

# Three Steps to Greener Respiratory Care

**The total GM carbon emissions from inhalers are the equivalent of 27,000 cars on the road**  
This could be reduced by over 80% while improving care and outcomes

The [NHS Long Term Plan](#) has committed the NHS to be carbon neutral by 2040, [Greater Manchester](#) by 2038. This is supported by the [PCN Investment and Impact Fund](#)

How can we all contribute?

## Review (control)

Review patient to improve disease control and self-management

- Actively identify and review poor control – Short Acting Beta Agonist (SABA) overuse i.e. >3 inhalers per year, or recent exacerbation
- Optimise technique - Stick to one inhaler type, dry powder inhaler (DPI) or metered dose inhaler (MDI), for uniformity of technique – trying to switch to **all to DPI** wherever suitable
- Use InCheck [chart](#) as a guide for inhalers of similar resistance
- In **asthma**
  - Promote MART, using **Fobumix Easyhaler**, **Symbicort Turbohaler**, **Fostair NEXThaler** or **Duoresp Spiromax**
  - Titrate up and down as needed e.g. reduce ICS dose if condition stable for >6 months
- Always consider **non-pharmacological interventions**:
  - Smoking cessation, Vaccinations, Exercise advice
  - Inhaler technique, Self-management plan, Rescue packs
  - Pulmonary rehabilitation Oxygen referral
  - Consider and treat co-morbid disease, Advance care planning & end-of-life care

## Reduce (carbon)

**Choose carbon-friendly options whenever possible** - MDIs have 20-30 times higher carbon impact than DPI or soft mist inhalers (SMI).

- Consult the GMMMG Asthma and COPD [guidelines](#) which provide comparison information
- Use **dry powder** options with lower carbon impact e.g. **Breezhaler** 🚗17 miles, **Easyhaler** 🚗4-21 miles, **Ellipta** 🚗32-34 miles, **NEXThaler** 🚗39 miles and **Turbohaler** 🚗3-46 miles
- Only use **MDIs** (with spacers) when needed for good control – but **always avoid** highest carbon options e.g. **Ventolin MDI** 🚗199 miles, **Flutiform MDI** 🚗1556 miles and **Symbicort MDI** 🚗1513 miles

Make a shared decision with the patient:

- Use fewest number of inhalers - use combination inhalers, minimise number of puffs, use refills
- Offer patients [NICE inhaler decision aid](#).

Monitor practice, PCN, and Locality prescribing patterns on [GM Tableau](#)

## Return (to pharmacy)

- Encourage patients to make sure inhaler is completely empty before disposing of it.
- Returning unwanted, out of date and used inhalers to pharmacies to allow gases and devices to be disposed of in the most environmental way



More information and resources can be found [on Sustainability page of GM GP Excellence Website](#)  
Further guidance is available at [www.gmmmg.nhs.uk](http://www.gmmmg.nhs.uk)