

Public health offers planetary health training opportunities for family medicine

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The climate and ecological crisis is recognized the greatest threat to public health of the 21st century¹. In response, health professionals across the globe have engaged in efforts to advocate for urgent policy changes, support patients during extreme weather events, and reduce the environmental impact of health services.

Capacity to embed these laudable and demanding tasks into service delivery in the 'new world of climate stressors and shocks' can be supported through innovative training opportunities. In 2021, the CFPC published the *Guide to integrating planetary health in family medicine training*. This guide offers training settings a valuable framework for planning out placements, projects, and learning objectives that will support the development of a cohort of family doctors ready to meet the challenges we are now facing

Bringing the CFPC guide to life is an incredible opportunity for improving population health and meeting the needs of health care professionals. It meets the values of a generation of new providers who want to tackle climate change while also being equipped to provide adaptation and emergency planning support for the most vulnerable patients.

Recently, a Population and Public Health team from BC's Fraser Health Authority hosted two family medicine residents who utilized the CFPC guidance to plan out planetary health projects and learning objectives. Resident activities included:

- Coordinating training workshops for family physicians on mitigation and adaptation to support impacted communities (Planetary health advocacy, environmental health literacy, sustainable practice, patient empowerment)
- Supporting baselining of community inhaler prescribing carbon footprint (Sustainable practice)
- Developing a survey of patient perspectives on sustainable inhaler prescribing (patient empowerment, sustainable practice)
- Assessing policy options briefing to support physician engagement with patients on climate change (patient empowerment)

The growing ambitions of Canada's health authorities for climate action combined with leadership from population and public health teams offer an opportunity for increasing training in sustainable health care and planetary health. Public health and family medicine have already been natural partners through the health promotion and prevention agenda. Further collaboration on the climate agenda provides an opportunity for public health to support better understanding of climate impacts on population health, approaches to policy advocacy, support for patient communications/signposting to resources and even planning for low-carbon practice.

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