

Perspectives in Public Health

Call for papers: Climate Change and Health: Tackling Global Inequalities

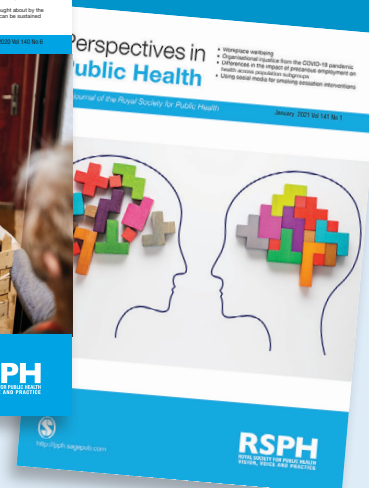
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Climate change is the single biggest threat to global health today.^{1,2,3} It is also a significant driver of health inequalities at local, national and global levels, with those who contribute least to the emissions causing climate change suffering most from its effects. Inequalities are apparent between countries, with low income countries more at risk of extreme weather events and from sea level rises, and within countries, with poorer communities more at risk from air pollution, heat island effects and flooding. Alongside this, there is an unprecedented loss of biodiversity across the planet, with a mass extinction of species underway.⁴ This is driven by many of the same factors causing climate change; intensification of farming, destruction of rain forests, damage to oceans, soils and other ecosystems that store carbon.

Whilst there have been calls for action, and tackling climate change has been described as 'the greatest global health opportunity of the 21st century'⁵, it is not always clear how public health professionals can be most effective in combating climate change. Actions are needed at national and international levels to change policies to zero carbon, to re-imagine our food systems, to change our financial systems and to secure land for nature and biodiversity. How can we use the power and opportunities of the financial systems, for example, to divest from fossil fuel companies and invest in greener more sustainable funds?

The impacts of climate change on health are being dealt with directly through the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, and indirectly through the impacts on populations whose health is made more vulnerable by physical inactivity, poor quality foods, and limited contact with green and blue spaces, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. A key question is how public health professionals can be effective both working in partnership and in providing leadership to tackle the key drivers of climate change whilst advocating for health and a reduction in health inequalities, for example, by achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We will be publishing a Special Issue in November 2021 called Climate Change and Health: Tackling Global Inequalities. Professor Selena Gray, Emerita Professor of Public Health University of the West of England, Bristol, Professor Diarmuid O'Donovan, Professor of Global Health, Queen's University Belfast, and Helen Johnston, Specialty Registrar in Public Health, will be Guest Editing this issue. All are members of the UK Faculty of Public Health's Climate Change and Health Committee.



The issue will have a special focus on climate change and health and inequalities with a particular emphasis on actions being taken by public health professionals to tackle this issue at local, national and global levels. Possible topics may include but are not limited to:

- Examples of best practice in interventions to tackle climate change, reduce its impact on health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities
- Evidence of systems leadership and partnership working in tackling health issues
- How the COVID-19 pandemic has changed perceptions of the importance of tackling climate change at local, national and international level

The Special Issue will comprise around five or six front matter articles (current topics and opinion, feature or in practice) and four peer-reviewed research articles. Author guidelines and information on article types can be found here: <https://bit.ly/304pYrc>

The deadline for submissions is 20 May 2021. Authors should submit via our online submissions system: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/pph>

References

1. A Commission on climate change - The Lancet
[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(09\)60922-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(09)60922-3/fulltext)
2. Climate action: the best gift for global health | The BMJ
<https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4723>
3. Haines A, Ebi K. The imperative for climate action to protect health. N Engl J Med 2019;380:263-73. doi:10.1056/NEJMra1807873 pmid:30650330
4. Urban M. C. Accelerating extinction risk from climate change. Science, 2015 348(6234), 571-573
5. Lancet Countdown 2015 <https://www.thelancet.com/climate-and-health>

If you would like further information or to express an interest, please contact the Editorial Office: publications@rsph.org.uk