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ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE SKIN SURGERY: STAFF PERCEPTION, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES AT A DERMATOLOGY DEPARTMENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The National Health Service (NHS) has set the goal of reaching net zero emissions by 2040. Within dermatology, minor skin surgery is particularly energy- and resource-intensive. As we approach the 1-year mark since the publication of the British Society for Dermatological Surgery (BSDS) sustainability guidance 2022, there is a need to assess dermatology staff's awareness, attitudes and practice towards environmentally sustainable minor skin surgery.

Methods: A single-centre service evaluation study was conducted at South Warwickshire University NHS Foundation Trust (SWFT). A 12-question structured questionnaire was distributed to all medical and nursing staff that undertake skin surgery (n = 14 medical and n = 5 nursing staff) between 10 and 21 July 2023, with a response rate of 11 out of 19 (58%). The skin surgery waste disposal practices were evaluated between 14 June and 11 July 2023 where the weights of waste generated from seven skin surgery lists (each lasting 4 h) involving a total of 29 procedures were evaluated using a digital scale accurate to the nearest 100 g.

Results: Out of 11 respondents, 9 (82%) stated that they were aware of the BSDS sustainability guidance 2022, but only 4 (36%) respondents had read the guidance. Seven (64%) stated that they used absorbable and non-absorbable sutures for surface wound closure, whereas 4 (36%) respondents stated that they exclusively used non-absorbable sutures for surface wound closure. Eight