President, Congress

Alison Hancock - The Royal College of Podiatry Seconding Composite D

This Congress is well aware of the huge problems facing the world over the potential global disaster of climate change and recognises that we all must act now and focus on making Scotland a sustainable, carbon neutral nation. Congress recognises the role of all workers and employers have in achieving a carbon neutral Scotland and the need to ensure it is not just a tick box exercise but a priority that we must all work together on.

In November 2021, we saw at COP26, the coming together of 197 countries to discuss how to lower the temperature by 2 degrees centigrade across the world. Now is the time as workers we need to ensure that our employers take this seriously and by working together, we can make the changes required in our workplace.

Congress supports the introduction of a legal requirement for all workplaces to have a “Green Committee” similar in status to that of a Health and Safety Committee and that all workplace meetings have sustainability on the agenda.

Congress also believes that education has a critical role in ensuring that we repair the damage and mistakes of previous generations. Key to this is greening the curriculum across education.

We must act now today, not in 1 year, 5 years or 10 years, but now, and look at all the processes we currently use in our workplaces, the waste we produce and our impact on climate change.

Within Podiatry services across Scotland alone, most health boards have moved to Single Use Instruments and we must use our purchasing power collectively to makes changes to packaging of these items to reduce waste but also to make the instruments used fully recyclable too.

Congress calls on the STUC to:

* work with all unions to develop sustainability guidance and training for Green Reps
* promote sustainability ideas across Scotland
* work with unions and the Scottish Government to pass legislation for the requirement for all workplaces to have a Workplace Green Committee.