

Making Sustainable Change – Barriers and Facilitators to the Design and Delivery of Sustainable Healthcare in NHS Scotland

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Introduction

NHS Scotland has committed to achieve net-zero by 2040¹. To better understand the reality of making sustainable change within NHS Scotland, this project undertook a Lewin's forcefield analysis exercise² which aimed to: 1) identify the barriers and facilitators to the design and delivery of sustainable healthcare in NHS Scotland and 2) form recommendations to support achievement of this goal.

Methods

Virtual 1-hour, semi-structured interviews were performed with 20 multi-professional individuals involved in sustainability work from 12 healthcare organisations across Scotland. The project team grouped the barriers and facilitators identified in the interviews into 24 common themes and applied a weighted score to each using a scale of 1 = low impact on change and 5 = high impact on change. The project team formulated 10 recommended actions that could be taken to strengthen the facilitators and overcome the barriers. These apply to individuals, teams, and organisations across NHS Scotland.

Recommendations

1. Communicate with the general public, NHS staff, and wider system partners on net-zero ambitions and the role they can play.
2. Consider environmental sustainability in all healthcare planning and procurement decisions.
3. Allocate human, economic and time resources to sustainable change efforts.
4. Organisations should make net-zero a priority with clear action plans, leadership and accountability to accompany this.
5. Create and strengthen networks to facilitate shared learning, resources and good practice.
6. Make carbon footprint calculations more accessible.
7. Develop a national repository of carbon footprint metrics.
8. Promote multi-disciplinary and cross-organisational working.
9. Inspire leadership among those with a climate interest.
10. Work with academics and industry to harness innovation.

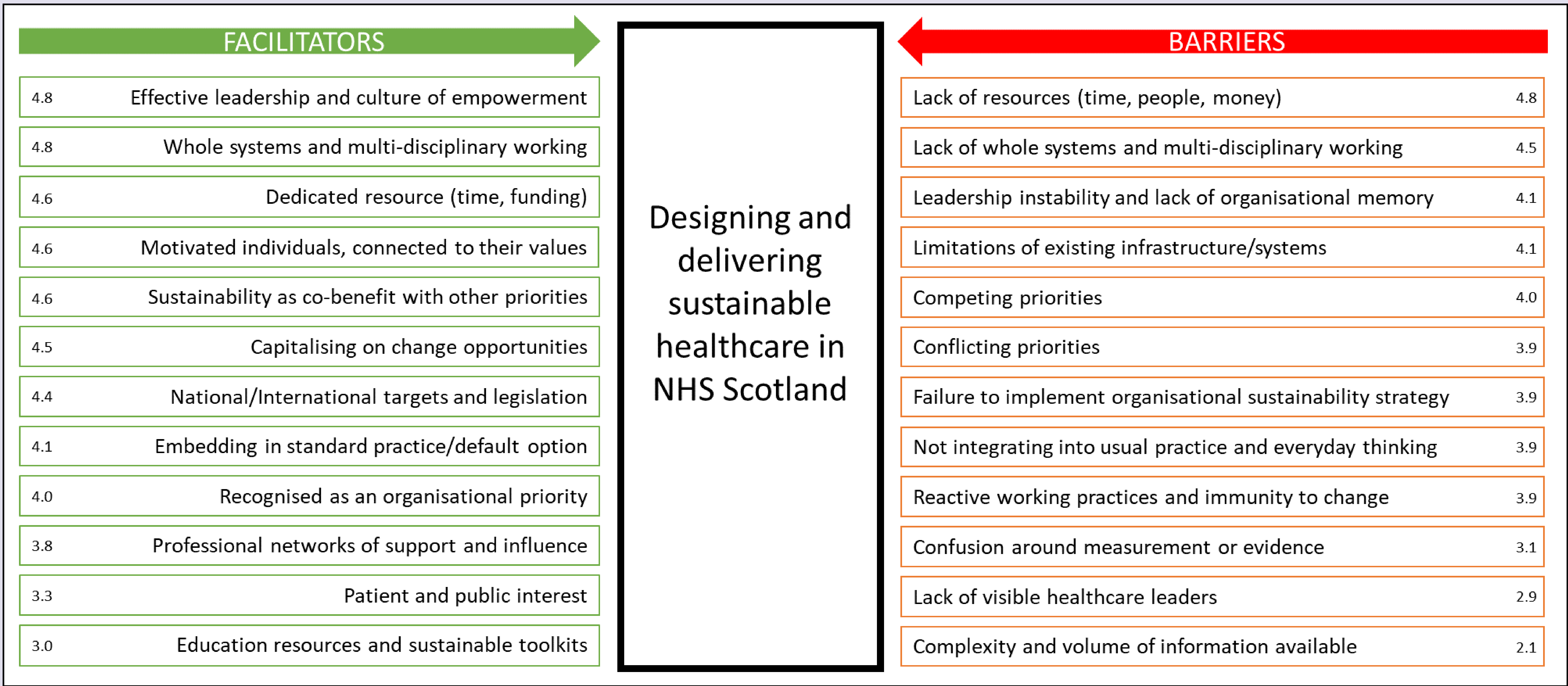
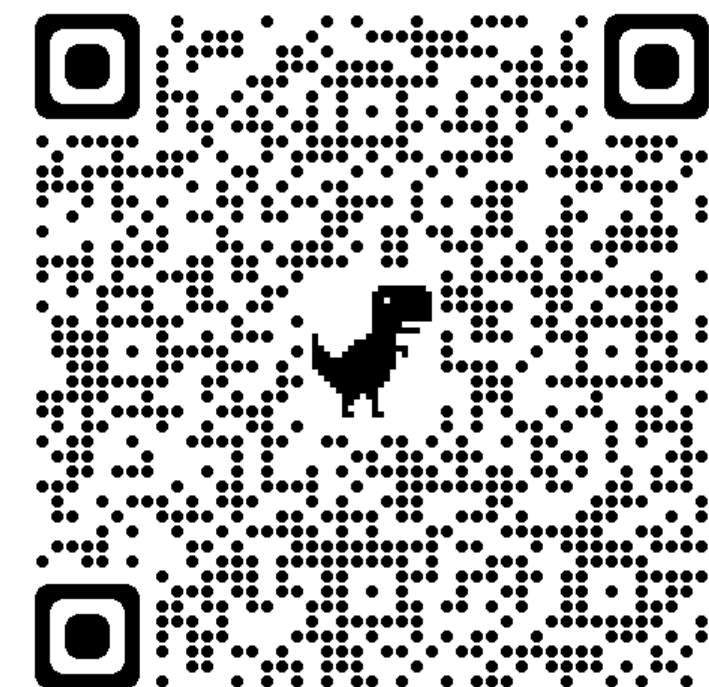


Figure 1 – Forcefield Analysis of Barriers and Facilitators to the Design and Delivery of Sustainable Healthcare. Numbers refer to weight of each force, scored from 0-5 (0 – no anticipated effect; 5 – maximum anticipated effect).

Read the Full Report



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References

1. [NHS Scotland climate emergency and sustainability strategy: 2022-2026](#). Scottish Government. Aug 2022
2. Lewin, K. (1951) Field Theory in Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers (ed. Cartwright, D.). Harper & Row, New York.