

Recognising Resource Use

You can use this table to review where different categories of resource use are used in your system – and to consider opportunities to reduce these.

Table 1. Resource use

| Resource | Which steps in your process use these resources? | Could any of this resource use be avoided/improved?  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Medical supplies | Medications |  |  |
| Anaesthetic gases/ nitrous oxide |  |  |
| Propellant (MDI) inhalers |  |  |
| Medical & surgical equipment |  |  |
| Dressings |  |  |
| Diagnostic imaging & radiotherapy equipment & services |  |  |
| Other, specify… |  |  |
| Non- medical supplies | Office equipment, telecomms, computers & stationery |  |  |
| Furniture fittings |  |  |
| Provisions (food) |  |  |
| Other Resources | Waste disposal |  |  |
| Energy use |  |  |
| Water use |  |  |
| Travel | Staff travel |  |  |
| Patient and carer travel |  |  |

[[1]](#footnote-0)

| Units of Healthcare activity | Inpatient bed-day |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outpatient appointment |  |  |
| GP appointment |  |  |
| Surgical or other procedure |  |  |
| Ventilator days |  |  |
| Social resources | Patient time and expertise |  |  |
| Patient social support networks (family, friends, community organisations, charities) |  |  |
| Staff time and expertise |  |  |
| Staff networks |  |  |
| Local government support services |  |  |

Non-carbon environmental impacts

The resources listed in Table 1 (apart from social resources) can all be translated into financial and carbon costs or impacts. However, it is important to remember that carbon impact is just one category of environmental impact. Common sources of non-carbon environmental impacts in healthcare include:

• **Air pollution** from burning fossil fuels in transport or power generation, or from waste incineration

• **Deforestation, landscape degradation, loss of biodiversity** – from building and management of healthcare facilities, as well as building, mining and cultivation in the supply chain (including rubber plantations for glove manufacture)

• **Depletion of scarce natural resources**, including fresh water

• **Bio-accumulation and toxicity** of chemicals entering the environment, often through water pollution (antibiotics, antidepressants, contraceptives, propofol)

• **Plastic pollution** from inadequate waste disposal systems / littering

You can use Table 2 to review whether the system you are studying is responsible for significant non-carbon environmental impacts and how these might be minimised.

Table 2. Non-carbon environmental impacts

| Impact  | Which steps in your process could lead to this impact | Could any of these impacts be avoided or reduced? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Air pollution |  |  |
| Deforestation, landscape degradation, loss of biodiversity |  |  |
| Depletion of scarce resources |  |  |
| Bio-accumulation and toxicity of chemicals entering environment |  |  |
| Plastic pollution |  |  |

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)