

1.13 Inhaler Usage and Environmental Impact: An Irish perspective on knowledge, attitudes and environmentally friendlier prescription practices

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Background Pressurised Metered Dose Inhalers (pMDIs) use hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) with significant global warming potential. Alternative options exist with lower environmental impact, notably Dry Powder Inhalers (DPI). **Methods** Post a review of relevant literature, we designed an inhaler environmental impact survey for healthcare professionals involved in the prescription/recommendation of inhalers at Cork University Hospital. Following ethical approval this survey is ongoing electronically (Qualtrics software).

Results Preliminary results (n=44: NCHDs 69%, Respiratory-nurse specialists 9%, Respiratory-Physiotherapists 18%%, Pharmacists 4%) demonstrate that 48% prescribe/recommend

pMDIs most frequently. 31% reported being aware of the environmental impact of inhaler

choice, with 5% regularly discussing this with patients. 18% felt that environmental impact of medical products was adequately covered in their training to date. With additional training 99% would be more likely to prescribe environmentally friendlier options. Barriers to change identified include effectiveness (21%), compliance (25%) and local/national guidelines (18%). After reading a vignette on different inhaler environmental impact, 95% reported this would influence their future decisions. 88% believe their patients would be open to using environmentally friendlier options.

Conclusion This study demonstrates: 1) the lack of knowledge regarding the environmental impact of inhalers and 2) the willingness to change approach with appropriate education.