

# Substitution of EDCs in medical devices



# Outline



- Chemical substitution strategy through procurement
- Launch of the 'Non-toxic Healthcare Report' 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- General discussion on the way forward



# Public procurement as a tool for chemical substitution

Arianna Gamba, Procurement Policy and Projects Officer, HCWH  
Europe

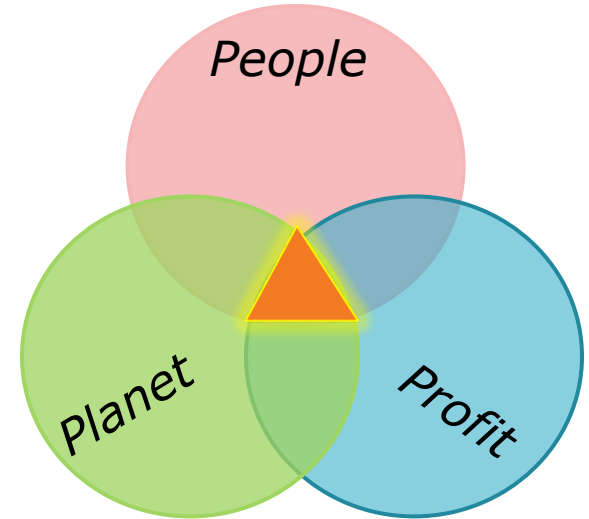
# Before we start...



# Sustainable Public Procurement

It draws on the principles and practices of traditional public procurement, but also considers additional factors such as:

- **Social** – e.g. fair working conditions, developing local communities
- **Environmental** – e.g. carbon footprint reduction
- **Economic** factors – e.g. evaluating lifecycle costs



# Why it matters



- Healthcare accounts for approximately half of public spending in the EU – 14% of annual EU GDP in total
- Over 15,000 hospitals in the EU
- The production, consumption, and disposal of many healthcare products pollute the environment, with consequences for human health
- Sector's unique healing mission to 'first, do not harm'

# How to implement it

- Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Baseline assessment
- Product prioritisation
- Identification of alternatives
- Raise awareness internally
- Tender preparation
- Contract implementation and monitoring

# Sustainable Procurement Policy

- The Vienna Hospital Association operating 18 hospitals, sanatoriums and centres for senior care, committed to phasing-out PVC in 1992.



- *"Stockholm County Council will decrease its environmental impact caused by hazardous chemicals"*: in 1997, the Stockholm County Council issued the decision to avoid the use of PVC in all areas where it is possible.



# Baseline Assessment

- Accurate understanding of the procurement process and products use
- Collect data to:
  - Support prioritisation
  - Inform the decision-making process
  - Help raise awareness amongst staff and other stakeholders about the risk of hazardous chemicals in medical devices

A FACTSHEET BY HEALTH CARE WITHOUT HARM EUROPE



**How to survey PVC use in your hospital and begin a successful PVC phase-out programme**

# Product prioritisation

- Product matrix and substitution plan that considers:
  - Medical Device Regulation provisions
  - Most vulnerable groups
  - Products that have the biggest impact

## Czech Republic

- 2003-05: University Hospital of Olomouc successfully substituted 95% medical aids made of PVC coming into contact with the newborns
- 2006: Ostrava University Hospital first children's phthalate-free dialysis



# Identification of alternatives

- Market research
- Dialogue with suppliers
- Collaboration with other healthcare institutions and procurers
- Make use of network organisations



# Raise awareness

- Management buy-in and stakeholders' support, particularly clinicians
- Steps:
  - Stakeholder mapping
  - Assess stakeholders' knowledge
  - Design an awareness raising plan
  - Develop and organise training

# Tender preparation

- Give a clear signal to the market
- Provide list of hazardous substances to avoid
- Implement the European Public Procurement Directive's sustainability provisions
- Test products

# Contract implementation

- Train staff
- Maintain a constant dialogue with suppliers, provide feedback and suggest areas for improvement
- (Joint-)Audits and site visits to identify risk, or introduce corrective actions

## **Slovakia**

- In 2007, Kosice Saca Hospital signed a contract for supply a list of PVC/DEHP-free items

# Challenges

'Very' or 'extremely important' obstacles to chemical substitution:

1. Lack of support and involvement in the hierarchy (70% and 11.8%)
2. Lack of knowledge about the environment and the way to develop environmental criteria (very important for 52.9%)
3. Impression that more ecological products would not be easily available (58.8% and 23.5%)
4. Impression that more ecological products would be more expensive

# Price of alternatives

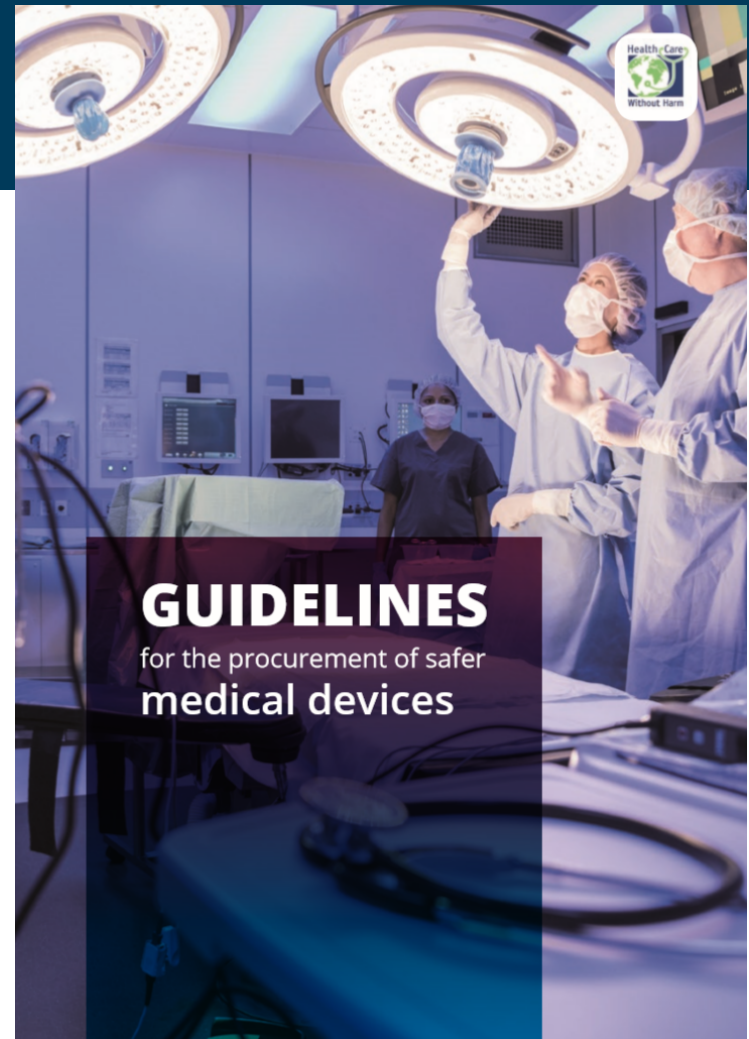
Product	Year	Price Vinyl Product	Price PVC-free Product	Price PVC-free Product (2017)	Difference
Examination gloves (nitrile)	2003	0,23	1	0,21	±0%
Straight suction catheters	2007	1,05	2,45	1,95	+100%
Urinary catheters	2003	10,50	13	10,50	±0%

**Most common alternatives**  
DEHT, DINCH, DEHA, COMGHA



# More information

<https://noharm-europe.org/>



**GUIDELINES**  
for the procurement of safer  
medical devices



# Thank You!

Arianna Gamba, Procurement Policy  
and Projects Officer

[Arianna.gamba@hcwh.org](mailto:Arianna.gamba@hcwh.org)

Health Care



Without Harm