

Focus Referrals Waste Management Policy

At Focus Referrals we know that how we dispose of our waste can have a huge and long-term environmental impact and we are working to reduce this by working with the Investors in the Environment (IIE) accreditation scheme. Our waste management policy utilises the Waste Hierarchy. No waste produced by Focus Referrals goes to landfill and all waste is weighed on collection for auditing.



Prevention: waste reduction initiatives

At Focus Referrals we are always looking for new ways to reduce our waste. Our strategy includes reducing waste through use of reusable theatre fabrics including hats, gowns masks and clogs for clinical staff. Our uniforms and scrubs are partially made from recycled plastic bottles. We use washable incontinence pads, reduce our plastic waste production by switching from laundry liquid to powder supplied in a cardboard box and changing plastic pill bottles to cardboard tablet cartons and using recycled plastic bottles where necessary. We source FSC certified biodegradable cat litter and use wet hospital diets supplied in infinitely recyclable metal tins. Switching from 400g tins to 156g sizes helps to reduce food waste. Supplying reusable comfortable collars were possible or plastic collars made from recycled plastic post-surgery and using poo bags made from plastic bottles are also some of our initiatives.

Preparing for reuse

Reusable equipment and instruments are meticulously cleaned and sterilised in our reusable zero waste metal kit tins on site, NHS standard surgical gowns and drapes are laundered and sterilised in zero waste packaging. At the end of their life span they are returned to the manufacturer and repurposed into new products, a completely circular economy.

Alternative recycling schemes

- Soft plastics – soft plastic waste created by staff are collected and recycled at the local supermarket. Theatre soft plastics are being separated and segregated for the recycling scheme provided by MVH started in December 2025.
- Pet food packaging and anaesthetic circuit tubing: we have a MVH sponsored recycling collection point available for staff, in patients and clients to drop off soft plastic animal food packaging for recycling.
- Blister packs – Blister packs produced on site are collected and recycled by teracycle.
- Batteries – collected and recycled by Veolia.
- Printer Cartridges – collected and recycled by the manufacturer.

Waste Anaesthetic Gases

Our anaesthetic isoflurane waste gases are collected in specialised SageTech storage equipment for extraction and reuse, preventing harmful F gases from entering the planet's atmosphere.

Disposal

In accordance with veterinary risk assessments, Focus Referrals waste is disposed of in one of the following waste streams based on the required route for disposal: Focus Referrals changed waste collection companies in June 2025, diverting all our non-infectious offensive waste from landfill to Energy from Waste (EfW)

Medical Waste – via PHS

- Cytotoxic and cytostatic pharmaceuticals (glass bottles and vials, contaminated needles, syringes, PPE etc)
- Infectious waste
- Non infectious and offensive waste - EfW
- Sharps
- Pharmaceutical waste (prescription only medications, out of date drugs, contaminated bottles, syringes and packaging, denatured controlled drugs)

Anatomical waste (body tissues or parts) – Via CPC

Business and Domestic Waste – Via Veolia

- General waste – EfW
- Recycling (including batteries)
- Food waste -waste for anaerobic digestion

Medical Waste	Route of Disposal
Cytotoxic & Cytostatic – Rarely	Separated into purple and yellow containers for high temperature incineration
Anatomical	Separated into yellow and red anatomical waste containers located in dedicated waste freezer before collection for high temperature incineration
Infectious – Rarely	Collected in yellow bags before storage in dedicated waste freezer before high temperature incineration
Non-infectious and offensive - EfW	Collected in yellow “tiger” clinical waste bins located in the central prep room and all consult rooms. Sent for incineration to create energy (EfW)
Sharps	Collected in yellow sharps containers located in all clinical areas. Sent for high temperature incineration. In June 2025 the size of these were increased from 5 litre to 7 litres to reduce the amounts of plastic being incinerated
Pharmaceutical	Segregated into blue leak proof cardboard containers (previously plastic) All controlled drugs are denatured prior to disposal in the presence of an authorised person.
Cadavers	If not taken home by the pet’s owner they are individually prepared and placed in cold storage for collection by CPC, Meadowview or another cremation company selected by the owner.
Non-Medical Waste	Route of Disposal
General Waste - EfW	Collected in black bin and sent for general waste incineration to create energy (EfW)
Recycling (including but not limited to, Paper, cardboard, aluminium, plastics etc)	Segregated into appropriate recycling bins. Recycling bins positioned in all rooms at Focus Referrals
Food Waste – Anaerobic Digestion	Separated into food waste bins in staff areas and collected by Veolia
Coffee Pods	Collected in staff kitchen and recycled with the pod back scheme
Soft Plastics – (e.g. crisp & biscuit packets, chocolate wrappers)	Collected in staff kitchen and recycled at local supermarket. Theatre soft plastics also collected
Pet Food Packaging and anaesthetic tubing	Collected in specialist bin located kennels
Batteries	Collected and recycled via Veolia
Glass	The minimal glass waste produced by staff and CPD evenings is washed, stored and recycled at glass bins
Printer Cartridges	Collected and recycled by the manufacturer

At Focus Referrals we are committed to continually reviewing and improving our environmental and waste management system by working to the Investors in the Environment criteria, whilst considering any changes in legislation, our organisation and other factors. We distribute our policy to all our employees to ensure that they are provided with the training and information necessary to increase awareness of Focus Referral environmental impact.

Charlotte Wynn is our Sustainability lead and is responsible for the employment of this policy.

Focus Referrals will make this policy available when requested to members of the public, including displaying a copy on our website.

This policy was reviewed by

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