



Adult Learning Within Reach

Member Lecture – 24 August 2023

Plastic: global menace or miracle material?
Pearl Ryall, WEA tutor

Questions answered post-lecture

Q1 How is medical plastic waste dealt with?

The answer to this is much the same as any other plastic waste. About 15% of medical waste is designated as clinical waste and has to be dealt with according to strict regulation. The rest is collected by commercial waste companies, much like any other business would use. But because nearly all of the waste falls into the 'hard to recycle' category most will go to incineration or landfill. I did find this [article on the BBC](#) which expands some of the arguments for how it could be done better.

Research sources

[Our World in Data - Plastic Pollution](#)

[UN Environment Programme – Plastic Pollution](#)

[cleanseas.org](#)

[OECD – Global Plastics Outlook: Economic Drivers, Environmental Impacts & Policy Options](#)

[Ellen MacArthur Foundation – Plastics in a Circular Economy](#)

[theoceancleanup.com](#)

[British Plastics Federation](#)

Useful links and resources for further reading

Wasteland: The Dirty Truth About What We Throw Away, Where It Goes, and Why It Matters – Oliver Franklin-Wallis (book)