

Routes Healthcare is a purpose-driven company

whose core focus is delivering quality, clinically led care at home while ensuring the social impact benefits associated with our service delivery are optimised. We combine this with a commitment to being a sustainable operator across all aspects of our business.

Why sustainability matters to us

To be a sustainable operator we need to understand and manage our impacts and potential impacts on people, the environment and the local health and care eco-systems in each area that we work. We are mindful of the significant responsibilities we take on when we are entrusted to work with people in their homes, who may be sick, elderly or vulnerable, towards the people that we engage to deliver our care services and the customers who engage us. To continue to deliver on our company purpose we must also be mindful of our own business success and resilience and play our part in minimising the environmental footprint of care at home. To achieve this, we commit to integrating a set of principles for operating sustainably into our business ethos and day-to-day decision making, as well as into our longer-term strategy.

Our sustainability principles:

- To deliver the best of person-centred quality care, and to continually strive to improve our ability to do this through our culture, our investment in people, training and expertise and our governance and policy mechanisms.
- To make safeguarding, safety and wellbeing paramount across our business operations for all stakeholders and in particular for our home care clients and our own staff.
- To put quality at the heart of everything we do and to evaluate and optimise the social and added value of our operations
- To promote and enable fairness, inclusion and diversity of approach towards all stakeholders relevant to our business.
- To comply with all applicable laws in a proactive way and wherever possible show leadership by going beyond compliance, whilst also promoting a positive, transparent and ethical culture, underpinned by clear policy and guidance.
- To take proactive steps towards resilience by managing risk and operational security while building and maintaining value.
- To reduce our environmental impacts wherever possible and contribute to addressing the climate emergency.
- To play an innovative role in helping the UK home-care sector be more effective, person-centred and sustainable.

Routes sustainability themes and commitments

Our People are our Business

- **Being the best employer we can be** by delivering a People strategy that positions us as an employer of choice and in particular addresses the causes and challenges of staff churn so relevant to our sector.
- **Promoting fairness, equal opportunity, and diversity** and taking steps to understand how we can most effectively embed inclusion in our culture and practices, e.g. through expert advice and standards.
- **Making safety and wellbeing of all kinds central to our practice**, including mental health wellbeing, recognising that our teams sometimes work under pressure and in distressing situations such as complex and end-of-life care.
- **Emphasising training, career progression and retention of skills** by maintaining our **Routes Academy** to provide multi-choice career pathways, skills training and mentoring, apprenticeship qualifications and paying the Real Living Wage wherever funding allows.

Greener, cleaner and climate focused

- Committing to **recognising our impacts on the climate** and training management staff in **Carbon Literacy** to be advocates in our response to the climate emergency.
- **Measuring our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions** annually to provide a basis for carbon reduction goal setting.
- **Reducing our climate impacts where we can**, such as through carer route planning, procuring renewable energy for our offices, etc.
- **Minimising waste and wider environmental impacts**, e.g. through adopting paperless processes, safe but waste-free clinical practices and special initiatives, such as uniform recycling.

Playing a role in the community

- **Strengthening the local care community** wherever we are engaged, e.g. by exporting trained and dedicated workforce from our Routes Academy pathways into the wider health and care eco-system.
- **Mapping additional care and support organisations and signposting** them to our clients where appropriate.
- **Putting something back** by offering an employee volunteering policy.

Client care and social impact

- Constantly seeking to **design and deliver the best of client centred, clinically led care** that we can.
- Using our **Care Cadet concept to find, train and support carers** who will be the best fit for each client and their particular needs.
- Making **listening and consultation with clients** to design a bespoke care package a hallmark of how we operate in the field.
- Embracing the **Dignity in Care** agenda and supporting members of our team to be **Ambassadors** to champion the '10 Dignity Do's'
- **Continuing to innovate** in areas such as digitisation to improve and maintain our agility and responsiveness, communication and record keeping, and quality evaluation towards the best of care.

Sustainable supply chain

- **Extending our own ESG commitments into our supply chain** where we can by developing supply chain screening for ethics, inclusion, environmental credentials, and overall commitment to sustainability.
- **Recognising the value of buying locally** where we can.

Leadership, ethics and commitment to sustainability

- **Operating a governance and ethics approach** that includes a full suite of ethics policies and promoting our **Speak Out campaign** as an anonymous mechanism for anyone in our team to voice concern about standards of care, conduct or any other matter.
- **Reducing the risk of Modern Slavery** by avoiding the use of agency staff wherever possible, not being a visa sponsoring organisation and raising awareness of modern slavery within our industry.
- Committing to **publishing a gender pay gap report** and being proud to have a **majority female management team** in the context of the high number of female workers in our field workforce.
- **Pursuing risk management and resilience** through strengthening and monitoring our data protection mechanisms and maintaining an up-to-date business resilience and continuity plan.
- **Undertaking an annual ESG review** to identify where we need to focus our forward sustainability plans and goals.

Our management commitment

Our Board and senior team commit to supporting Routes to fulfil its sustainability principles and address its priorities by making resources available and regularly reviewing progress and policy. We will enhance this by continuing to maintain recognised standards that are material to running a sustainable business in our sector, including Cyber Essentials, NHS Digital Standards, Mental Health and Disability Confident Employer and other standards relating to being an inclusive, fair employer and providing good work and employment.

Signed:



CEO

Date: 10th January 2025