

Scoping Review: Environmental Health and Health Effects of Climate Change in Primary Care

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The changing climate is affecting our daily environment and adding challenges to healthcare. Indeed, environmental factors are responsible for many diseases. At the community level, primary care physicians could have a role to play in facing the health effects of a changing environment. This scoping review aims to investigate how environmental health is treated in family medicine and how the effects of climate change on health are considered in this same field. The articles were retrieved from two databases using a search key based on relevant keywords. 13 out of 1842 articles were included following selection criteria. A large scope of results opened to various directions. Education was the most prevalent approach found, with many facets addressed with the common realization that there is a need for more education. This was also raised in the training and practice of physicians. Some studies referred to the ethical side of the problematic, noting that any physicians should be aware of the magnitude of health effects of climate change and act upon it. A challenge was differentiating the different concepts around environmental health and making decisions for a coherent final selection. Environmental health now enters a new paradigm that includes climate change and works in collaboration with all health professionals. Education is a first step to be addressed. At the Swiss level there is also room for improvement.

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