



BC | Climate Resilience
Summit 2025

Vancouver, Robson Square March 3rd/4th

BC | Climate Resilience Summit 2025

The Climate Crisis is a Health Crisis

Moderator



Arianna Cruz
CASCADES Canada



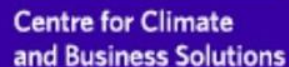
Breanna Gregory
Vancouver Coastal Health



Craig Dedels
Vancouver Coastal Health & Provincial Health Services Authority



Tracie Jones
Fraser Health



An aerial photograph of a large industrial facility, likely a power plant, featuring several prominent white cooling towers and tall smokestacks. The plant is situated in a landscape with dense green and autumn-colored trees. The sky is filled with dramatic, layered clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. A dark purple semi-transparent banner is overlaid at the bottom of the image, containing white text.

How is climate change impacting health and health systems?

Climate impacts on health

B.C. doctor clinically diagnoses patient as suffering from 'climate change'

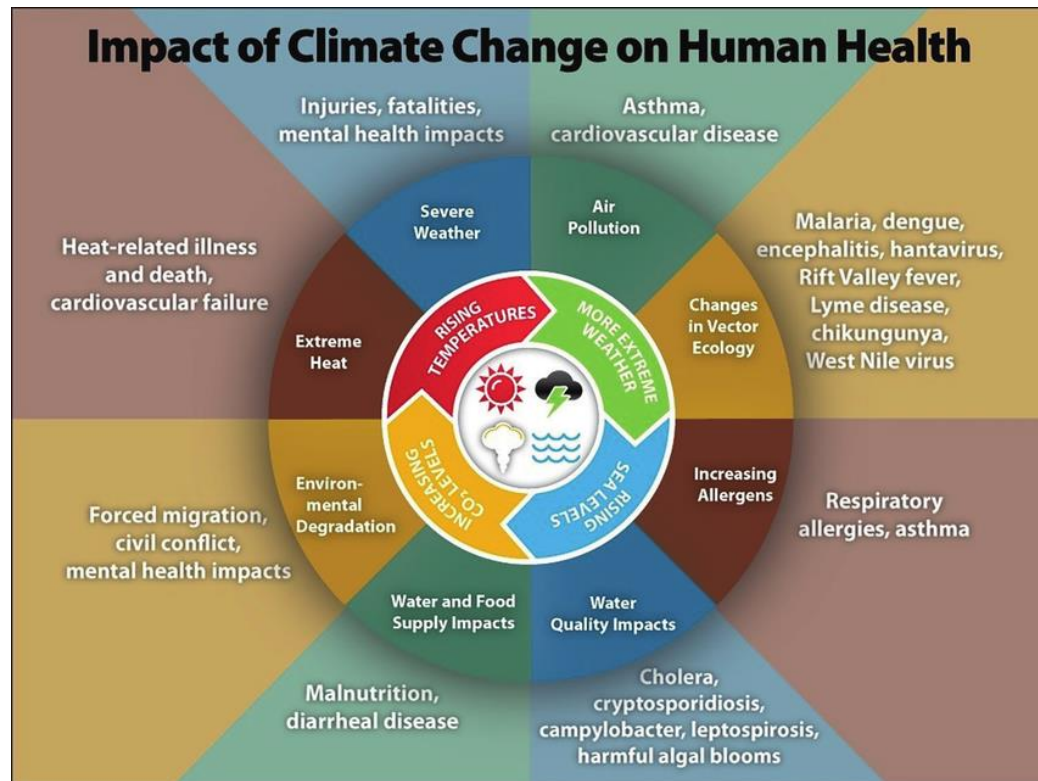
The head of a Nelson, B.C., emergency department says it's time doctors start looking at the underlying cause of medical conditions triggered by smoke and heat



Stefan Labbé
Nov 4, 2021 11:08 AM

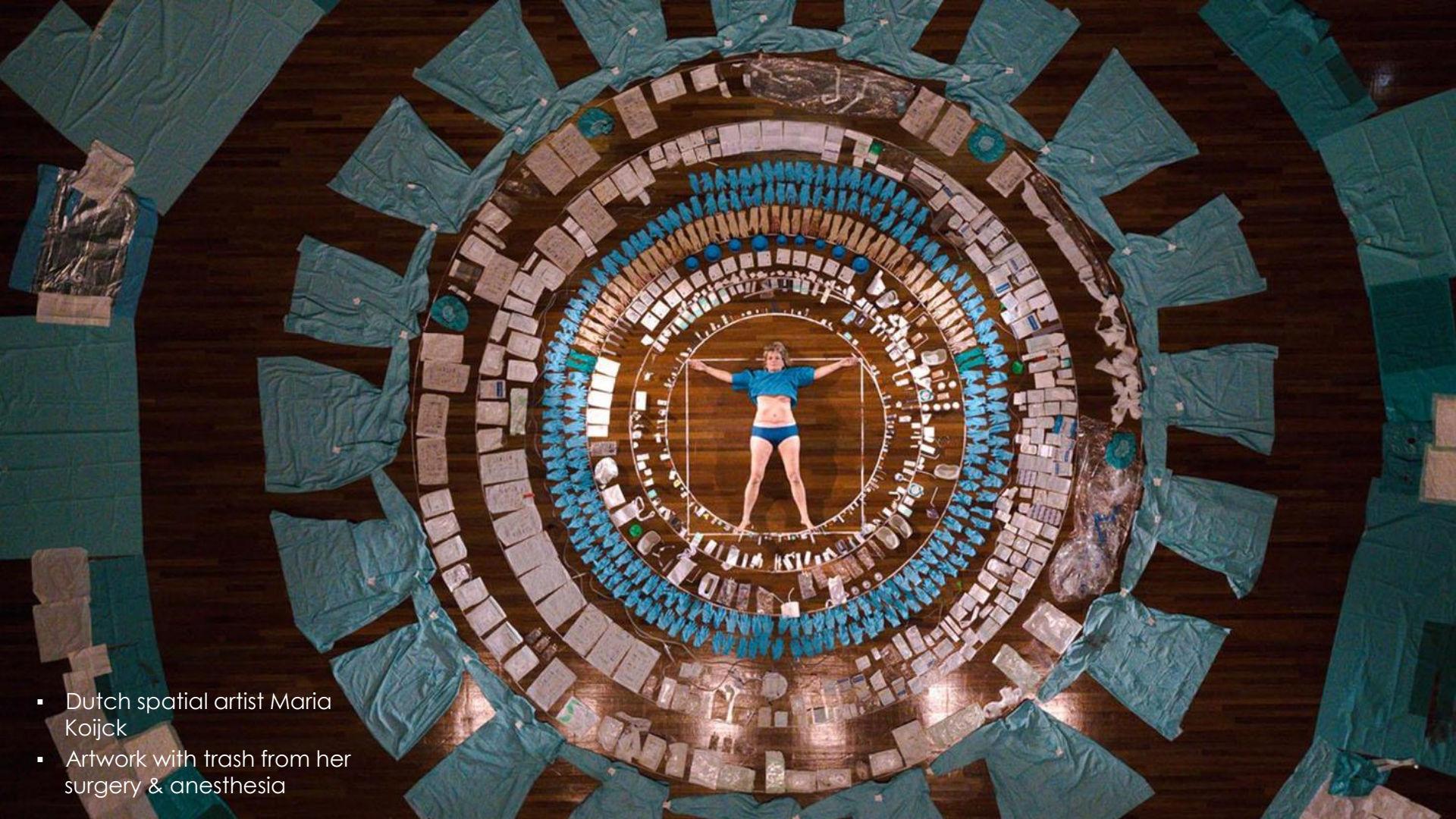


Dr. Kyle Merritt, head of the emergency room department at Kootenay Lake Hospital in Nelson, B.C., says he is seeing first hand the effects climate-driven heat and wildfire smoke are having on his patients. | supplied



A healthcare worker in full personal protective equipment (PPE) is shown in a hospital room. The worker is wearing a patterned surgical cap, a clear face shield, a teal surgical mask, and a light blue protective gown. They are leaning over a patient who is lying in a hospital bed. The patient is covered with white and purple linens. In the background, there are several medical monitors and equipment stands, suggesting an intensive care or specialized treatment area. The lighting is bright, likely from natural light coming through a window. A semi-transparent purple banner is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing white text.

How are health systems impacting the environment?



- Dutch spatial artist Maria Koiijck
- Artwork with trash from her surgery & anesthesia



What is the direction of travel?

National

Health Standards Organization's Declaration on Climate Action



Academic Health Institutions' Declaration on Planetary Health

Academic health institutions declare the health of the planet a Code Red emergency and call for immediate implementation of planetary health education and research, and the transition to climate-resilient and low-carbon health systems in order to build a healthy, sustainable, and just future for all.

This Declaration endorses the definition of planetary health as defined by the Planetary Health Alliance: *Planetary health is a solutions-oriented, transdisciplinary field and social movement focused on analyzing and addressing the impacts of human disruptions to Earth's natural systems on human health and all life on Earth.*¹

BACKGROUND

- Healthcare professionals have the responsibility to care for human health and to "do no harm."²
- Climate change is recognized as the greatest threat to health in the twenty-first century. The Working Group II contribution to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report declared that the rate of global warming is a code red for humanity.³ The 2021 Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change Report, which tracks the relationship between health and climate change, has similarly declared a Code Red for health, concluding that humankind must act immediately.⁴ Tackling climate change is thus the greatest opportunity to act for human health and global equity.⁴
- Considerable evidence indicates that climate change; contamination of air, water, and soil; ecosystem degradation; and biodiversity loss are already causing human morbidity and mortality in complex and interdependent ways, disproportionately affecting marginalized populations including people living in poverty, racialized people, Indigenous Peoples, elderly, children, and women around the world. These effects are predicted to radically increase over the next century.⁵
- Extreme weather events such as floods, wildfires, heatwaves, and storms disrupt health systems and prevent healthcare delivery, and are increasing in frequency and intensity as a result of the changing climate.⁶
- Calls for urgent action to preserve planetary health and keep global warming below 1.5 °C have been endorsed by leaders and institutions in clinical and academic healthcare training worldwide.⁷
- Global health system activities contribute 4.4-5% of global greenhouse emissions.^{8,9,10}
- Academic health institutions have a distinct responsibility to educate, train, and prepare health professionals to respond to and advocate for the health needs of society, from the individual to the populational level and from a local to a global level.¹¹
- Planetary health can only be achieved while also empowering women and girls through access to education, sexual and reproductive health services,¹² decision-making that centers health, the environment, and families,^{13,14,15} and leadership opportunities.

Provincial

This Act is current to February 25, 2025

See the [Tables of Legislative Changes](#) for this Act's legislative history, including any changes not in force.

CLIMATE CHANGE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

[SBC 2007] CHAPTER 42

Contents

1 Definitions

Part 1 — BC Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets

- 2 BC greenhouse gas emissions — target levels
- 3 Determination of 2007 baseline level
- 4 Repealed

Part 1.1

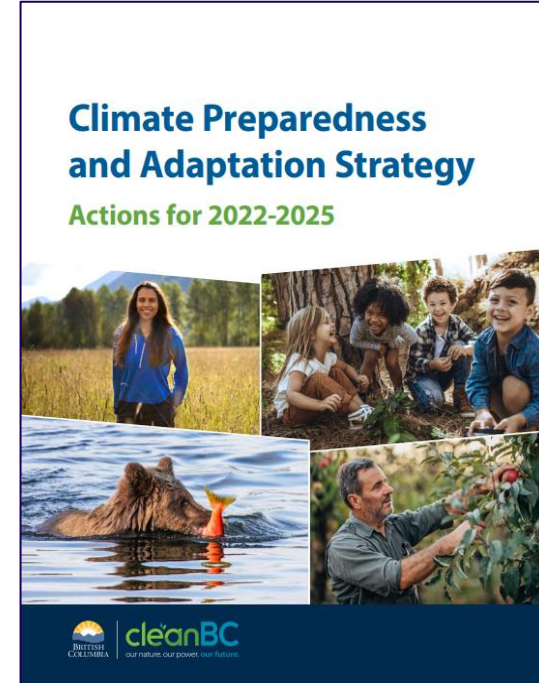
- 4.1 Repealed

Part 1.2 — Climate Change Accountability Framework

- 4.2 Advisory committee
- 4.3 Minister's report on climate change risks and progress toward targets

Part 2 — Public Sector Climate Change Accountability


- 5 Carbon neutral public sector




Organizational

**Fraser Health
Planetary Health Strategy**
2023-2028


Approved: September 19, 2023



fraserhealth
Better health. Best in health care.


fraserhealth.ca 

1



**VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH
PLANETARY HEALTH STRATEGY 2024-2029**
Becoming a climate resilient and sustainable health system

MARCH 2024



**Climate Change and
Sustainability Roadmap**



**2023-
2028**



Resilience key action areas

- Facilities and infrastructure
- Systems processes and protocols
- Staff and community resilience



Craig Dedels

- Facilities and infrastructure
- Systems processes and protocols
- Staff and community resilience



Climate change and the health system

The health system contributes to climate change

Climate Change

Environmental Impacts

- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Waste
- Soil and water contamination
- Energy and natural resource consumption

Climate Hazards and Impacts

- Extreme temperatures
- Wildfires
- Floods and storms
- Food/water safety and security
- Air quality and allergens
- Changes in infectious agents

The Health System



Disruptions to Care

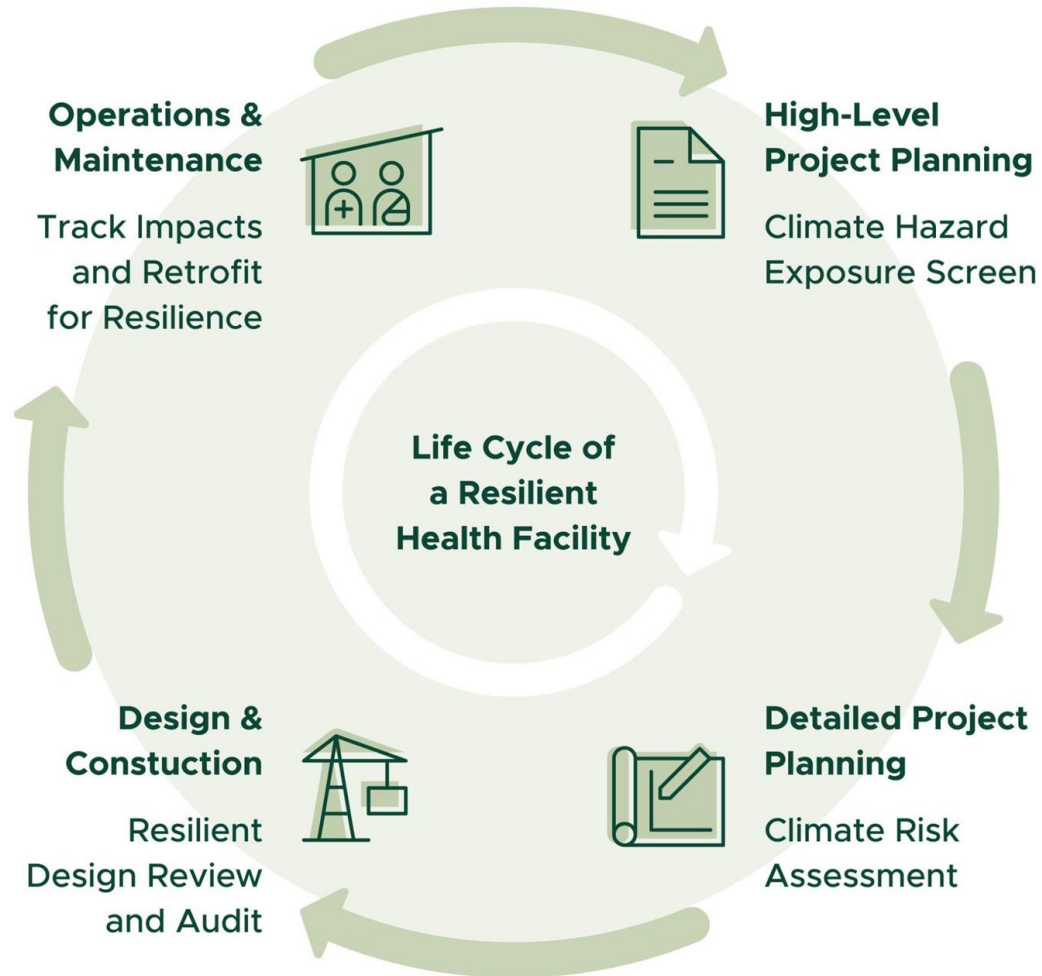
- Staff safety, wellbeing and travel
- Infrastructure damage
- Closures and evacuations
- Supply chain interruptions
- Energy system impacts

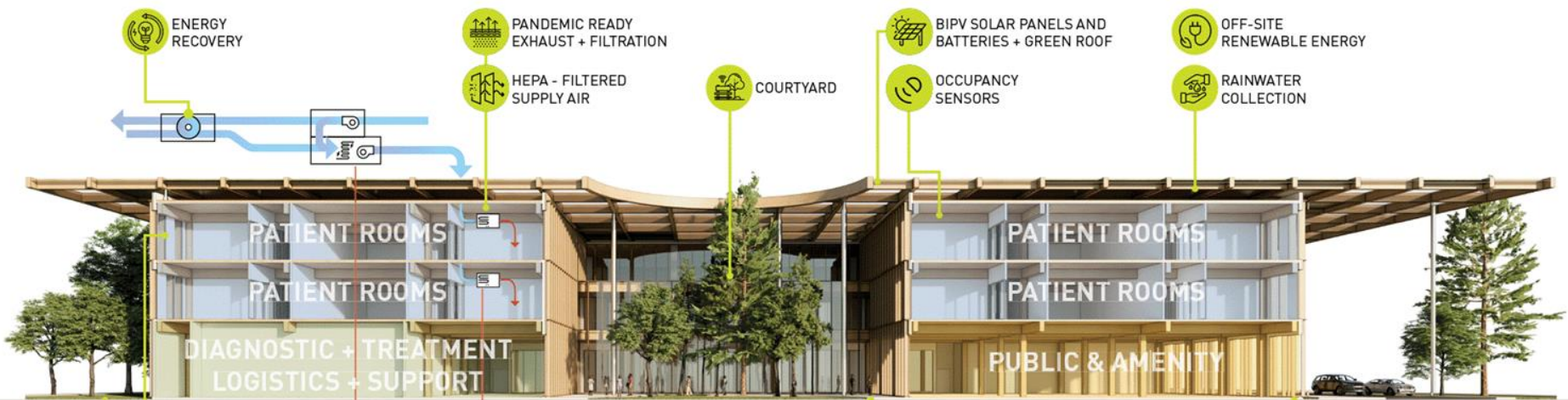
Increased Illness and Service Demand

- Injuries and premature deaths
- Mental health
- Cardiovascular disease
- Infectious diseases
- Allergies and respiratory diseases

Health and Care Delivery

Climate change threatens health and care delivery





CLT MASS TIMBER CONSTRUCTION

GREENSCAPES AND WATER RETENTION

GROUND SOURCE HEAT PUMPS FOR HEATING + DOMESTIC HOT WATER



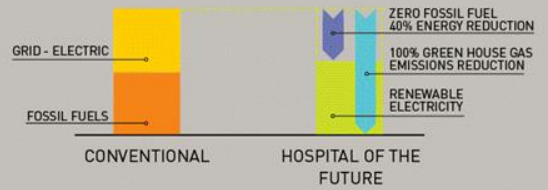
WATER RECYCLING

WASTE RECYCLING

100% ELECTRIC + RESILIENT

- FUTURE - CLIMATE - READY
- POWER & WATER STORAGE ON-SITE
- ELEVATED ABOVE FUTURE FLOOD LEVEL

ZERO EMISSIONS



Breanna Gregory

- Facilities and infrastructure
- Systems processes and protocols
- Staff and community resilience



Steps in climate resilience



Tracie Jones

- Facilities and infrastructure
- Systems processes and protocols
- Staff and community resilience



CREATING A HEALTHY, LOW-CARBON, CLIMATE-RESILIENT FUTURE

- A HEALTH-FOCUSED VISION FOR INCLUSIVE, COLLABORATIVE ACTION -

FOOD

Food systems that support local agriculture and food security, provide access to traditional foods for Indigenous communities, and enable a diet that is higher in plant-based foods improve nutrition and reduces health risks.

HEALTH CARE

A health care system with low-carbon resilient facilities, adaptable health services, strong public health leadership, and reliable supply chains can promote and protect health while reducing impacts on the environment.

BUILDINGS

Low carbon buildings and housing that use healthy design principles, are accessible to everyone, and prepared for climate change are essential in promoting health and wellbeing, protecting people, and providing services.



ECOSYSTEMS

Healthy ecosystems provide access to clean air and water while sequestering carbon. In cities, urban parks and trees reduce flooding, lower temperatures, and promote physical activity while providing a space for social connection and relaxation.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation systems that favour safe active transportation and accessible electrified public transit reduce air pollution, improve road safety, and encourage physical activity; all factors that promote and protect health.

COMMUNITIES

Complete communities that have opportunities to live, work, and play, provide access to green space, key amenities and healthy foods, and that promote social connections will make us more healthy, happy, and resilient.

CURRENT AND EXPECTED CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS



Extreme Heat

Wildfire

Air Quality & Allergens

Flooding & Windstorms

Infectious Diseases

Ecosystem Changes & Food and Water Insecurity

POPULATIONS AT HIGHEST RISK OF BEING IMPACTED



Pregnant Women & Children

Elderly

Underhoused & Resource Deprived

Socially Isolated

Pre-existing Health Issues

Systemically Marginalized Groups

Resilient staff and communities

1. Training, tools and time
2. Engage and empower
3. Invest and innovate



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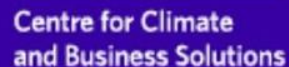
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