

PSR and Area Medical Schools Teach about Climate Change

From March to July 2018, Philadelphia PSR spearheaded a consolidated effort to teach climate change in four of the medical schools in Philadelphia. The participating schools created their own independent programs, but all were designed to include climate change as part of the current curriculum in each school. We are grateful to the Franklin Institute's Climate and Urban Systems Partnership who provided seed funding to each of the medical schools to make these programs a reality.

Drexel School of Medicine developed three lectures presented in April and May on "Climate Change Basics" and "Communicating Climate Change-Related Health Impacts", "Heat Morbidity and Extreme Weather Events" and "Public Health Emergency Preparedness" and "Air Quality, the Built Environment and Asthma". Speakers included Esther Chernak, MD, MPH, Ali Kenner, PhD, Jerry Faglano, PhD, Jessica Caum, MPH, and Tom Hipper, MSPH

Temple's Lewis Katz School of Medicine and the College of Public Health developed a lecture on climate change for their public health and medical school.

Jefferson's Sidney Kimmel School of Medicine invited visiting professor, Dr. Mona Sarfaty from George Mason University, who spoke in July on how Climate Change is Harming our Health and Using the Health Frame to talk about Climate Change. The latter talk was on the important role that physicians can play talking about global warming.

University of Pennsylvania's Center on Excellence in Environmental Toxicology had three summer projects. Miriam Fink, a first year veterinary medicine student noted that in Philadelphia, we have combined sewer and storm runoffs that could be a health hazard for dogs swimming in the Schuylkill River. This is worsened with climate change and cautions not letting dogs swim in the rivers after a heavy rainfall. Evangeline Williams, a recent Penn graduate worked as an intern at the Philadelphia Department of Public Health as a Vector-Borne Disease Surveillance Intern. She noted that most were unaware for the risk of tick bites, including Lyme disease or the risk of West Nile Virus whose mosquitoes have been found in Philadelphia. Finally, Melissa Ostroff, an MPH student interviewed key informants on flooding in the Eastwick section of Philadelphia. She has worked on a presentation to share with interested parties.

PSR Philadelphia/PA developed a presentation on climate change which we are presenting through our speakers bureau. You can request a speaker through our www.psrphila.org website.