services
Clinical waste	Contractor data	Monthly	Invoice/ report from contractor	Environmental Services
Staff culture	Newsletter updates, staff forums	Annually	Newsletter	Chief Executive Officer
Gas consumption	Invoicing	Quarterly	DoH AIMS Reporting	F&M Manager

## 10. Data collection plan

Indicator	Frequency	Responsibility	Reports to	Status
<b>Energy Consumption</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity data (Peak and off peak)</li> <li>• Natural Gas</li> <li>• Diesel</li>   <li>• Other fuel (ie transport)</li> </ul>	Quarterly	F&M Manager  Supply/Finance	Chief Operating Officer (COO) / Board of Directors (BoD)  COO / BoD	Current
<b>Water</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water consumption</li> </ul>	Quarterly	Chief Engineer	Environmental Sustainability Committee  COO / BoD	Current
<b>Waste Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Waste</li> <li>• Recyclables               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Comingled – full (cans, bottles &amp; plastics)</li> <li>(b) Cardboard</li> <li>(c) Confidential paper</li> <li>(d) Sanitary Waste</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Clinical waste generated               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(e) Cytotoxic</li> <li>(f) Clincial</li> <li>(g) Anatomical</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recycling rate</li> <li>• Paper Purchased</li> </ul>	Quarterly	General Services Team Leader	Environmental Sustainability Committee  COO / BoD	Current