



Policy Statement: Health and Climate Action

Introduction: Climate change has a devastating effect on human and environmental health. Potential effects of climate change on human health include higher rates of respiratory and heat-related illness, increased prevalence of vector-borne and waterborne diseases, food and water insecurity, and malnutrition, in addition to direct ill-effects of extreme climate events like floods, heat waves, etc. on community health. Persons who are elderly, sick, or poor are especially vulnerable to these potential consequences. While the ill-effects of climate change on health have been documented and well understood, the measures and action to combat them are grossly deficient.

MSAI stance: MSAI reaffirms the need of urgent climate action to ensure good health and well being of communities locally, nationally and globally. Furthermore, MSAI acknowledges the direct effects of human activity on climate change and pledges to work towards climate action.

Call to Action:

National Government to:

- Enact policies that encourage a speedy transition to clean energy (wind, solar, etc) and levy taxes on the use of fossil derived resources
- Incentivize the reduction of vehicular transport, promote active transport, and build the appropriate infrastructure to facilitate this transition
- Meet an emissions trajectory consistent with the limiting of the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels
- Establish sustainable and environment friendly techniques of waste disposal
- Ban the use of plastic bags and coverings
- Monitor, evaluate and analyse the health effects of government-run initiatives and make the conclusions of these interventions open-access
- Support NGOs and other relevant organisations to encourage climate solutions
- Support and actively promote meaningful youth engagement at all levels

State and Local Governments to:

- Promote green and clean initiatives that directly benefit the community
- Ensure the implementation and monitoring of national regulations established towards ensuring climate action
- Increasing funding for research on climate change and its effects on human health in local habitats and communities
- Incentivize the reduction of vehicular transport, promote active transport, and build the appropriate infrastructure to facilitate this transition
- Develop and implement education, training, public access to information, public awareness and public participation
- Build capacity among communities to respond to extreme climate events through preparatory activities like simulations, drills, etc.





Medical and other educational institutions to:

- Encourage and support student-led climate solutions and relevant research
- Integrate climate change, its threat to health, organizational sustainability, and the role of the healthcare sector in adapting and mitigating to climate change within the curricula for medical students through Preventive and Social Medicine/Community medicine and relevant subjects for other students
- Develop climate resilient health systems, infrastructure and technologies to make greener and safer healthcare facilities and universities and discourage the use of all forms of non-renewable energy
- Strictly regulate waste disposal, especially from hospitals and healthcare setups
- Train medical students and health professionals to respond effectively to extreme climate events like floods, heat waves, etc.

Other institutions, organisations, industries and companies to:

- Establish and follow an organizational sustainability policy
- Adapt the use of renewable, clean energy
- Increase transparency around the extent investments in fossil fuel companies

Student organisations and other youth-led bodies to:

- Lead the change by advocating towards key stakeholders, including governments, to take action in climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Take up projects and initiatives to take action in climate change
- Collaborate with universities and other educational bodies to improve the education on climate change and its impact on health in curricula

Civil Society to:

- Advocate for climate action and environmental health
- Help in establishing interventions aimed at taking action in climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Commit to minimizing use of harmful substances like plastic
- Use public transport and environment-friendly alternatives
- Make lifestyle modifications to curb climate change
- Hold institutions, organisations and companies accountable to limit the environmental impact of their activities and actions

