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		

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		