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**Statement on Health  
Inequalities and  
Sustainability**

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# South East Clinical Senates' Statement on Health Inequalities and Sustainability

## Fairness for all - now and for future generations.

Fairness is a core value upon which the NHS is built. We recognise that a service can only be high quality if it is fair to all people now and in the future. Fair services address inequalities in health within and between our communities and ensure their sustainability for future generations. The South East Clinical Senates are committed to putting this principle at the heart of all our work and advice.

Health inequalities are unwarranted differences in health outcomes, access to services, and determinants of health between groups of people. Sustainability means meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations. To become truly sustainable the NHS needs to take into account a much wider range of impacts than is currently the norm in its decision-making, for example considering the impact on the local community and economy, and the impact on the environment both local and global. This broader perspective is also needed to effectively reduce health inequalities as these are often due to the unfair distribution of the factors which determine our health.

**In formulating all our advice, we will consider its impact on social, environmental and financial sustainability, and its impact on health inequalities.**

In practice this will include considering:

- its impact on distribution of health determinants, differences in health outcomes, and differences in access to services between different communities and groups,
- the potential for increased preventative measures at all levels alongside health services as appropriate to the decision at hand even when some of these may lie outside the remit of the NHS,
- opportunities to reduce harmful impacts on the environment and to increase resilience to our changing climate.

We recognise that no single organisation can create a sustainable fair health system so we will also collaborate with partners across the South East and beyond to achieve this goal. These commitments are the foundation for our support of the

implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the NHS, Public Health and Social Care (2014) <sup>1</sup>

Together we can create a health system which is fair to all now and in the future. This statement represents our commitment to play our part in doing this.

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainable Development Strategy for the NHS, Public Health and Social Care. Public Health England / NHS England, 2014. Available from <https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/engagement-resources.aspx>