



# CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH



## WHAT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH?

### Potential effects of climate change on mental health

1

- Extreme weather, increased temperatures and reduced air quality events are all associated with climate change and can impair mental health

This impairment can increase:

- Depression and post-traumatic stress disorder
- Anxiety associated with their perception of climate change

### Mental health risks associated with climate change

**Temperature and humidity:** psychological distress, independently of pre-existing depression or anxiety can: influence mental health and well-being decrease productivity and affect livelihoods

2

**Droughts and rainfall:** Elevate psychological distress, mood disorders

**Wildfire:** increases fear, stress, and uncertainty

**Flood/Hurricanes and rainfalls :** increase psychological morbidity

### Risks factors associated with Vulnerable Societies

**Heat** Pregnant women

**Flood** Women  
Young or elderly age  
People:  
with disability  
part of an ethnic or linguistic minority  
living in a household with a female head  
and having lower level of schooling

**Air Pollution** People with mental health disorders.

**Deforestation** People with low quality of life.

3

### Psychological impacts of climate change

Anxiety

Stress

Depression and despair

Increases in violence and aggression

Loss of community identity

PTSD

Burn Out

4

### Mental Health responses for Health Professional related to climate change

Recognize risk factors affecting health care workers mental health

Recognize factors influencing HCW's capability to cope

Know how the climate change affect the mental health of Health professional

Know the adaptation and mitigation measures to face the impact of climate change on mental health

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# CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH?



## HOW HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAN SUPPORT CLIMATE CHANGE MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS ON THE COMMUNITY ?

### Identify the vulnerable Group



- Women
- Children
- Elderly
- Military employees
- First responders
- Persons with pre-existing mental health issues
- Individuals with fewer economic resources
- Under resourced communities



### Identify mental health issues in the community

#### Psychological impacts of climate change

- Anxiety/Eco-anxiety
- Stress and Depression
- Long-term emotional distress
- Increased violence and aggression
- Loss of community identity



### Identify Priority actions/interventions to mitigate the impacts



Provide persuasive information about climate change and its impact.

Promote mental health and wellness.

Foster positive, cohesive sense of well being within the community, in the face of uncertainty.

Identify structures and systems to promote mental health.

Educate health-care providers, particularly first responders, on how to deal with mental health challenges.

Strengthen social ties within communities to foster a sense of trust and control in the face of disasters.



#### References:

- 1) Berry, H.L., Waite, T.D., Dear, K.B.G. et al. The case for systems thinking about climate change and mental health. Nature Clim Change 8, 282–290 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-018-0102-4>
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# CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH?



## HEALTH PROFESSIONALS RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

### How does climate change affect the mental health of health professionals?

#### Climate change can increase the likelihood of:

- Exhaustion
- Cynicism
- Low self efficacy among employees
- Excessive stress
- Burnout
- Disturbed sleep
- Poor emotional health
- Other health problems

#### Effects of disasters on healthcare workers

- Numbing
- Heightened arousal
- Diffuse anxiety
- Loss of a sense of safety
- "survivor guilt"



### What adaptation measures can be taken to address mental health issue for health professionals?

#### Communicate

Don't isolate yourself from colleagues and stay optimistic.

#### Maintain contact with your loved one

Reach out your loved ones as much as possible.

#### Take care of yourself

Take care of yourself: eat, drink, and take a nap when the situation is calm.

#### Respect ways people respond

Some people react differently, some talk, others don't.

#### Afford yourself some rest

Comfort yourself with some fun and relaxing activity. Limit your Health Professional activity in your free time.

#### Stay updated

Keep yourself informed about changes in plans or events

### What mitigation measures can be taken to address mental health issue for the health professionals?



#### Wellness

Physical and Mental Consideration and fulfillment

#### Education

Continuing and adaptive Interprofessional trainings

#### Resources

Autonomous and adequate Equipment and facilities

#### Communication

Transparent and timely specific and clear

#### References:

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