



The Medical
Society Consortium
ON CLIMATE & HEALTH

2019

Annual Report



Photo taken at a legislative meeting organized by California Climate Health Now, an affiliate of the Consortium, on the day of the global student strike in September 2019.
climatehealthnow.org

Climate Solutions are Health Solutions

We are delighted to share with you this, our third, Annual Report for the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health (Consortium.) It has been a year of exciting and important achievements. The voice of our active and growing coalition of medical societies, public health affiliates, and committed individuals is growing stronger as we work in concert to address the climate crisis.



Our footprint has grown dramatically. From our original seven, we have grown to 25 medical societies representing 60% of all U.S. physicians. Our affiliate membership now stands at 40 organizations representing millions of health professionals across diverse areas of practice. We have seen, and in some cases supported, the rise and impact of clinician groups – now in 12 states – including Virginia, Ohio, California, Florida, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Vermont, Minnesota, Montana, Utah, California, and Georgia. As critical as the increase in our organization-level heft, we now boast over 720 individual health professionals who are raising their voices as committed advocates, educating their colleagues, the public, and policymakers about climate change.

In retrospect, we see that our April, 2019 Annual Meeting was a turning point for the Consortium. Joining forces with our allies in the health professions – organizations representing our nation’s nurses, social workers, hospital systems, academic institutions and many others – we used our meeting to co-create the “*U.S. Call to Action on Climate, Health and Equity: A Policy Action Agenda*” (Agenda.) Now endorsed by 138 health organizations, the Agenda provides a ten-point roadmap of policy priorities to address climate change and promote the health of all Americans. Please go to climatehealthaction.org to see (and endorse!) the Agenda.

Over the past five years, people in the U.S. have become more concerned about climate change. They are looking for solutions and leadership. Our message on climate to the public, to our civic leaders and elected officials, is one of urgency and hope. The urgency is that climate change has created a health emergency and America must aggressively pursue a renewable and efficient energy future to reduce emissions and adopt the land use, transportation, forestry and agricultural practices that will reduce carbon pollution. We must also buttress our capacity to protect everyone, but especially our most vulnerable, against the climate-driven health harms that are now inevitable.

Our message of hope is every bit as compelling:

Climate solutions are health solutions. Policies that fight climate change will protect the healthy futures of our children and grandchildren, but cleaning our air, encouraging mobility and nudging ourselves toward more nutritious diets will deliver immediate improvements to our health and savings on health care.

Our Consortium staff will continue to support our collective mission – to organize, empower and amplify the voices of America’s physicians, and all health professionals around the reality that climate change is the greatest health challenge we will ever face – and the greatest health opportunity we could ever seize.

I look forward to hearing your comments on this Annual Report. Please don’t hesitate to contact me to learn more about what we’re doing and the ways we can work together.

Last, thank you for your continued support of the Consortium. Together, we can make a big difference. We must.

With appreciation and excitement,

Mona Sarfaty, MD, MPH
Executive Director



The Consortium
organizes,
empowers, and
amplifies the
voices of doctors
and other health
professionals
on the health
dangers of
climate change
and the health
benefits of
climate solutions.

Our Mission

Climate change is one of the most important issues of our time and has major health and healthcare implications. We see 2020 as a year we must deploy all three of our strategies – organizing, empowering and amplifying – to advance the Policy Action Agency (PAA).

- We will continue building our list of endorsers and work with our partners to grow and connect our coalition in key states.
- We will work to ensure that individual members of our societies and affiliates who want to speak out in support of the PAA have the information and support they need to do so.
- We will continue to work hard to make sure that the voices of our active members and our collective voice stimulates and shapes the public discussion around solving climate change.



organize

Our 25 Member Societies represent over 60% of all U.S. Physicians (>600,000).

40 health and science organizations have affiliated with the Consortium, representing millions of health professionals across diverse areas of practice.

empower

During 2019, our website received 48,046 views and social media engagement grew over 220%.

Over 1,800 subscribers across 50 states received our monthly newsletter.

The Consortium took a leading role in bringing America's health professionals and institutions together behind a consensus Policy Action Agenda.

amplify

Upon its launch, our consensus Policy Action Agenda earned widespread media coverage.

Since its founding, the Consortium has been featured in the media >200 times. 720 advocates, across 39 states, have logged 1091 activities! These include: 422 presentations, 293 published media articles and interviews, 38 research publications, and 338 policy activities.



Annual Meeting

At the 2019 Annual Meeting we welcomed 128 doctors, nurses and other health professionals invited to represent Consortium members and affiliates, and engage in joint policy planning. On April 28, in Arlington, VA, the participants heard a review of the four major reports of 2018, explored energy issues and state level policy challenges, and worked to build joint support for a consensus policy agenda that benefits health while addressing climate change. The theme of the meeting was '*Good Climate Policy Starts with Health*'.

The meeting opened with a welcome from Edward Maibach, Director of the Center for Climate Change Communication at George Mason University. He presented new data documenting a shift in American public opinion toward greater personal concern about climate change.

Dr. Mona Sarfaty, Executive Director of the Consortium, announced goals for the meeting: expanding cohesion in the network of physicians and health professionals working to end the climate crisis, and developing a plan to promote a policy agenda on climate, health and equity.

The morning sessions highlighted recent reports on the health impacts of climate change. Lyndsay Alexander, Director of the Healthy Air Program at the American Lung Association, presented the 2019 *State of the Air Report*. Dr. John Balbus, of the National Institute of Environmental Health, presented the 2018 *National Climate Assessment*. Dr. Renee Salas, from Harvard Medical School, presented the 2018 *Lancet Countdown U.S. Brief*, and Dr. Jonathan Patz, director of the Global Institute for Health and the Environment at the University of Wisconsin, presented the September 1.5° *Report* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The meeting highlighted many activities. Participants reported their progress on State based priorities, health education programs, and community climate programs focused on equity. Policy presentations focused on solutions needed to address the climate crisis, including energy efficient buildings, changes in energy use, carbon pricing, and addressing the worsening problem of air pollution from particulates and ozone in many cities.



Dr. Sarfaty gave a brief overview of the activities of the Consortium during 2018, describing it as a year of growth, increased action, and greater visibility. The Consortium will continue its core strategies of organizing, empowering, and amplifying medical voices to affect action on the climate emergency.

Three Consortium member societies described their major accomplishments of the last year. The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology focused its entire 2018 annual meeting on environmental health;

The American Academy of Family Physicians founded a new member interest group on climate change and environmental health with 87 members, created two new web pages, and passed 2 new policy resolutions; and the Climate Psychiatry Alliance held 13 sessions on climate and health at their annual psychiatry meeting, and now publishes a monthly column on climate change and mental health in their newsletter.

Breakout workshops focused on Medical Practice Issues, Community Health and Equity, and Climate Health Education Programs.

The final session of the day invited discussion on developing a strategy to pursue the *U.S. Call to Action on Climate, Health and Equity: A Policy Action Agenda* developed by Dr. Linda Rudolph with a working group representing Consortium members and affiliates, and others, over several years. The session opened with a video message from Dr. Fiona Armstrong, Founder and Director of the Climate and Health Alliance of Australia.

On April 29, the second day, which was scheduled in collaboration with the American Lung Association, 69 meeting participants from 25 states visited Congress where constituents asked their Senators and Representatives to speak publicly about why health is a reason to address the climate crisis.

Conference sponsors included Johnson & Johnson, Walgreens, the American Lung Association (ALA), the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the American Public Health Association (APHA), ecoAmerica Climate for Health, and 8 collaborating organizational conveners.



Good Climate Policy Starts with Health



A Year of Advocacy

Mar

Member Interest Group on Climate Change starts in AAFP.

May

Announcement of 'Covering Climate Now', a global journalism initiative committed to bringing more and better coverage to climate change.



Jun

Florida Clinicians for Climate Action take part in Miami Climate Month.



Dec 2018

Consortium presents at the Health, Environment, Energy meeting of the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy.

Apr

NMA meetings in Milwaukee and Alabama include climate and health education.

Jun 24

70 health groups declare climate change a "health emergency" and release the *U.S. Call to Action on Climate, Health, and Equity: A Policy Action Agenda* (climatehealthaction.org), covered in >450 press stories.

Apr 28

Consortium Annual Meeting charts strategic policy direction.

climatehealthaction.org



Jul

ACOEM testifies in favor of
OSHA heat standard bill.



Nov 16

Wisconsin Health
Professionals for Climate
Action 1st Conference.

Nov 17

AMA Interim Meeting Forum
on Climate and Health.

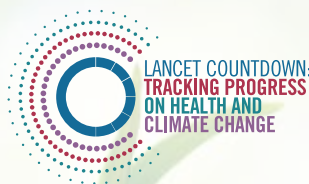


Sep

Student Climate Strike.
United Nations Climate Meeting.
Consortium presents at the
UN behavior change session and
the J&J Power of We session at
NYC Climate Week.

Nov 18

Lancet Countdown on
Health and Climate Change.



Dec 2

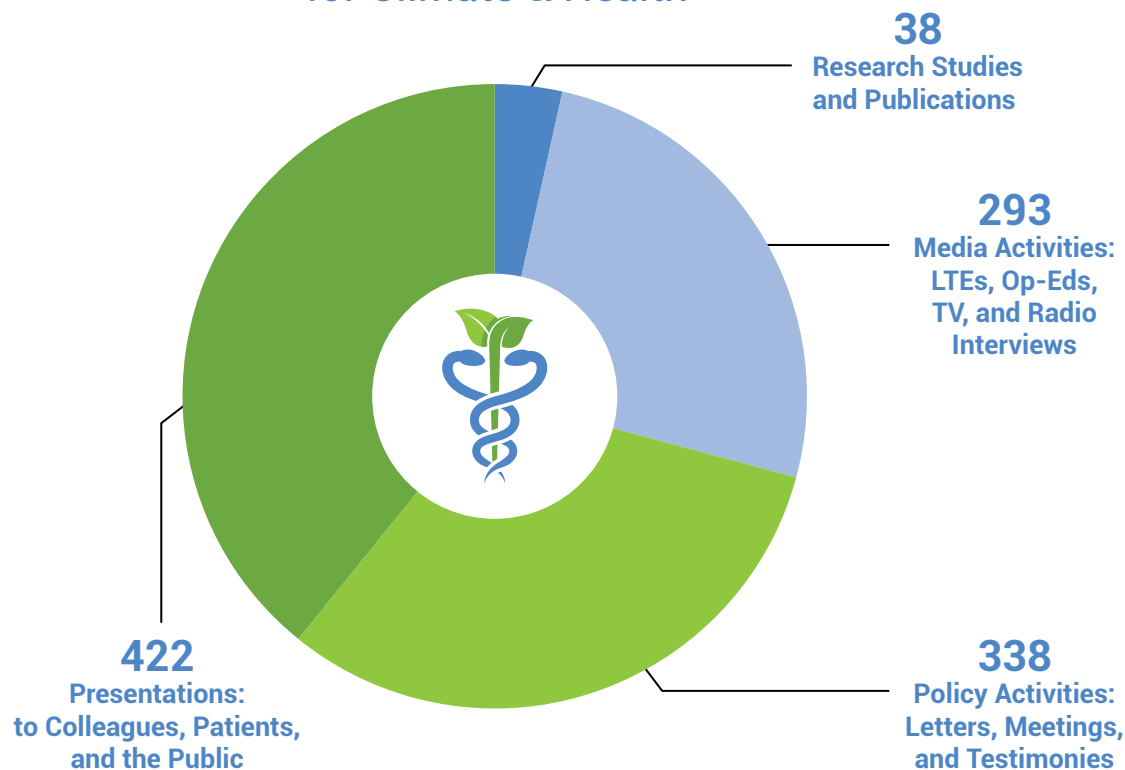
United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate
Change COP25.



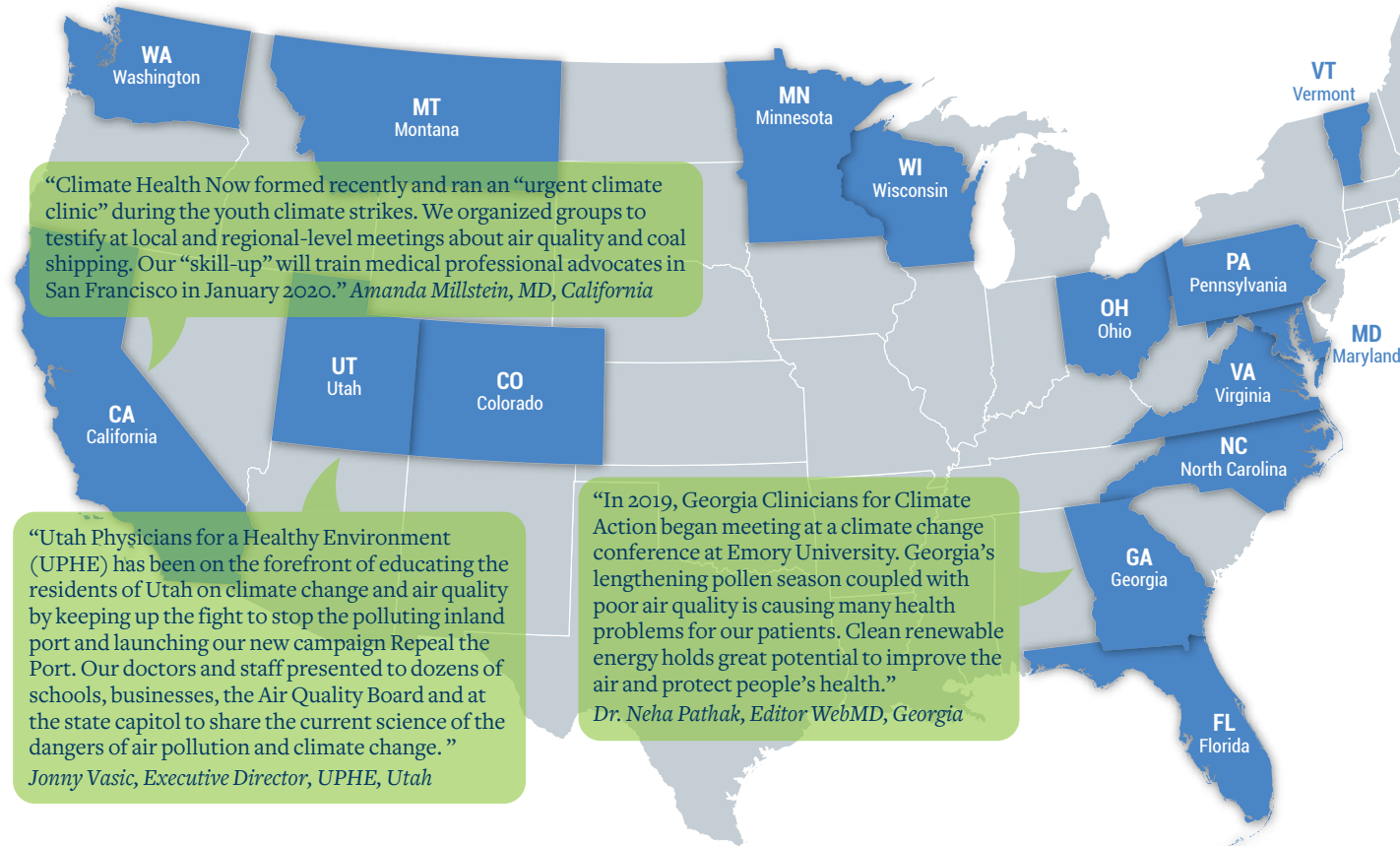
We are making our voices heard

- The Consortium and prominent health organizations released the *U.S. Call to Action on Climate, Health, and Equity: A Policy Action Agenda* in June. This agenda is endorsed by over 130 societies of medicine and nursing, schools of medicine, nursing, and public health, and over 500 hospitals and health systems.
- Physician advocates have increased their advocacy activities. Since 2017, advocates have logged a total of 1091 activities! These include: 422 presentations, 293 published media articles and interviews, 38 research publications, and 338 policy activities.
- We filed formal testimony opposing EPA actions to establish new source performance standards for coal plants, roll back the fuel economy and clean car rules, loosen the mercury and air toxics standards, and weaken regulations that decrease methane pollution. We met with the Office of Management and Budget to end efforts to deregulate methane pollution.
- Our monthly newsletter named a Champion of the Month, suggested advocacy actions, offered news updates, and announced continuing education events. Newsletters entries were disseminated by member associations.

Activities by Medical Advocates for Climate & Health



We are growing our State footprint



FLORIDA – Florida Clinicians for Climate Action added a public affairs staff member this year. This was critical to helping clinicians get more than a dozen climate, health, and equity media stories covered throughout the state. The organization held a training in Miami and weighed in on statewide efficiency standards adopted by the Public Service Commission.

NORTH CAROLINA – North Carolina has one of the highest heat-related death rates in the country. Medical Advocates for Healthy Air (MAHA) joined with 100 health, environmental, and community organizations to support legislation that will protect workers during life-threatening heat waves. MAHA also partnered with NRDC to make a video that shows how the climate crisis impacts North Carolina.

VIRGINIA – Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action (VCCA) leaders now serve on the Virginia Department of Health Climate Change Committee. VCCA organized educational programming for over 1,500 clinicians through a conference in conjunction with the Carilion Health System, the Clinicians Climate Challenge and numerous lectures at Virginia medical centers. In the advocacy sphere, VCCA created a PSA video which reached over 15,000 people, held 35 in-person state legislator meetings and appeared in 20 media publications.

MONTANA – Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate (MHPHC), incorporated as a 501(c)3, promotes the health of Montanans through education, science, advocacy, and action. The Montana American Academy of Pediatrics allied with the group. Montana newspapers published op-eds regarding the policy action agenda. MHPHC is working with Climate Smart Montana, providing resources to municipalities on climate mitigation/adaptation. Members are helping write the Health Section of the Montana Climate Assessment.

OHIO – Ohio Clinicians for Climate Action (OCCA) has been leading an engagement campaign through TED talk style education and networking events around Ohio. This year OCCA, plans to continue its advocacy through partnering with the Ohio Public Health Association in completing a climate and health needs assessment, holding a clinicians day at the Statehouse to educate legislative leaders on the impacts of climate on health, and holding a symposium in conjunction with the Cleveland Clinic.

VERMONT – A family physician spoke at the state’s largest Climate Strike rally before several thousand people on September 20th, echoing the words of Greta Thunberg and calling on Vermonters to push the state’s lawmakers. Vermont Climate and Health Alliance is doing this because the reality is that the state’s greenhouse gas emissions have risen 16% since 1990. Cardiology nurse educator joined a panel discussion at Castleton University with Bill McKibben, a State Representative, and an NAACP speaker. The panel focused on the intersection of climate change, public health, communities of color, and public policy.

WISCONSIN – Wisconsin Health Professionals for Climate Action launched its organization with a well-attended conference in Milwaukee featuring Lt. Governor Mandela Barnes, who leads the Governor’s Task Force on Climate Change. Funding from a Wisconsin foundation will support activities in 2020.

MINNESOTA – Minnesota Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate (HPHC) submitted a statement to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) supporting spending from the Volkswagen settlement on electrifying the school bus fleet; marched with students at the Youth Climate Strike; joined climate justice organizations to support Indigenous communities against the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline replacement project; and participated in a successful phone campaign to deny a water quality permit to Enbridge. HPHC offers a course entitled “Climate Change: What Every Senior Needs to Know” and a conference “Code Blue for Patient Earth: Pathways to a Secure Future.”

Members in Action



Steering Committee



Mimi Guarneri
MD, ABIHM
Academy of Integrative
Health and Medicine



David Blaine Peden
MD
American Academy of Allergy,
Asthma & Immunology



Mary L. Williams
MD, FAAFP
American Academy of
Dermatology



Julie Wood
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American Academy of
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Jerome A. Paulson
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Pediatrics



David A. Pollack
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Amanda McKinney
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Samuel Snyder
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Shannon Gearhart
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Preventative Medicine



Robert McLean
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American College of
Physicians



Diane Chau
MD, FACP
American Geriatrics
Society



Andrea Garcia
JD, MPH
American Medical
Association



Shahnaz Fattah
MD
American Medical
Women's Association



Carissa Cabán-Alemán
MD
American Psychiatric
Association



Peter Yellowlees
MD, MBBS
American Telemedicine
Association



Yukari Manabe
MD
Infectious Diseases
Society of America



Claude J. Tellis
MD, FACP, FCCP
National Medical
Association



Beth Gillespie
MD
Society of General
Internal Medicine



Daniel Oppenheim
PhD, MD
Endocrine
Society

Member Societies

Our member organizations are committed to working with officials at all levels to reduce emissions of heat-trapping pollution, as well as with health agencies to promote research on effective interventions and ways to strengthen public health infrastructure, all with the aim of protecting human health from climate change.



Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine (AIHM)



American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAAAI)



American Academy of Dermatology (AAD)



American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)



American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)



American Association for Community Psychiatry (AAP)



American College of Emergency Physicians, CA (ACEP)



American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM)



American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)



American College of Occupational Environmental Medicine (ACOEM)



American College of Osteopathic Internists (ACOI)



American College of Physicians (ACP)



American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)



American Geriatric Society (AGS)



American Medical Association (AMA)



American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)



American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA)



American Psychiatric Association (APA)



American Telemedicine Association (ATA)



Association of Academic Physiatrists (AAP)



Endocrine Society



Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA)



National Medical Association (NMA)



Society of General Internal Medicine (SGIM)



Society of Gynecologic Oncology (SGO)

Affiliate Organizations

Our affiliates are health and science organizations that are aligned with the Consensus Statement regarding the health threats of climate change and the health benefits of solutions.

	Allergy & Asthma Network		Arkansas Medical Society		Islamic Medical Association of North America		Ohio Clinicians for Climate Action
	Allergy and Asthma Foundation of America		Association for Humanistic Psychology		Clean Air Carolina: Medical Advocates for Healthy Air		Physicians for Policy Action
	Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments		California Climate Health Now		Medical Society of Northern Virginia		Physicians for Social Responsibility
	American Council for Energy-Efficient Economy		Children's Environmental Health Network		Michigan State Medical Society		The Global Climate & Health Alliance
	American Geophysical Union		Citizen's Climate Lobby – Climate and Health		Moms Clean Air Force		Union of Concerned Scientists
	American Heart Association		Climate for Health / ecoAmerica		Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate		US Climate and Health Alliance
	American Lung Association		Climate Psychiatry Alliance		Mound City Medical Forum (St. Louis)		Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment
	American Medical Student Association		Florida Clinicians for Climate Action		My Green Doctor		Vermont Climate & Health Alliance
	American Meteorological Society		Health Care Without Harm		National Association of Social Workers		Vermont Medical Society
	American Psychological Association		Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate (Minnesota)		National Environmental Health Association		Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action

Meet our Team



Mona Sarfaty
MD, MPH, FAAFP
Executive Director



Robert Gould
PhD
Strategy & Communication
Counselor



Mark Mitchell
MD, MPH, FACPM
Director for State Affairs



Jerome Paulson
MD
Research Consultant



Ira Dreyfuss
Public Affairs Advisor



Mohamed Ahmed
Finance Manager



Beverly Harp
Policy Research
Manager



Wendy Cook
Digital Communication
Manager

2019 Program on Climate and Health Revenue and Expenses

CY19 Total Revenue \$556,674.20

CY19 Total Expenses \$459,073.11

THANK YOU
to our
Funders



Johnson & Johnson



Our Champions

These Medical Leaders – our 2019 Champions – have featured in the Consortium newsletters and on the website. They all take to heart the realization that the prominence afforded by the profession imbues doctors with the power of leadership in health, and that this power carries with it the urgent responsibility to act.

Dr. Carissa Cabán-Aleman is an Assistant Professor at Florida International University College of Medicine. Following Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico, Dr. Cabán-Aleman provided psychological first aid for local leaders, helping them deal with stress as they helped others through the recovery process.

Dr. David Fivenson is a dermatologist in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dr. Fivenson has developed action steps to prepare the dermatology community to counter the growing climate crisis: Physicians should raise awareness and educate patients about the effects of climate change on skin health. Physicians should also reduce the carbon footprint of their own facilities.

Dr. Homan Wai is an internal medicine specialist practicing as a hospitalist at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Virginia. He is a founding member of *Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action*, which is part of a growing nationwide network of health care professionals advocating for state-level policy changes related to climate change and its effect on health. Dr. Wai has helped to make changes at his hospital, and is leading efforts to make changes in his state.

Climate and Health Advocates who attended the 2019 Annual Meeting. On April 29, these dedicated advocates attended 103 meetings on the Hill, covering 52 Senate offices and 51 House offices! Meeting with Members of Congress, senior staff, and health and environmental issue staffers, these advocates asked their representatives to commit to speaking publicly about the health impacts of climate change.

Dr. Vishnu Laalitha Surapaneni is an Assistant Professor of Medicine, at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Surapaneni is part of the effort at her academic health center to expand the curriculum on Climate Change

and Health. She also works with *Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate*, a group of physicians, nurses and public health professionals advocating for 100 percent clean energy in Minnesota.

Dr. Todd Sack is a gastroenterologist in Jacksonville, Florida. Dr. Sack believes doctors must step up because the climate crisis directly affects their patients' lives. One of Dr. Sack's initiatives is the *My Green Doctor* website (MyGreenDoctor.org) that shows healthcare providers and staff how to make their offices environmentally healthier and save money as well. *My Green Doctor* also has teaching tools for patients, such as brochures and posters.

Dr. Marcalee Alexander is a physiatrist and co-founder of *Canada to Key West*. Dr. Alexander took a break from practice to walk on an awareness-raising mission from Campobello Island to Key West, Florida. In September, Dr. Alexander launched the *Day for Tomorrow*, a movement she is building to focus on the needs of people with disabilities, who are disproportionately impacted by climate change.

Dr. Ankush Bansal is a Florida hospitalist and lifestyle medicine physician. Dr. Bansal works with many organizations, including *Florida Clinicians for Climate Action* and wants the medical community to realize the dangers of climate change. Dr. Bansal was also on the data collection and interpretation team of The Lancet's *Call for Clinicians to Act on Planetary Health*.

Dr. Randall Morgan is an orthopedic surgeon in Sarasota, Florida. He is a founding executive director of the *Cobb Institute*, dedicated to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in health care, and racism in medicine. He's also a member of *Florida Clinicians for Climate Action*, an alliance of health care providers dedicated to learning about the health harms of climate change and advocating for equitable solutions.





Advisory Committee

John Balbus, MD, MPH, Senior Advisor for Public Health, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Richard H. Carmona, MD, MPH, FACS, 17th Surgeon General of The United States, and Distinguished Professor, University of Arizona

Mike Coburn, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Research!America

Gary Cohen, MBA, President and Founder, Health Care Without Harm, MacArthur Genius Award Winner

Harvey Fineberg, MD, President, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Former President of the Institute of Medicine

Howard Frumkin, MD, MPH, DrPH, immediate Past Head of the Our Planet, Our Health initiative at the Wellcome Trust in London, Past Dean of the University of Washington School of Public Health

Robert Graham, MD, Former CEO of the AAFP, and Advisory Board of the Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies

Bob Inglis, Director, RepublicEn, Energy and Enterprise Initiative

Camara Jones, MD, MPH, PhD, Past President of the American Public Health Association

Jay Lemery, MD, Chief, Section of Wilderness & Environmental Medicine, University of Colorado

Ana Núñez, MD, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Drexel University College of Medicine, and Executive Editor of the journal "Health Equity"

Jonathan Patz, MD, MPH, Professor and Director, Global Health Institute, University of Wisconsin



The Consortium is headquartered at the Center for Climate Change Communication, on the campus of George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

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