



## Returning Inhalers to Pharmacy Campaign Support Pack

Some inhalers known as pressurised metered dose inhalers (pMDIs) contain propellants called hydrofluoroalkanes (HFAs) which are powerful greenhouse gases. Some of this propellant remains in the inhaler when empty. All inhalers consist of multiple types of plastics and will contain some medicine even when empty.

At present there is no national recycling scheme for inhalers and councils do not generally accept inhalers in domestic recycling. In addition to this inhalers should not be disposed of in normal household waste.

Inhalers therefore should be returned to community pharmacy where they will be sent for incineration. This will destroy any remaining propellant and will also prevent used inhalers going to landfill.

We carried out a survey of 1200 people receiving inhalers across Sheffield and Doncaster, only 16% of respondents are currently returning their inhalers to a pharmacy. The remaining patients were putting used inhalers into domestic waste or domestic recycling. Only 36% of respondents knew that inhalers could not be put into domestic recycling. 84% of respondents did not know that returning their inhalers to community pharmacy was the most environmentally friendly way to dispose of their inhalers. Encouragingly 96% of respondents would be happy to return their used inhalers to a pharmacy.

**We are asking practices and pharmacies to support this campaign locally by using posters and social media to improve patient awareness about inhaler disposal.**

See below how you can use the resources to support the campaign.

### One-off text message (for GP practices)

You may wish to send a one-off text message to all patients on the asthma and COPD registers.

*“Inhalers contain propellants that are powerful greenhouse gases. Did you know that used inhalers should not be put into domestic waste or recycling? The most environmentally friendly way to dispose of your inhalers is to return them to a pharmacy.”*

## Returning inhalers to pharmacy A4 poster

Please display the A4 poster in your practice/pharmacy. This poster has been developed in conjunction with the Sheffield SYICB Sustainable Respiratory Group.



## Returning inhalers to pharmacy - screen friendly options

An animation with voice over has been created which can be used on practice TV screens or social media. The animation can be found here: [Return your used inhalers to your local pharmacy - YouTube](#) . The animation is also available as a MP4 file - please contact the Sheffield comms team if you would like a copy of this on [syicb-sheffield.comms@nhs.net](mailto:syicb-sheffield.comms@nhs.net)

An adapted version of the poster in PowerPoint can be used on screens within practices and pharmacies or as a screen saver in clinical rooms.



## Social Media

We would like to encourage practices and pharmacies to share this campaign via social media too. The animation and PowerPoint version of the poster are suitable for social media.

In addition, IPAC (International Pharmaceutical Aerosol Consortium) have produced some materials which can be used as part of a social media campaign. Please use the following images and sample social media messages on your organisation's social media platforms. You can save these images onto your computer by right clicking then choosing save picture as.



### Sample social media post 1

Don't throw it away! When you next go to your local pharmacy, take your empty inhaler, when it is no longer needed or usable, to be safely disposed of to help the environment. #inhalerreturn

### Sample social media post 2

Do your bit for the environment by taking your empty inhaler back to your local pharmacy when it is no longer usable or needed #inhalerreturn

### Thank you for your support