Environmental Sustainability Report
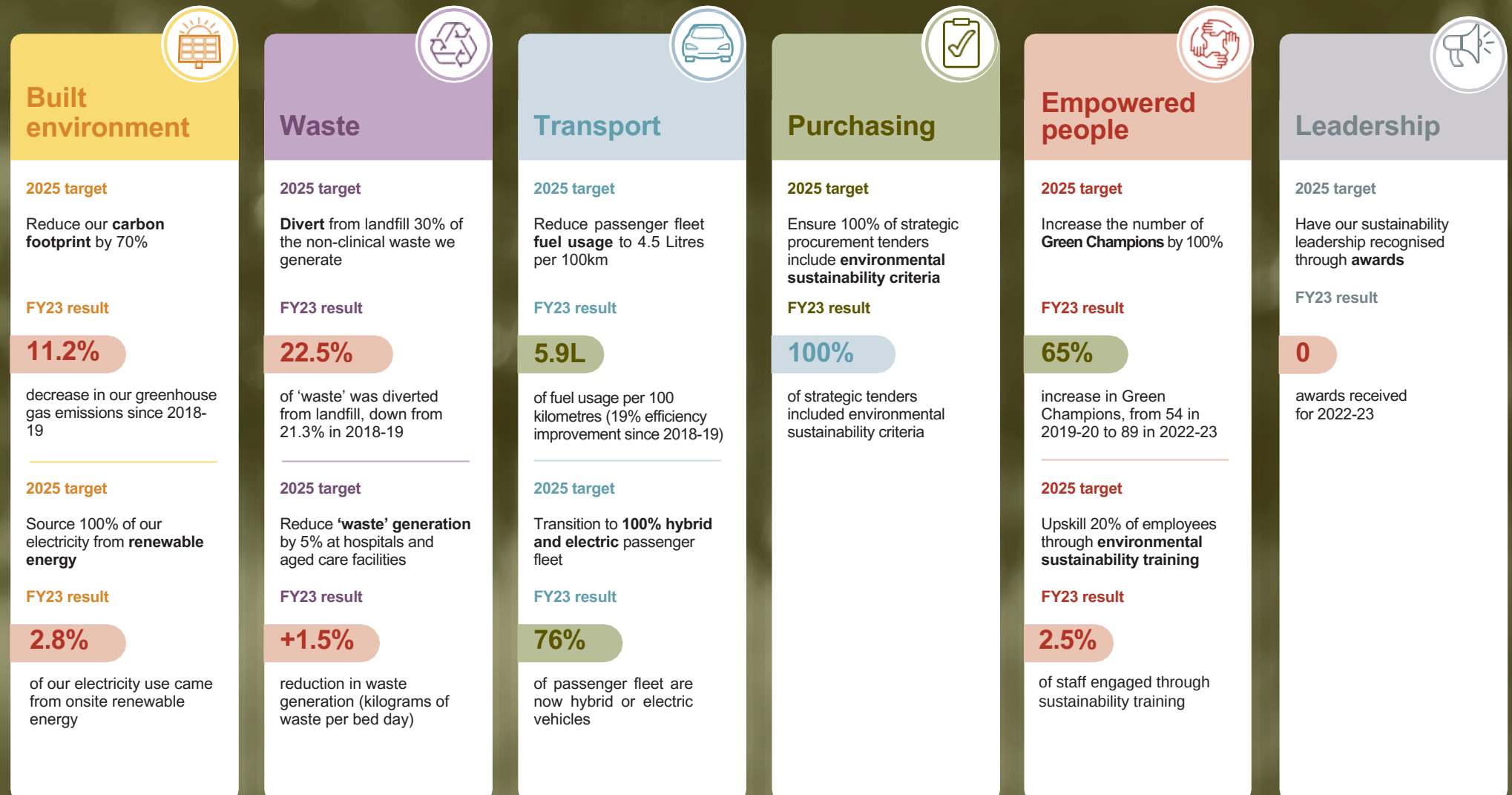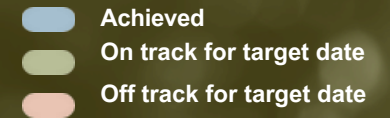
2022 - 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

UnitingCare acknowledges that we live and work on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Countries. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Australia's First Nations Peoples have cared for Country for over 60,000 years, and have long recognised the interdependency of ecological, spiritual and human health. We acknowledge and respect this deep relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their ancestral lands and seas. We recognise this custodianship and the contribution our First Nations Peoples continue to make to conservation, climate action and the management of lands and waters.

We commit to learn from, work with and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge of caring for Country, to build a brighter, greener future together.

Contents

Our 2022 - 2023 scorecard

Here we share a snapshot of our progress and areas for improvement in the third period of our *2025 Environmental Sustainability Strategy* journey.

- 🟦 **Achieved**
- 🟩 **On track for target date**
- 🟥 **Off track for target date**

Built environment

2025 target

Reduce our **carbon footprint** by 70%

FY23 result

11.2%

decrease in our greenhouse gas emissions since 2018-19

2025 target

Source 100% of our electricity from **renewable energy**

FY23 result

2.8%

of our electricity use came from onsite renewable energy

Waste

2025 target

Divert from landfill 30% of the non-clinical waste we generate

FY23 result

22.5%

of 'waste' was diverted from landfill, down from 21.3% in 2018-19

2025 target

Reduce **'waste' generation** by 5% at hospitals and aged care facilities

FY23 result

+1.5%

reduction in waste generation (kilograms of waste per bed day)

Transport

2025 target

Reduce passenger fleet **fuel usage** to 4.5 Litres per 100km

FY23 result

5.9L

of fuel usage per 100 kilometres (19% efficiency improvement since 2018-19)

2025 target

Transition to **100% hybrid and electric** passenger fleet

FY23 result

76%

of passenger fleet are now hybrid or electric vehicles

Purchasing

2025 target

Ensure 100% of strategic procurement tenders include **environmental sustainability criteria**

FY23 result

100%

of strategic tenders included environmental sustainability criteria

Empowered people

2025 target

Increase the number of **Green Champions** by 100%

FY23 result

65%

increase in Green Champions, from 54 in 2019-20 to 89 in 2022-23

2025 target

Upskill 20% of employees through **environmental sustainability training**

FY23 result

2.5%

of staff engaged through sustainability training

Leadership

2025 target

Have our sustainability leadership recognised through **awards**

FY23 result

0

awards received for 2022-23

Built environment

Objective

Transition to greener, healthier buildings that reduce our demand for energy, water and resources.
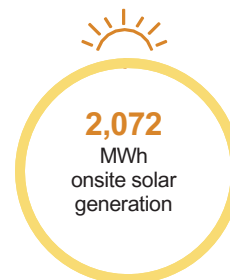
2025 Targets

70%

Reduce our carbon footprint by 70%

100%

Source 100% of our electricity from renewable energy
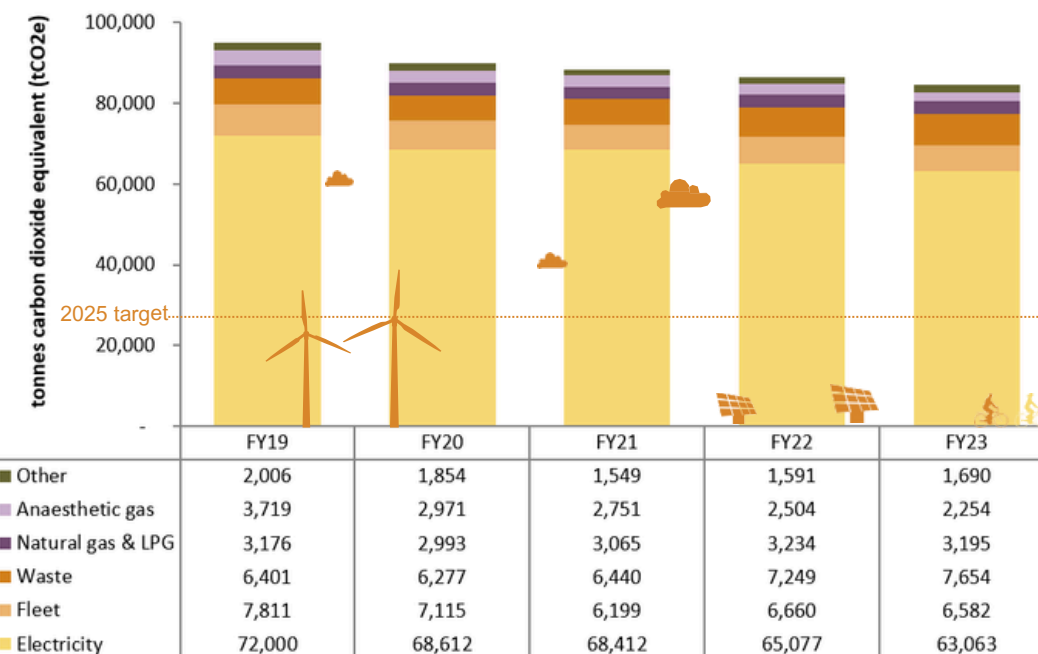
Our progress in 2022-23

Renewable energy

2,072
MWh
onsite solar
generation

Reported **onsite renewable energy** generation increased to 2.8% of total consumption, up from 1% in 2021-22. From July 2022 to June 2023, 1.5MW of rooftop solar was installed across eight BlueCare facilities, adding 1,388 MWh to our onsite renewable production capacity.

Carbon footprint[1]

▼
11.2%

Carbon footprint **reduced by 11.2%** compared to our 2018-19 baseline, continuing a year-on-year downwards trend since 2016-17. Electricity and fleet continue to represent our most significant emission reductions, while reducing waste-to-landfill remains a priority improvement area.

tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e)

	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
■ Other	2,006	1,854	1,549	1,591	1,690
■ Anaesthetic gas	3,719	2,971	2,751	2,504	2,254
■ Natural gas & LPG	3,176	2,993	3,065	3,234	3,195
■ Waste	6,401	6,277	6,440	7,249	7,654
■ Fleet	7,811	7,115	6,199	6,660	6,582
■ Electricity	72,000	68,612	68,412	65,077	63,063

Waste

Objective

Implement waste management practices that reduce waste generation, increase recycling and support the transition to a circular economy.
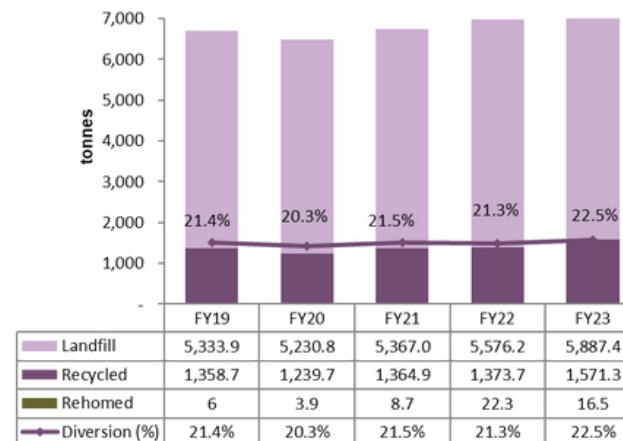
2025 Targets

30%
Divert from landfill 30% of the non-clinical waste we generate

▼5%
Reduce waste generation by 5% at hospitals and aged care facilities

Our progress in 2022-23

Waste tonnage[2]

	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Landfill	5,333.9	5,230.8	5,367.0	5,576.2	5,887.4
Recycled	1,358.7	1,239.7	1,364.9	1,373.7	1,571.3
Rehomed	6	3.9	8.7	22.3	16.5
Diversion (%)	21.4%	20.3%	21.5%	21.3%	22.5%

▲ 22.5%

Diversion increased to 22.5% (compared to 21% last year), largely due to improvements in the diversion of organic waste and the successful implementation of asset rehoming projects.

Waste diversion[3]
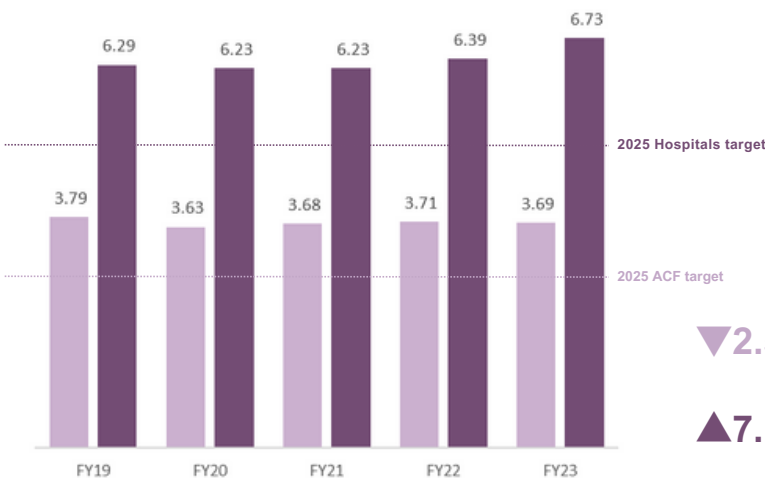
▼2.5% ACFs

▲7.1% Hospitals

Waste intensity (kg per bed day) at our aged care facilities decreased marginally in the last twelve months; representing a 2.5% improvement against pre-Covid levels. A 7.1% increase was reported for hospitals, driven by an increase in total waste generated.

Transport

Objective

Reduce our contribution to air pollution and emissions through improved fuel efficiency and reduced travel.
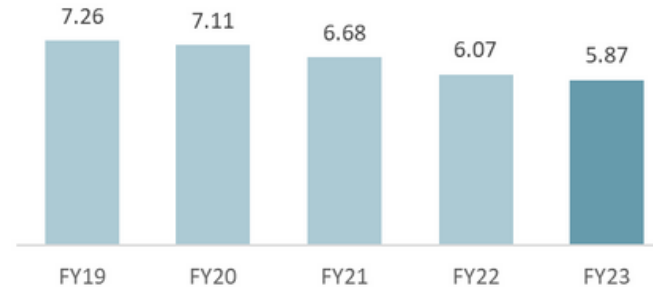
2025 Targets

▼4.5L

Reduce passenger fleet fuel use to 4.5 litres per 100 km

1⃞⃞%

Transition to 100% hybrid and electric passenger fleet
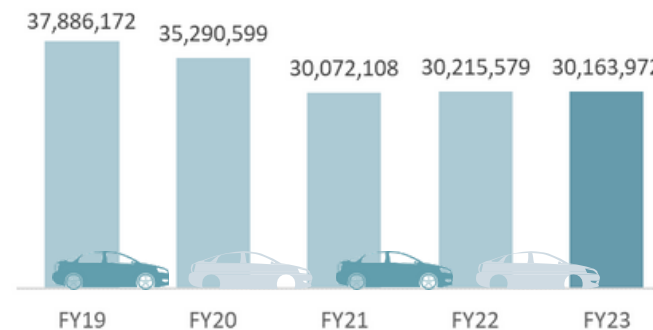
Our progress in 2022-23

Fuel efficiency (L per 100 km)

FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
7.26	7.11	6.68	6.07	5.87

76% hybrid + electric

Added 304 new hybrid and 8 electric vehicles (replacing internal combustion engine vehicles), which now make up 76% of our passenger fleet.

Fleet travel (km)

FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
37,886,172	35,290,599	30,072,108	30,215,579	30,163,972

25.8 million km avoided

Changes in service delivery have contributed to a reduction in kilometres driven, helping to save around $3.9M in fuel costs per year. Coupled with better fleet efficiency, this has resulted in a 29.2% decrease in our fleet scope 1 carbon emissions since 2018-19.

Air travel (km)

Number of flights:

FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
8,236	4,873	2,625	4,692	5,934
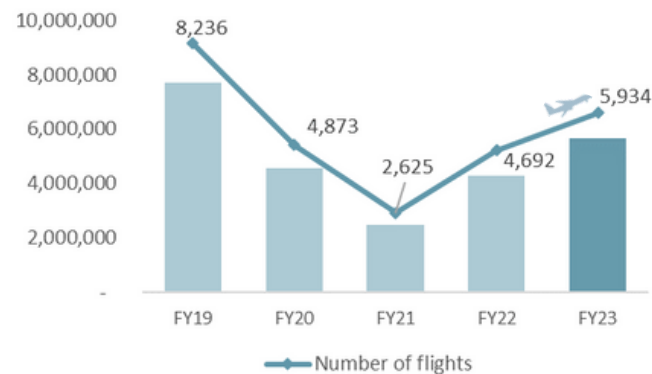
Flights on the rise

Corporate air travel continued to return to pre-pandemic levels. However, this still represents a 28% reduction on 2019-20, in line with UnitingCare's internal corporate travel policy which targets a 30% reduction in travel and travel-related expenses.

Purchasing

Objective

Reduce environmental harm arising from the products and services we procure.

2025 Target

100%

Ensure 100% of strategic procurement tenders include environmental sustainability criteria

Our progress in 2022-23

Renewable electricity options analysis

Completed an options analysis for renewable energy sourcing approaches, involving extensive consultation, education, and alignment across 30+ executive and senior leaders and internal subject matter experts.

Paper type & usage

A 'force majeur' event in November 2022 impacted the supply chain of our regular carbon neutral paper, resulting in a substitute product being used for the last six months of 2022-23. This supply chain issue resulted in a 20% reduction in our carbon neutral paper purchases for the year.

Legend:
- Not carbon neutral (kg)
- Carbon neutral (kg)
- Carbon neutral (%)
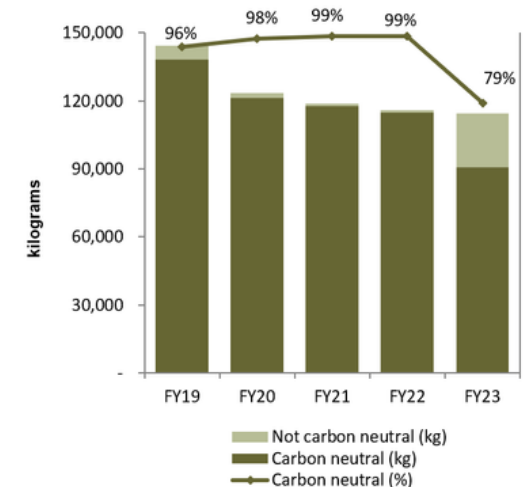
Embedding product stewardship

More than 1500 beds were diverted from landfill thanks to the leadership of Zak Adams, Procurement Contract Manager, as part of an ongoing bed replacement program within BlueCare.

Partnering with bed supplier AlphaCare and the Rotary Club, Zak was able to ensure that at least 30% of the beds were re-homed to communities in need, such as Papua New Guinea. The remaining beds are dismantled for recycling of valuable components.

This successful partnership has allowed BlueCare to divert an extra 122.5 tonnes of resources from landfill.

Watch this video to hear Zak speak about his impactful work with BlueCare, AlphaCare and Rotary Australia:

Empowered people

Objective

Embed environmental sustainability within our work culture and practices, and support our staff and clients to contribute to UnitingCare's sustainability goals.

2025 Targets

20%

Upskill 20% of employees through environmental sustainability training

100%

Increase the number of Green Champions by 100%

Our progress in 2022-23

Staff training

▲ **2.5%**

400+ staff engaged in one of the 10 sustainability events and team training sessions held across the organisation.

Green Champions

▲ **37%**

increase in Green Champions since last year, from 65 in 2021-22 to 89 in 2022-23. Much of this improvement continued to stem from our hospitals, which are growing local networks of 'Waste Warriors' and 'Bin Chickens' to drive greater recycling practices in the hospital wards and kitchens.

Recognition

UnitingCare's annual Full Circle & Reconciliation Awards celebrate our staff and volunteers who go above and beyond in their work. The 'Go for Green' award category recognises our sustainability changemakers who promote new ways to reduce our environmental footprint.

Congratulations and thank you to our 2022 nominees!
- Simone Elias (Environmental Sustainability) – Winner
- St Andrew's Soft Plastics Recycling Project (St Andrew's Hospital) – Finalist
- Jodie Jackson (BlueCare) – Finalist
- The Wesley Hospital Engineering Department
- Sue Wellauer (Perioperative – The Wesley Hospital)
- Mira Fitzgerald (Waste Warriors – The Wesley Hospital)
- Mitzi Lagera (Clinical Services – St Andrew's Hospital)
- Neal Jenkinson (Property Maintenance)

People-powered circular solutions

Our passionate staff are key to helping UnitingCare play its part in 'closing the loop' on waste, by turning unwanted trash from hospitals and aged care facilities into treasure for others. These initiatives have allowed us to divert waste from landfill, extend the life of valuable resources and build relationships within UnitingCare and also with local communities.

Here are some of the dedicated change-makers that have been leading the charge this year:
- Todd Rayner, ARRCS Activities Officer at Mutitjulu community in the Northern Territory, diverted more than 100 mattresses, 50 lounges, 100 blankets and 70 bed ensembles from ending up in landfills. Todd organised the furniture to be distributed to local people doing it tough.
- Christopher Long (Clinical Educator) and Jen Kash (Orderley) at St Stephens Private Hospital have started a Repurposing Project to donate old furniture, books, and clinical equipment to local charities, veterinary surgeries and education centres.
- Clayre Gerrard, Clinical Equipment Coordinator at The Wesley Hospital in Brisbane, helped rehome nearly 500 beds, retired clinical equipment and expired supplies via a partnership with Rotary Australia's Rehoming Equipment Program.

Leadership

Objective

Accelerate societal progress towards climate resilience and environmental sustainability through advocacy, collaboration and modelling the way.

2025 Targets

Achieve our sustainability targets

Have our sustainability leadership recognised through awards

Our progress in 2022-23

Climate change risk & resilience

Established an internal cross-functional Climate Risk Working Group, to undertake UnitingCare's first Climate Risk Maturity and Climate Change Risk Assessment.

Electric vehicle legislation submission

Policy submission on the Federal Government's electric vehicle legislation, advocating for tax and scope considerations that would help to accelerate organisations' uptake of EVs.

External advocacy forums

External advocacy of sustainability action reaching an audience of 570 people, including a presentation at the Greening the Healthcare Sector Forum and seminars at the University of Queensland and Griffith University.

Queensland Government Resilient Homes Fund

Provided support to flood-affected residents and clients in Gladstone to access the Queensland Government's Resilient Homes Fund for climate resilient retrofits and home raising work.

Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

UnitingCare's mission has a strong alignment to the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a shared blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for everyone.

Recognising the fundamental importance of planetary health for achieving human health and prosperity, this Environmental Sustainability Report focuses on the seven environment- related SDGs where we believe UnitingCare can play a transformative role based on our current impacts and risks, strategy, core capabilities and partnerships.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDGs		SDG target	Our progress in 2022-23 (compared to 2018-19 baseline)
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	3.6	Halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents	• Car accidents—from both the corporate fleet and staff commuting—remained stable in the last 12 months, maintaining a 20% reduction since 2018-19 and highlighting the win-win of reduced travel for environment and safety
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	6.4	Substantially increase water-use efficiency and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity	• Installation of a more water and energy efficient dishwasher model at The Wesley Hospital with anticipated annual water savings in excess of 9,000,000 litres
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	7.2	Increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix	• Reported onsite renewable energy generation increased to 2.8% of total consumption, up from 1% in 2021-22 • From July 2022 to June 2023, 1.5MW of rooftop solar was installed and energised across 8 BlueCare facilities, adding 1,388 MWh to UnitingCare's onsite renewable production capacity
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	11.7	Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces	• No actions reported in 2022-23
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	12.5	Substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse	• 22.5% diversion rate (up from 21.3% last year) • In the last twelve months, waste intensity (kg per bed day) increased in our hospitals and marginally decrease in our aged care facilities • Both the diversion and waste intensity results highlight a need for greater focus on waste reduction, recycling and reuse programs within UnitingCare
	12.6	Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle	• 13 strategic tenders (100%) included evaluation criteria about companies' sustainability practices
	12.8	Ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony and nature	• Embedded environmental sustainability expectations and information into UnitingCare's employee Orientation Handbook
13 CLIMATE ACTION	13.1	Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters	• Completed UnitingCare Climate Risk Maturity Assessment and established the Climate Resilience Working Group
	13.2	Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning	• Carbon footprint reduced by a further 2.3% in the last twelve months • 3.1% decrease in electricity (scope 2) related emissions and 9.1% decrease in natural gas (scope 1) related emissions
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	17.17	Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.	• Policy submission on the Federal Government's electric vehicle legislation, advocating for tax and scope considerations that would help to accelerate organisations' uptake of EVs. • External advocacy of sustainability action reaching an audience of 570 people, through conference presentations and industry and university seminars

Our reporting approach

This Environmental Sustainability Report provides an aggregated snapshot for all UnitingCare services in Queensland and Northern Territory, including hospitals, aged care, family and disability services, retail thrift shops, and offices.

In most cases—where sufficient data is available—the 2018-19 financial year is used as a baseline for comparison, to represent a 'normal' (pre-COVID-19) operating year.

Technical notes

[1] UnitingCare's reported carbon footprint currently includes emissions from Scope 1 (direct), Scope 2 (indirect from electricity) and limited Scope 3 (other indirect) sources – these include air travel; upstream emissions from use of paper, grey fleet, bottled water, and energy; and downstream emissions from waste sent to landfill. Work is underway to expand to more comprehensive Scope 3 measurement.

[2] Waste data is available only for operations included in UnitingCare's consolidated waste service contract, which covers 170 of our largest sites.

[3] 'Diversion' is calculated as the weight of recycled or rehomed items as a percentage of total non-clinical waste (i.e. all solid and liquid waste excluding clinical, pharmaceutical, cytotoxic, anatomical and sharps waste streams).

[4] Waste intensity is calculated as the total annual waste at measured hospitals (4) and residential aged care facilities (26), divided by annual bed days ('total bed days' for hospital and 'occupied bed days' for aged care facilities).

Data corrections & developments

UnitingCare has adopted a continuous improvement approach to our sustainability reporting, and will seek to progressively increase data coverage and quality over time. Where data and reporting methodologies evolve and become universally standardised, we will retrospectively apply this to prior years and highlight where these updates have occurred.

Impact area	Development	Resulting change
Generators (Hospitals)	Missing data source added for Buderim Private Hospital diesel consumption for back-up generator.	Marginal change with additional 44 tCO2e reported from FY19 to FY23.
Grey Fleet (Fleet)	Added "grey fleet" (work trips traveled in private vehicles) scope 3 emissions, prompted by availability of new financial data. This included backdating to FY19.	Substantial increase in carbon footprint, representing 4.6% (1,009 tCO2e) of overall Scope 3 emissions in FY23.
Natural Gas (BlueCare)	Consolidated natural gas reporting highlighted missing aged care facilities not reported since FY19. These were added in FY23 and backdated to FY19.	Change in GJ: • FY19: 8,794 => 10,406 (+18.3%) • FY20: 9,038 => 10,649 (+17.8%) • FY21: 9,955 => 11,522 (+15.74%) • FY22: 9,055 => 10,666 (+17.8%)
IT assets (rehoming & recycling)	E-waste recycling values added in FY23 and backdated to FY19, based on reports provided by IT asset management vendor.	Change in tonnes of e-waste recycled: • FY18: 0 => 1.39 • FY19: 0 => 3.85 • FY20: 0 => 2.22 • FY21: 0 => 12.8 • FY22: 0 => 5.48

100 kilowatt solar PV system at BlueCare Maleny Residential Aged Care Facility

![UnitingCare]

Proudly representing
BlueCare | Lifeline | ARRCS | The Wesley Hospital | Buderim Private Hospital
St Stephen's Hospital | St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital

Contact: sustainability@ucareqld.com.au