

Promoting Sustainable Practices in Gynaecology: A Review of Gowns & Drapes usage in Minor Procedures

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Introduction :

NHS generates over 600,000 tonnes of clinical waste annually.

.Operating theatres are responsible for 20-30% of a hospital's waste, and a large proportion of that comes from single-use disposable gowns and drapes.



Environmental Impact of Surgical Waste.

Burning drapes and gowns releases toxic gases and microplastics that can disrupt hormonal balance in women, leading to menstrual problems, infertility, miscarriages, and increased risk of hormone-related cancers like breast and ovarian cancer.

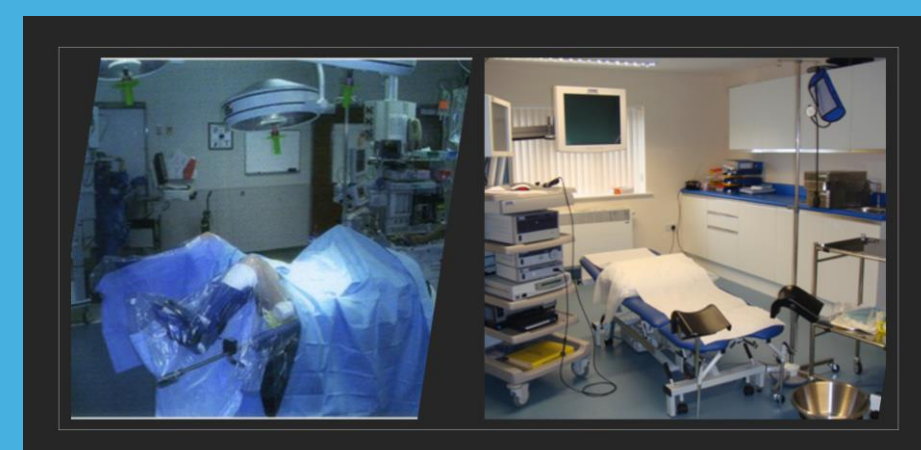


Study Objective & Methods.

Assess whether surgical gowns and drapes are truly necessary for minor procedures. Identify opportunities for cost and waste reduction while maintaining patient safety.



Theatre vs. Outpatient Practices



In outpatient settings, minor procedures are performed safely with minimal or no use of disposable gowns and drape

In contrast, operating theatres routinely use disposables, often due to habit rather than necessity. These procedures can be done without Drapes and gowns without compromising infection control or patient safety.

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Cost Reduction



Each minor procedure using disposable gowns and drapes costs £30.16.

. Procedures / years at Northumbria Healthcare 1463.

• By eliminating unnecessary disposables, we could save £44,129.90 annually across all minor procedures

Waste Reduction



Each procedure generates 986 grams of waste just from disposable gowns and drapes. That adds up to 1,442 kilograms of waste per year, which could be prevented.

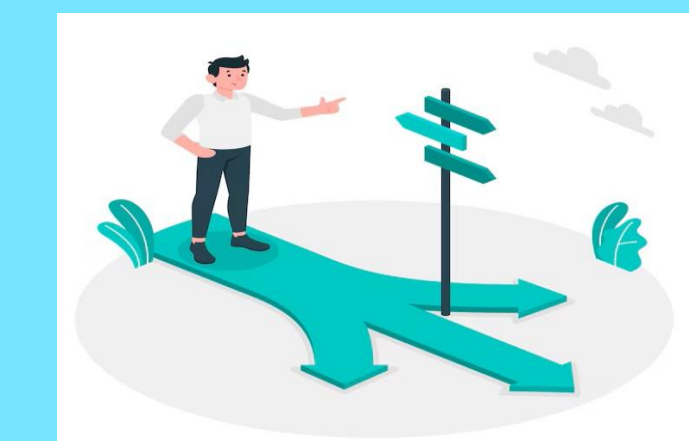
Recommendations

Reduce unnecessary disposable gowns and drapes in minor procedures.

Adopt **reusable alternatives** where feasible and safe.

Educate clinicians about cost and environmental impacts.

Implement sustainability policies at a hospital-wide level



Conclusion & Call to Action



Our Project demonstrates that significant cost and waste reductions are possible without compromising patient care.

By rethinking minor procedures, we can align theatres with outpatient sustainability practices.

Future Goals

Expand our study to other regions & Collaborate with NHS sustainability teams.

Develop formal eco-friendly surgical guidelines to ensure safe and sustainable practices