

Scholarly Concentration: Climate Health

The World Health Organization has called climate change the single greatest threat to human health. Numerous medical societies and organizations have echoed this concern. The American College of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) has plans to create a new climate health fellowship within internal medicine by 2035. There is recognition that climate medicine impacts health across the patient spectrum but especially to already disenfranchised communities. Medical students need to be prepared to meet the needs of patients in their future practice. CMSRU has been committed to the social determinants of health since its inception. The ecological determinants of health which focus on where people live, work, and play are recognized to be even more foundational.

Students who pursue a track in Climate Health will undertake additional studies in environment and health, health policy, advocacy, and sustainability practices. Students will begin to cultivate important leadership skills and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become effect patient advocates. Students will work to incorporate research and quality improvement into climate health understanding and will learn about health policy and systems.

Placement in the Concentration will be considered for rising M2 students who have completed an application process and who are in strong academic standing. Acceptance will be at the discretion of the lead faculty. A file will be maintained on each student in the concentration. To successfully complete the program, students must consistently maintain good academic standing and meet all the listed requirements.

Lead faculty: Elizabeth Cerceo, MD

Other faculty: Vedam Gummadi, MD, Hospital Medicine; Samer Badr, MD, Hospital Medicine; Tina Edmonston, MD, Pathology; Anat Feingold, MD, Infectious Disease; Shawana Hussain, MD, Critical Care; Jennifer Garefino, Performance Improvement Office; John Porter, MD, Associate Dean Diversity, Equity, Inclusion; Danielle Nordone, DO, Family Medicine; Krystal Lazos, Dir Nursing Quality, Practice, and Innovation; Kenneth Lacovara, PhD, Dean Earth Sciences Rowan University

Goal:

- Students will learn that climate change and pollution impacts human health.
- Students will become leaders in climate health in their future roles.
- Students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in climate change, environment, and health to effectively improve individual and population health, to effect policy, and to implement environment-based research.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this scholarly concentration, students will be able

- to describe a range of climate impacts on specific medical conditions related to individual and population health.
- to understand that there are environmental justice communities.
- to understand how the social determinants of health are amplified by climate risks.

- to appreciate how climate disasters can affect patient care delivery.
- to become more empowered to advocate for climate and environmental initiatives that can positively impact health.

Process Objectives:

- to write a perspective piece or op-ed to influence policy on climate health.
- to develop the skills to conduct quality improvement projects in the healthcare sector.
- to describe the role of advocacy in patient care and population health.
- to lead lectures and/or activities at the medical school in climate health.
- to be actively involved in the climate medicine group at CMSRU.
- to submit for presentation or publication a scholarly work in climate health.

Capacity: 2 students/class

Requirements

Within the MD curriculum, students must:

- Complete the selective course in climate health.
- Identify a faculty mentor and complete a Capstone Project related to Climate Health in the Scholar’s Workshop, including an extramural poster presentation and article submission.
- Students will meet with Dr. Cerceo or other faculty once per semester.

Outside the MD curriculum, students must

- Participate in at least four Medicine Grand Rounds on climate health.
- Contribute to one quality improvement project at Cooper University Health Care with a sustainability focus.
- Attend ten other climate health lectures, and submit to their faculty mentor a one-paragraph description of something they take away from each event. Qualifying events include online grand rounds and lecture series; students will be provided with an approved list of seminar series to choose from. If the student selects another event, they will first need approval from their faculty advisor.
- Participate in a leadership role within CMSRU’s Green Team
- Engage in one advocacy issue outside of the medical school or hospital
- Submit a final paper listing the activities they have participated in and led, briefly summarizing what they have learned from the scholarly concentration, and speculating on how they will use what they have learned in their careers.

	Activity	Hours	Mandatory
Curricular			
	Complete the M1/2 selective in Climate Health	12	Yes
	Complete a Capstone Project related to Climate Health	30	Yes
Extracurricular			
	Participate in at least four Medicine Grand Rounds on climate health	12	Yes

Contribute to one CUHC quality improvement project with a sustainability focus	30	Yes
Attend 10 other climate health lectures and submit descriptions of take-aways	10	Yes
Participate in a leadership rol in CMRSU's Green Team	15	Yes
Engage in one advocacy issue outside the medical school or hospital	10	Yes
Prepare a paper in the M4 year summarizing activities and learning	6	Yes
Total	120	
Hours needed to complete the Concentration	120	

Resources for Lectures:

[Climate Crisis and Clinical Medicine Virtual Elective for Medical Students – Emory Office of Sustainability Initiatives](#)

[Our Past Events — NH Healthcare Workers For Climate Action \(nhclimatehealth.org\)](#)