

# Climate change in the UK: what will be the impact on health, mortality and frontline NHS services?

All-Party Parliamentary Climate Group, All-Party Parliamentary Health Group, Lancet Countdown and UK Health Alliance on Climate Change

On 21 November 2017, in the Macmillan Room, Portcullis House, opposite the Palace of Westminster, a joint meeting hosted by the All-Party Parliamentary Climate Group (APPG), the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group (APHG), the Lancet Countdown and the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change, examined the health implications of climate change.

'Climate change isn't just hurting the planet—it's a public health emergency': that is the conclusion of Christiana Figueres, Chair of Lancet Countdown, a collaborative research project which published a report on 31 October 2017 that has shone a light on the damaging impacts that climate change is having on our health (Watts et al, 2017). In order to discuss this public health crisis in further detail—and to explore what we can do about it—Lancet Countdown has teamed up with the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change, the APPG on Climate Change and the APPG on Health, in order to host a panel discussion on the impact of climate change and health.

## Co-chairs

Daniel Zeichner MP, vice chair, APPG on Climate Change and Labour MP for Cambridge

Baroness Walmsley, co-chair, APHG and former Liberal Democrat Health Spokesperson

## Panel

Dr Richard Horton, editor-in-chief of the *Lancet*

Hugh Montgomery, co-chair of the



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By its actions, humanity now threatens to destabilise the earth's key life-support systems.

Lancet Countdown and professor, intensive care medicine, University College London

Professor Georgina Mace, head, Centre for Biodiversity and Environment Research, University College London

Sir Andy Haines, professor of public health and primary care, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

## Dr Richard Horton provided an introduction to the topic and the work of the Lancet Countdown

In 2009, the UCL Lancet Commission published its first report on the relationship between climate change and health (Costello et al, 2009). It concluded, simply, that climate change represents the biggest threat to global health in the

21st century. Since that publication, the *Lancet* has continued to work on this topic. In 2015, the *Lancet* published a second report as part of the Health and Climate Change Commission (Watts et al, 2015)—but instead of describing climate change as a threat, it concluded, optimistically, that climate change represents the biggest opportunity for global health in the 21st century.

This change of tone reflects a growing recognition that action on climate change can bring about dividends for public health, a notion which empowers the health and climate community to capture these 'co-benefits'.

More recently, the *Lancet* has pioneered the concept of 'planetary health'. A growing body of evidence shows that

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