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The activity of medical workers during heat/cold waves

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Introduction

Regardless of human activity, climate change will occur and continue to develop over the decades. The study of the impact of meteorological phenomena on the health of medical workers during extreme climatic periods make it possible to determine the degree of discomfort and precaution. The adverse health effects of heat waves are largely preventable. The aim of the work was estimating the particularities of hospital activity during periods of heat/cold, the working conditions of medical workers and the effects of adaptation and mitigation of extreme events caused by climate change.

Material and methods

The present research includes a descriptive and analytical study. A bibliographic review was conducted by retrieving the essential data, using full-text articles from the social networking site *ResearchGate*.

Results

Health professionals face the physical and psychological risks of climate change more acutely than the general population. Climate change not only disrupts their lives but also makes their work more difficult, increasing the risk of burnout. Storms, floods, wildfires and other extreme events often prevent them from traveling to health care facilities. As more and more people become ill due to climate change, a larger climate-ready workforce will be needed. Heat/cold waves can influence the physical parameters in the rooms of medical

institutions and the working conditions of medical workers, the conditions of patients undergoing treatment, and the possibilities for medical workers to travel to the patient's home. Extreme weather events cause excessive fluctuations in demand for hospital care. While patient flows in hospitals typically follow seasonal patterns, extreme temperature events can create unexpected variations in unscheduled patient admissions. Heatwaves are projected to increase in frequency and intensity by 5 to 10 times over the next 40 years. As we expect more frequent weather events that increase demand for healthcare, it becomes increasingly important to measure the capacity pressures generated by these events and how they vary across the population. The urgency of climate change and its impact on health requires the health sector to act as quickly as possible. To be successful in combating the effects of climate change, stakeholders at all levels should be aware of the contribution of hospitals to climate change. The common (mis)perception that mitigation measures jeopardize the quality of care should be overcome by emphasizing that many mitigation measures have (in)direct health co-benefits or can be implemented while maintaining high quality of care.

Conclusions

Health professionals everywhere have a big responsibility to put health at the center of climate change negotiations. Firstly, because climate change is already having a major negative impact on the health of human populations. Second, because reducing greenhouse gas emissions has unparalleled opportunities for improving public health. However, our understanding of the links between the environmental, economic and social sustainability of the healthcare system and climate change is still in its infancy.

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