

Media Release: Hamilton, Ontario, October 19, 2021

Eight Canadian Health Organization Call on Canada to do its Fair Share at COP26

Eight Canadian health organizations urge the Prime Minister to take the steps needed at COP26 “to stave off the existential threat of global warming”.

Four public health organizations including the Canadian Public Health Association (**CPHA**) and four healthcare organizations including the Canadian Nurses Association (**CNA**), the Canadian Medical Association (**CMA**) and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (**CFNU**), have written the Prime Minister Trudeau to spell out the heavy costs of limp action on climate change.

“People across Canada are already being harmed by climate change” said **Ian Culbert, Executive Director of the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA)**.

“Over 600 people died in mainland BC in one-week last summer because of a heat wave of unprecedented intensity. Thousands were evacuated from their homes because of wildfires. And millions were exposed to extremely high levels of air pollution created by burning forests. People in every region of the country have felt the impact of climate change with floods, wildfires, ice storms, droughts or hurricanes – that have become more frequent or more intense because of global warming. Recent events have affirmed that, like COVID-19, global warming is having a much greater impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged populations in our communities.”

The eight organizations are calling for substantive action on the part of the Canadian Government at the upcoming UN Climate Conference to be held in Glasgow, UK. They are urging Canada - as a wealthy nation that has been among the top 10 emitters of greenhouse gases for decades - to do its fair share to limit warming to 1.5°C. They also calling upon Canada to ensure that low-income countries get the funds needed to protect their citizens from global warming caused largely by wealthier nations such as Canada.

In particular, the health organizations are calling for a rapid transition away from fossil fuels by ending the expansion of the oil and gas industry, phasing out subsidies and financing for fossil fuels, and shifting current financing into the development of clean energy and energy efficiency.

“There are immediate and significant health benefits and health care savings to be gained from climate action,” offered **Kim Perrotta, Executive Director of the Canadian Health Association for Sustainability and Equity (CHASE)**. “Many of the actions needed to fight climate change - such as investments in renewable energy, building retrofits, public transit and bike lanes – will reduce premature deaths, hospital admissions, and chronic diseases, by reducing air pollution, increasing physical activity, and improving access to jobs, services and recreational opportunities. These actions save lives, improve health, and produce billions of dollars in health-related benefits each year for Canada.”

Letter: <https://chasecanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Letter-to-PM-COP26-Oct-18-2021.pdf>

Media Contact: Kim Perrotta at kim@chasecanada.org