

# HOW TO Decarbonise Health Research

Questions to consider to reduce the carbon footprint of clinical trials

## Does the study need to be done?

Using existing evidence could avoid carbon emissions associated with unnecessary research.

### At The George Institute we aim to:

- ✓ Conduct systematic reviews of existing evidence before developing study proposals, address health issues with the widest patient and public relevance and ensure all stakeholders are involved in study conceptualisation.



## Is the study design as effective and efficient as possible?

Study coordination centres are one of the highest sources of carbon emissions in clinical research. Improvements in study efficiency can reduce emissions by 1/3.

### At The George Institute we aim to:

- ✓ Simplify data collection and use the most efficient electronic data entry methods,
- ✓ Limit data to clinically relevant end points,
- ✓ Optimise participant recruitment.



## Are study partner organisations and suppliers aligned with net-zero targets?

Two thirds of healthcare related emissions are 'Scope 3 emissions' from the supply chain and are dominated by the manufacture of goods and services.

### At The George Institute we aim to:

- ✓ Partner/contract with organisations/offices/suppliers targeting net-zero emissions or using low-carbon production and waste minimisation practices.



## Can study activities be reduced or study visits made remote?

Around 16% of a study's carbon emissions are due to participant-related travel. These can be reduced to 0 depending on the number and location of study visits.

### At The George Institute we aim to:

- ✓ Minimise the number of participant study visits and measure outcomes remotely or using tele-/video-conferencing where possible.



## Can study-related travel be reduced?

Study team travel accounts for between 19-29% of study carbon emissions. Focused initiatives can cut these emissions by 17%.

### At The George Institute we aim to:

- ✓ Optimise the number of study meetings to increase efficiency and reduce redundancy,
- ✓ Conduct tele- / video-conferencing or web-based training to reduce unnecessary travel,
- ✓ Undertake centralised and risk-based data and site monitoring, limiting site visits to sites/issues of concern.

