

2022-25 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

FOREWORD

Sustainability is an often-used phrase to describe being environmentally friendly, doing 'green' dentistry or having better systems and protocols to help save the environment. Although there are many definitions, the most accepted is the one defined by the United Nations in 1987. "Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

At the 2005 World Summit, it was noted that this requires to encompass other factors such as environmental, social, and economic demands. Combined, these are known as the "three pillars" of sustainability. So how do they relate to the Dental Profession? Plus, particularly in NZ how can we do better than the generations of dentists before us to make a more sustainable future for generations to come?

While this question may ultimately not be fulfilled in our lifetime, we can start today within our own dental practices, businesses, homes and contribute to a growing generational society with significant impact.

"Don't put off until tomorrow, what you can do today!" – Mark Twain (Benjamin Franklin)
Changing habits takes practice. The more you practice, the more it will become a habit.

A CHOICE THAT MATTERS.

The choices we make in our daily lives affect the future of tomorrow. The more sustainable our choices, the more sustainable the future. Taking care of our oral health will benefit our overall health, and promoting better health is building a sustainable future.

The choices we make today will matter.



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CONTENTS

What is Sustainable Dentistry in New Zealand?	pg 4
Internal Initiatives	pg 5
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, Rot	pg 6
Plastics and Single Use	pg 8
<i>Sustainable products we have brought to market</i>	-
<i>Our Suppliers</i>	pg 10
<i>Packaging Policy</i>	-
The Triple Bottom Line + Green Dentistry	pg 11
<i>Environmental Sustainability in Green Dentistry</i>	-
<i>Economic Sustainability in Green Dentistry</i>	-
<i>Social Sustainability in Green Dentistry</i>	pg 11
<i>Building Internal Community</i>	-
<i>Building External Community</i>	pg 12
Lead by Example though our Operations	pg 14
<i>Activities</i>	-
Summary	Back page

What is Sustainable Dentistry in New Zealand?

We have all heard the saying after visiting the beach 'leave only your footsteps', but how in our highly disposable dental environment can we do the same or at least do better than the generations of dentists before us?

From the outset we want to acknowledge that as a company at Aluro we aren't perfect, we can do better - and more importantly, we want to do better. But being a part of an industry steeped in disposable single use items made predominantly from plastic, we want to continue the discussion and share what we know, combine it with what you know and collaborate to define Sustainable Dentistry in NZ, and create an industry we are proud of.

With the introduction of Covid, the little efforts everyone was starting to make got put to the side, but as we come back down to our 'new normal' let's look at a few little things you can start tomorrow to put your practice on a journey to a more sustainable future.



Internal Initiatives

As a company we have our team onboard and committed to the big picture of Sustainability within our business. Whilst we are not perfect, we are on our journey to be the most sustainable dental supply company within our industry.

Where we have upgraded large equipment, vehicles, and everyday small appliances **we have sourced energy/fuel efficient rated items**, and quality items with good warranty that will last a long time. Our team are trained on the different waste streams within our local area and **trash bins are labelled accordingly** making it easy to avoid the landfill option.



At our monthly company meeting we have incorporated a GREEN section which is non-negotiable. Each month the meeting chairperson nominates a product or system that illustrates sustainable earth friendly practices, and this keeps sustainability at the forefront of our employees. We have had successful input from employees on system and procedure updates by introducing this small change.

As well as sourcing innovative sustainable product choices for our customers, we also have introduced a **'Aluro Earth Friendly' logo we attach to our 'better choice' products** making them instantly recognisable. This may support the sustainability of either the product or the company. We have also been active in the ways we promote Sustainable Dentistry in NZ, with one page committed in each edition entirely to sustainable products or dental practice procedures. We intend to collaborate with our dental professional partners and help our customers start their sustainability journey.



Our procurement procedures are based on minimising our shipments with accurate forecasting and purchasing in bulk less often to reduce air miles and our carbon footprint. This is also actively encouraged and communicated to our customers – ask us for our bulk rates! Educating the general consumer on oral health is a major focus for us using our consumer online store Smilestore.co.nz. We are upgrading this to be more intuitive with recommended products and tabs to address concerns rather than just categories by product. By actively engaging with the dental consumer and educating them on good oral home care habits we hope to reduce their level of dental decay and increase their level of awareness of good home oral care. This we hope will translate to all family members including children to actively join the fight against the dental decay statistics in New Zealand.

Align ourselves with like-minded suppliers and professional partners and organisations that we can replicate successful strategies and processes from. Engage with a professional sustainable partner that can audit our current processes and advise how we can take our business to the next level of Sustainability, minimising our impact on the environment.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, Rot

Aluro can make a positive impact that can significantly improve dental practices, and the quality of life for the communities they serve. That is why we aim to educate and motivate our customers on changes they can make to Reduce/ Reuse/ Recycle/ Refuse / Rot. This includes creating discounts for buying NZ Dental products – a basics range we have purchased in bulk and repackaged for the customer. Discouraging smaller orders by charging freight to encourage customers to bulk buy and to discourage multiple orders going out. When we introduce a new product, we look at how we can leave a limited impact on the environment by purchasing in bulk and where possible freighting by sea. We are also conscious of how to recycle or dispose our products to evaluate the impact from the cradle to grave.

Reduce

- Look at the barrier sleeves you are currently using along with the NZDA Infection Prevention and Control guidelines and reassess what you are covering. Is it a critical area? Can it be cleaned and disinfected after use without the need for plastic wrapping?
- How many times do you place an order with a dental supply company? Most of our customers order once a month and have a little 'top-up' order at some stage. Obviously, you are still sometimes going to get that 'urgent' item that has just run out but keep a little stock of your daily essentials to avoid unnecessary shipments. Also please don't call to order one packet of interdental brushes at a time.
- There are some eco-friendly alternatives to the daily staples that are a 'better choice' than single use disposable items. Look at using dappen dishes instead of disposable plastic tray liners or disposable mixing wells.
- There are paper and oxy-biodegradable suction tip alternatives that break down quickly in landfill rather than regular plastic suction tips. Even better there are plastic and metal autoclavable suction tips that you can re-use.

Reuse

- Ditch the plastic impression trays – buy metal and clean and autoclave them after use.
- Similarly invest in metal cups to use in the practice. These can go through the dishwasher and/or the autoclave and although the initial investment is more than disposable, the savings long term is worth it.

Recycle

- Have you separated your soft plastics in the practice? These can be sorted into another waste stream and are being collected by commercial waste companies to go into roading and fencing projects.
- Look at stocking consumer and dental products that are made from recycled products or post-consumer waste. Ask your suppliers if they have products fitting this bill.

Refuse

- Hold your suppliers to account if you get a product sent bubble wrapped up to the wazoo! Ask them are they recycling existing packaging or purchasing new.
- Ask suppliers about their own sustainability policies, and work with companies that drive sustainability within their own business.

Rot

- Look for alternative products that are compostable and biodegradable.
- Stock bamboo toothbrushes and silk floss or look for consumer products that break down easily in landfill or use recycled materials and post-consumer waste.

Sustainable dentistry isn't just about recycling and using metal cups. It also encompasses economic and social responsibilities – known as the three pillars of Sustainability (Read further for more details). You may think about having one long treatment session for patients requiring a lot of work rather than several smaller appointments. Also reach out to your local community and provide education about oral healthcare at home, and healthy eating that will prevent dental decay.

There are some great resources online by people like Dr Brett Duane BDS Otago, MAM (Health) GCertDent MPH PHD, Associate Professor of Trinity College, Dublin. The following are links to Dr Brett Duane and his colleagues research papers on Sustainable Oral Health.

There is much more conversation still to be had and we as a company look forward to continuing the discussion and sharing of information to create a more sustainable dental industry in New Zealand that we can collaboratively be proud of.

Plastics and Single Use

As a supplier to the dental industry in New Zealand . . .

We have been looking at how we can reduce our environmental impact by supplying 'better choices' to dentists on things with a disposable 'one-use' purpose. To date we have replaced our single use plastic barrier products with oxo-biodegradable option, but further to this we have educated our customers on where and when these need to be used to reduce them altogether. These have an additive added to the plastic in the manufacturing process allowing them to bio-degrade within 24-36 months instead of decades.



Sustainable products we have bought to market include:

We have sourced a sustainable paper version of the popular hard plastic single use suction tip which is used for every patient. We have also sourced 100% bamboo wipes to replace micro-fibre cloths for cleaning and surface disinfectant wiping and/or patient bibs.



Eco Cloths & Bio Bamboo Soft Cloth Wipes:

We have developed a 100% biodegradable hard surface disinfectant wipe EcoCloth® which is used in the clinical setting. This unique product is effective against up to 99.99% of microorganisms and Covid-19 and we now supply, a 100% Bamboo Dry Wipe to be used in association with surface disinfectant solutions. The bamboo is grown sustainably in China and grows from roots to maturity in 3 - 5 years. It requires no irrigation, it produces up to 35% more oxygen than an equivalent stand of trees, it is carbon neutral, it is an excellent soil erosion inhibitor and is 100% Biodegradable. We then package this in renewable re-cycled cardboard inner boxes. We continue to explore more sustainable options for our products, both with re-useable and biodegradable options.



Eco Smart Eco Cups & Vegware Cups:

Our Eco-Smart® additive allows plastic to biodegrade* through a series of chemical and biological processes, when introduced to a microbe-rich environment such as a biologically active modern landfill. EcoSmart® accelerates the biodegradation of treated plastics by attracting microbes – microscopic organisms vital to the earth's ecosystem. Our vegware cups are made from plant-based fibre and can be composted either at home or in a commercial landfill.



Beesure Face Masks, Cotton Rolls & Gloves by Ecobee:

The Ecobee product range has been designed to preserve the environment by minimising impact. Through innovation in manufacturing, all their products are more environmentally friendly. They use 30 to 50% recycled plastic in our products as well as 80 to 100 post consumer fibre packaging. The compact packaging helps reduce material waste, storage space, and shipping costs. Most of the products are also chlorine-free manufactured to reduce the amount of toxic waste produced.



Piksters Bamboo Interdental Brushes & Toothbrushes by Erskine:

Erskine has been at the forefront of eco products for oral care for the past 10 years. They have introduced sustainably sourced bamboo interdental brushes along with bamboo toothbrushes in a variety of shapes and sizes. They introduced a silk floss in recyclable packaging along with Eco floss picks to make flossing easy. They have recently launched a corn starch toothbrush in a variety of handle choices that is made to be commercially composted.



Dr Hishams Natural Oral Care System:

Everything you need to restore balance for healthy teeth and gums already exists in nature. Dr Hisham's formulas harness the healing properties of New Zealand, Australian and European plant sourced ingredients, Organic oils & Vital Bio-minerals that are completely natural in effect, while eliminating all unnecessary harmful toxins.



AluroHQ Product Range of Everyday Essentials:

Aluro Healthcare NZ is unique within New Zealand dental market as we have designed a range of products locally manufactured specifically for this market. By manufacturing locally this negates the international transportation impact on the environment and builds the local economic environment. This range includes etching gel, prophy paste, hard surface disinfectant, liquid soap, ultrasonic solution, isopropyl alcohol, concentrated patient mouth rinse, air sanitizer and with a plan to introduce further products to this range that compliment your daily practice.



TePe Interdental brushes and oral care products:

TePe have updated their manufacturing process of all their products to reduce their carbon footprint and are actively supporting the FDI Sustainable Dentistry Task Group in achieving their international goals for Sustainability in Dentistry.

Our Suppliers

We work with suppliers who have sound policies on ethical manufacturing and an active interest in sustainability and minimising their environmental impact. Click on our major brands below to link to their sustainability and environmental policies.

https://www.3m.com/3M/en_US/sustainability-us/annual-report/

<https://piksters.com/product-category/consumer/eco-range>

https://www.nsk.com/sustainability/csrReport/pdf/all/NSKcsr2020e_all.pdf

<https://www.ecobeeworld.com/beegreener-campaign>

<https://www.diplomat-dental.com/about-us/>

<https://www.phillips.com/a-w/about/environmental-social-governance.html>

<https://www.carestream.com/en/us/company/environmental-health-and-safety/sustainability>

<https://www.tepe.com/global/sustainability/>

<https://sall.com/en/about-us/social-responsibility/>

Packaging Policy

Whilst we do not actively purchase un-sustainable packaging products, we re-use and recycle any that get sent to us either from local or international suppliers. We will re-use bubble wrap and other plastic items for our own packaging rather than sending it to landfill, and we hope that our customers in return will do the same when sending their own parcels or returns to us. We choose to deliver your orders in recycled cardboard boxes and wrap them in sustainably sourced paper rather than plastic courier bags. This is also because we want our product to arrive to you exactly as it left our warehouse. We encourage our customers to buy in bulk especially when delivering to the South Island to limit the impact of our courier trips up and down the country. We are continually looking at improving our deliverables and any feedback is actively welcomed.

Our locally produced AluroHQ products are sustainably packaged in glass and plastic that can be recycled in New Zealand and we again continue to evaluate our impact on the environment to ensure we aren't adding to the problem but becoming part of the solution.



The Triple Bottom Line + Green Dentistry

The Triple Bottom Line is one of the main systems being used by businesses to assess the profits they are making through their corporate sustainability.

The Triple Bottom Line method moves beyond the traditional bottom line of business to the impact that our business makes socially, environmentally, and economically. Aluro has merged this concept with Green Dentistry to reduce the environmental impact of dental practices and encompasses a service model for dentistry that supports and maintains wellness using a high-tech approach.

Aluro has been a member of Eco-dentistry.org for the past 9 years in looking at ways to help our clients introduce some small steps along the green dentistry continuum. We have been active in the promotion and advertising of ways that dental offices can make a difference to their sustainability efforts. We feature a Sustainable/Green section in every Spotlight Magazine we produce and give you the option of receiving this via Email rather than paper copy. We have decreased the number we publish a year and now do one every quarter rather than 2 monthly. We have also engaged with world leaders in sustainable dentistry and put on Sustainable Dentistry workshops in Auckland with the plan to roll these out around the rest of the country. Our efforts to communicate the meaning of Sustainable dentistry apply to dental procedures as well as products. The concept of green dentistry involves reduction in waste, saving water and energy, being high tech, reducing individual dental appointments, educating the community you live in and supports a wellness lifestyle.

“We have been active in the promotion of ways that dental offices can make a difference”

Environmental Sustainability in Green Dentistry

The environmental pillar is a progressive fit for the Dental Industry as currently many activities are not aligned in terms of single use and subsequent disposal.

Moving products and procedures to high tech can improve environmental impact. One activity of moving traditional to high tech products is changing from liquid film and developer to digital x-rays. This is a major step in the right direction to eliminate the estimated disposal of 28 million litres of fixer every year. (US Data) Incorporation of laser technology, chairside milling, digital scanning, 3D printing are other significant developments within green dentistry and this high-tech movement.

Manufacturers of dental products continue to drive innovation in design and sustainability.

Economic Sustainability in Green Dentistry

Aluro wants to strengthen the NZ economy as much as possible so we can continue to succeed in the future. Of course, our business needs to be aware of its traditional profits as well, and the Triple Bottom Line accounts for this.

We want to contribute to a locally economy model with our 100% NZ products, around 25 lines are locally manufactured specifically for the dental market. By encouraging waste reduction Aluro wants to decrease the number of resources consumed by the company and therefore deliver an economic return.

Improvements in energy efficiency reduces costs by requiring less energy to accomplish the same business value that is why we buy in bulk to decrease air miles and sea freight, if possible, to decrease carbon footprint caused by transporting by air. It has been estimated in one study that the bottom line of dental offices can be improved up to US\$50k per year by going green (Ecodentistry.org)

Social Sustainability in Green Dentistry

The final pillar, equality, addresses human capital and ensuring fair and equitable access to all, while improving the overall quality of life for our staff our clients and the communities served. Aluro and business partners also focus on workplace social initiatives that ensure the health and safety of workers by creating workspaces that provide a healthier work experience as well as programs that enhance skill sets and foster stable livelihoods. Some of our initiatives are:

Building Internal Community

Threads® Culture – Aluro's personnel development system Threads® software reviews employee performance based on how each member of the team contributes to the culture of our organization. We believe the organisation that builds the best culture will be the one that wins over the long-term. By focusing on culture, we will create the greatest amount of opportunity, growth, and rewards for every person on our team. Threads® helps us build our best culture by uniting everyone behind our core values and clearly defining the Results/Performance Expectations needed from each position on our team. Doing both things well is what builds culture and makes a person highly rated inside of Threads and inside our organisation.

Health & Safety – Aluro has partnered with a Health and Safety company to ensure we have a robust Health and Safety systems in place. We are determined to ensure we provide a safe workplace environment.

Employee Assistance Programme – We have partnered the Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP). Aluro staff, partners and immediate family all have access to this resource. EAP Services is New Zealand's leading employee assistance programme provider, their service is completely confidential, and they are committed to supporting organisations to enhance the wellbeing and performance of our staff.

Staff Welfare – Staff wellbeing and fitness is important to us. We offer all staff financial contribution towards their gym memberships or organised fitness activity. We also support our staff to take care of their oral health and support this by providing Dental Care reimbursements towards a bi-annual mouth fitness assessment. Staff are also offered free annual flu vaccines. A recent addition is the introduction of a fresh fruit box, delivered weekly to our Head Office and available to all team members as a healthy snack option.

Team Culture – At Aluro our team is our work family and the same values we have at home, we have in our work environment. Our core values are: Seek the Positive; Take charge; Value the team; Talk straight; Just did it. These all embody a team culture at Aluro that we are very proud of. Our regular team bonding exercises are a great way of further enhancing our relationships within the team and a chance for those who don't work next to one another to strengthen their relationships.

Building External Community

In our desire to build our community we are involved in the support of the follow projects:



Foster Hope NZ - A charity that supports children taken into foster care. Through each sale of our 360PRO Sonic Toothbrush and Water flossers we donate 2 toothbrushes to be included in the backpacks for foster children displaced by circumstances. Our staff have had a Christmas collection drive for gifts for children cared for by this organisation.



Wish for a Smile - The Wish for A Smile Trust is a public health initiative of the New Zealand Association of Orthodontists (NZAO).

The Trust aims to make specialist orthodontic treatment available to young New Zealanders who would otherwise be unable to access orthodontic care. Aluro in support of these young Kiwis provide an oral care pack for every child accepted into the program to assist in maintaining good oral care during their treatment.



Employee Assistance Programme - We have partnered the Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP). Aluro staff, partners and immediate family all have access to this resource. EAP Services is New Zealand's leading employee assistance programme provider, their service is completely confidential, and they are committed to supporting organisations to enhance the wellbeing and performance of our staff.



Smiles for the Pacific (SFTP) - SFTP was formed in late 2012 with the aim of training, upskilling, and mentoring Fijian health professionals to meet complex dental needs in underserved northwest region of Fiji. Aluro has provided a wide range of consumable products each year for the visit by the clinicians from NZ.



Westpac Rescue Helicopter - We have given generously to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter to help it continue the important job it does in emergency health situations.

Marine Reach MR - MR exists to ease suffering and provide hope for those affected by poverty, disease, or injustice through ministries in Vanuatu and their medical ship M/V Pacific Hope which provides free medical, dental, and optical care. Aluro has provided specific dental items for their missions to Vanuatu.

Lead by Example through our Operations

We are working to reorient all operational activities carried out by or on behalf of Aluro to maximise our contribution to a more sustainable approach.

This is a responsibility shared across all members of the company, and we will work together as community to continually improve our sustainability performance.

With a focus on achieving best practice through our operational activities, wherever possible we will strive to lead the way.

We aim to take incremental steps on our continuous path to sustainability, some of the strategies that we want to include to achieve our objectives:

- 1. Activate, collaborate, and support change towards sustainability in our industry**
- 2. Embed sustainability into Aluro's core values**
- 3. Build credibility through transparency and accountability**
- 4. Encourage sustainability in the procurement of products, services, and the supply chain**
- 5. Measure and evaluate our Sustainable processes**

Activities

Looking into Aluro's' activities to create a better environment for Green Dentistry in New Zealand through to 2025.

- Establish clear objectives to drive continual improvement in the company's sustainability performance.
- Embed sustainability within Aluro's policies, strategies, procedures, and practices as they come up for review.
- Incorporate sustainability into our buying cycle.
- Report regularly to staff, administration and clients about Aluro's sustainability performance.
- Embed the principles of sustainability within procurement activities to ensure the selection of products and services that provide value for money on a whole life cycle basis and achieve wider economic, social, and environmental benefits
- Promote and encourage sustainable forms of packing and shipping by staff and all the company areas.
- Encourage a reduction in the number of packages and try to increase selling volume.
- Develop and actively maintain partnerships with clients to create awareness and decrease non-GREEN products.
- Develop a framework for our customers by collaboration and shared knowledge with our dental profession partners, on steps to be a sustainable dental practice in New Zealand.
- Collaborate with world Leaders at the forefront of sustainable oral care and implement forums for discussion and shared knowledge.
- Demonstrate linkages between GREEN products and sustainability, via cost effective comparisons along with the introduction of new products.

In Summary

There is much more conversation still to be had and we as a company look forward to continuing the discussion and sharing of information to create a more sustainable dental industry in New Zealand that we can collaboratively be proud of.

For any comments, suggestions or product/supplier enquires please contact me:
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