

Evaluation Findings: PHD Climate Change Work Group



Background

The Oregon Climate and Health Program leads an internal Climate Change Work Group made up of program staff within Oregon's Public Health Division. The work group began in 2014 and meets monthly to hear updates about the program, provide input on program activities, learn about the latest findings in regional climate research, and discuss how climate change information can be applied across the division to inform public health practice. The work group includes membership from the following PHD programs:

- The Environmental Public Health Tracking program
- The Health Impact Assessment program
- Occupational Health and Safety
- The Preparedness, Surveillance, and Epidemiology Team
- Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention
- Health Security, Preparedness and Response Program
- Healthy Waters Program
- Acute & Communicable Disease Prevention
- Injury and Violence Prevention Program
- Drinking Water Protection Program
- Domestic Wells Safety Program

PHD's Climate Change Work Group members were asked to provide feedback through an anonymous online survey both in the summer of 2014 and 2015. Not all members participated in the survey. We received the following responses:

Q1: Do you feel like you know enough about climate change and health to identify top concerns for Oregon? If not, what else do you need to know?

Answered: 6

- Gosh, I don't think I can make a prioritized list... heat waves forest fires other inclement weather like winter storms air-quality related health concerns like asthma droughts That's my best guess.

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- Yes, mostly. I think there are or will be health concerns that haven't been identified or widely discussed.
- In general, yes. It might be interesting to know more about what other states are doing/have done. Also, historic data (if/when possible) might be interesting, given that climate change occurs slowly over time.
- No. I would like to know more about the potential impact of long-term drought on health in the State.
- I think I do understand, but I would like to know more about regional variations
- I could make reasonably educated guesses, but would likely benefit from a summary of current information.

Q2: Do you think OHA's Climate and Health program is on the right track? What would you change?

Answered: 6

- yes? I've not done a full accounting of the program, but seemingly goals are well defined.
- Yes, but I would like more longitudinal statistics about climate related health concerns.
- Yes. I'm not sure I have useful suggestions for change at the moment.
- Yes.
- I think you are probably on the right track. It might be good to collect a lot of baseline data for future comparisons
- Yes; I really like the public engagement focus of the work, and am excited about the upcoming profile.

Q3: How can OHA's Climate and Health program support the work of other PHD programs?

Answered: 5

- perhaps we can chat about this?

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- More longitudinal statistics about climate related health concerns.
- Provide information on vulnerable populations in relation to most likely climate change scenarios and areas of impact.
- I am interested in how climate change might affect workers.
- I see natural connections between some programs (like HSPR and Drinking Water), but not others. Focusing on areas of alignment and clearly communicating that alignment to create interest/develop working partnerships.

Q4: Where do you see opportunities to further connect and integrate climate change into existing public health practice?

Answered: 6

- perhaps we can chat about this again for Drinking Water?
- Providing information on emerging modeling efforts and plans for adaptation.
- It seems like ideally climate change messaging could be incorporated into the work of many programs.
- See question 3.
- Possibly adding your perspective to some of the work we do. Like co-authoring studies.
- Drinking Water, Emergency Response, the Lab/tracking related outbreaks, data systems like Essence

Q5: How has participation in the climate change workgroup been useful for you to date? What would make it more relevant and useful to you?

Answered: 6

- For drinking water, I think that climate change is a concern for water systems on
- The workgroup has provided a lot of useful information. Keep us posted on the strength of the BRACE program and grant. Keep up the good work.

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- It's been really helpful to hear what the climate change program and other members of the workgroup are doing; there is a lot of potential for climate change to collaborate with Tracking, and it is useful for me to know what the current priorities are.
- I consider climate change when researching health and environment associations. I think the program is on the right track.
- I have enjoyed my participation.
- Interesting, keeps me connected to PHD programs I don't otherwise regularly interact with.