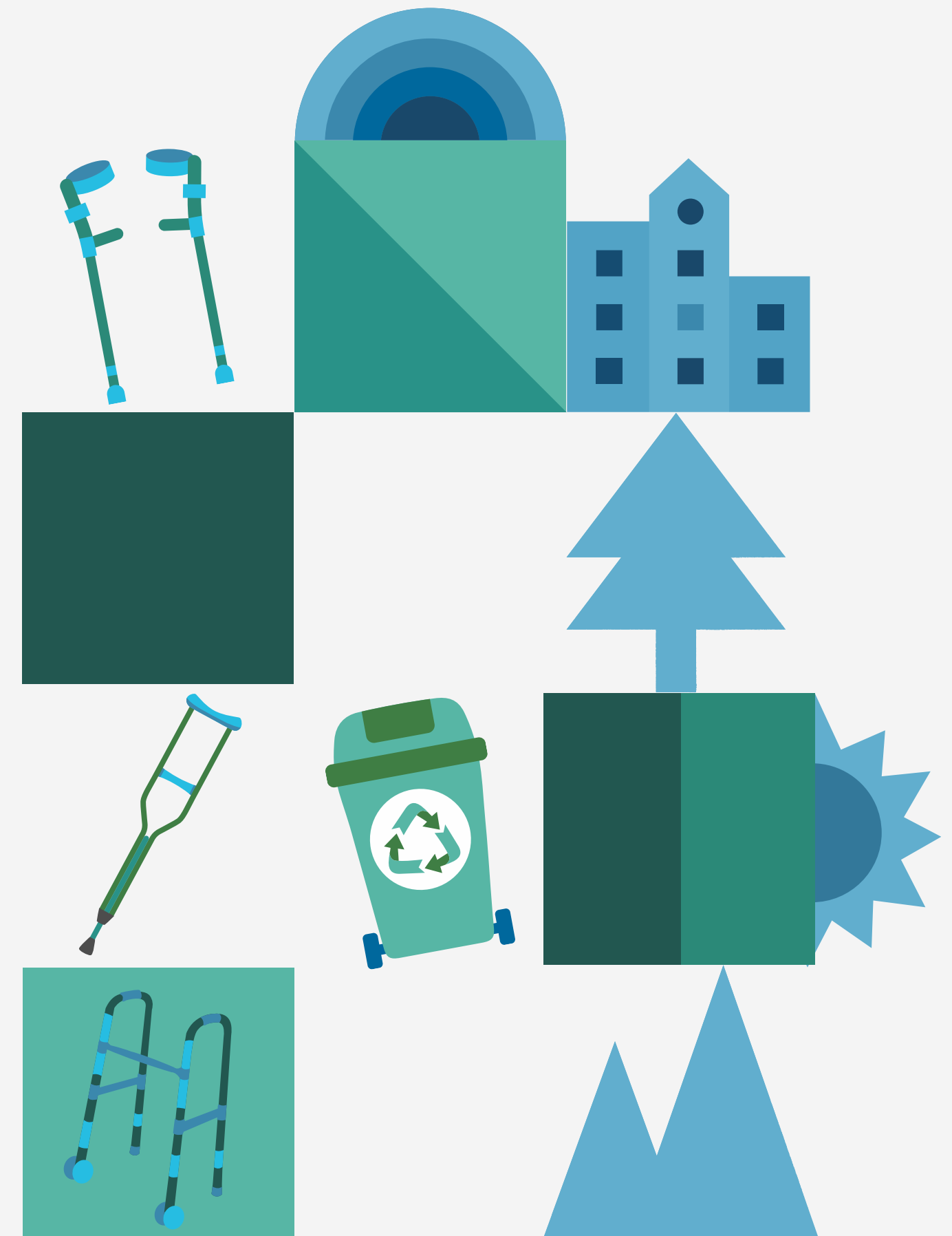


WALKING AID RECYCLING:

Working with local partners to reduce unnecessary waste and financial loss for the NHS by repairing, recycling and reusing walking aids.

Rhiannon Freshney, Rob Skellett, Rhodri Poacher, Susan Hostler



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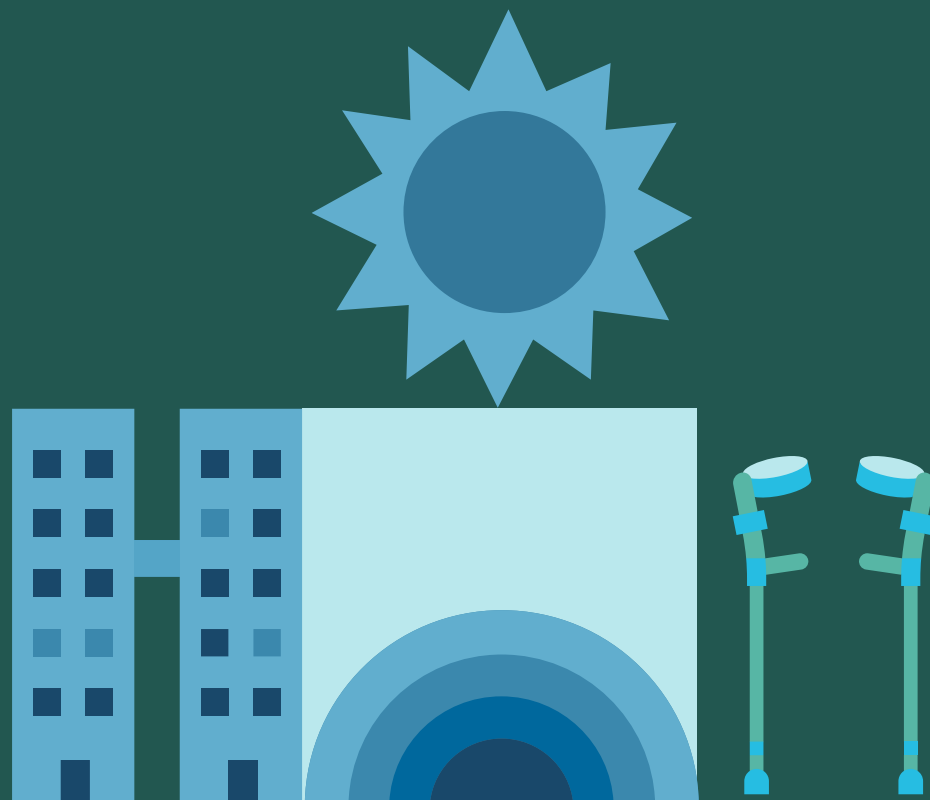
Barriers

02

Achievements
and Enablers

05

Next Steps



Our Project

Problem Statement

NHS Wales currently discard walking aids leading to unsustainable processes, unnecessary waste and financial loss for the NHS.

Aim Statement

Our aim is to prevent 20,000 walking aids going to landfill across NHS Wales, saving over 500,000kg CO₂e by April 2026.



Achievements

- Partnership with Probation Service
- Implementation at Swansea Bay LHB
- Development of resources, incl. implementation pack
- Reviewing lessons learnt for continuous improvement

Enablers

- Academy connected VUNHST & CAVUHB
- Recognising strengths of the team
- Developing robust framework to deliver the project
- Engagement with all Health Boards and Trusts
- Partners to complete refurbishments

CAVUHB REFURBISHED

4,563

WALKING AIDS IN 2024

THE CARBON SAVINGS EQUATE TO THE
ENERGY USE OF

11 HOMES

FOR A WHOLE YEAR



Barriers



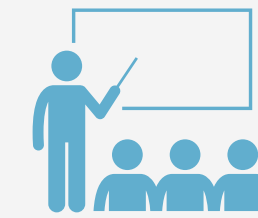
Space

Lack of dedicated storage areas for returned and refurbished crutches. IPC requirement to keep 'dirty' and 'clean' stock separate.



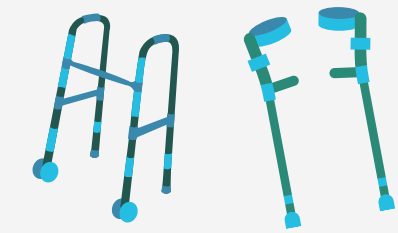
Contracts

At some LHBs, there are existing third-party agreements within the walking aids contract for ordering of stock. This makes it difficult for LHBs to internally monitor walking aid figures and may result in a challenge when looking to reuse or refurbish crutches.



Operational Pressures

Across the NHS, there is large pressures on the services coupled with limited staff availability to manage collection, cleaning, and redistribution of crutches. Staff and volunteers require time to learn proper cleaning, safety checks, and reallocation processes.



Stock Management

Concern from clinical leads regarding need for regular stock. To ensure consistent stock availability across all regions, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will establish clear roles, responsibilities, and processes for procurement, distribution, and replenishment in the All-Wales campaign.

Next Steps

Engagement with all LHBs is underway, we are working either align or assist the set up of a scheme.



Leadership

Senior stakeholder commitment to drive implementation and oversight. Senior leaders committed and raising awareness of the collaborative scheme in relevant forums.

Monitoring

Track progress, measure impact, and refine the scheme through regular reviews. Centralising monitoring.

Communication Campaign

To ensure success, the public, staff and our patients need to be aware of the scheme.. Campaign to include dedicated website, email address and contact.

Resource

Ensure staffing, logistics, and refurbishment facilities are adequately resourced.
