Climate Change and Global Health Risks

*Nursing Economic*$ special issue explores worldwide threats, nurses’ key role.

With the alarming spike in climate-related disasters, nurses are on the front-lines of patient care. The January/February issue of *Nursing Economic*$ presents scientific data, the latest reports, and the urgent need for nurses to advocate for change before it’s too late.

Feb. 20, 2019, PITMAN, NJ – The essence of nursing is to protect the health of the public. However, with the devastating effects of climate change intensifying across the globe, nurses may be facing the greatest challenge in history to this pledge.

Recognizing that global warming is now at a tipping point, *Nursing Economic*$ gathered many of the country’s top nursing experts and environmental scientists in its January/February issue to present the sobering data – including government reports, recent studies, and scientific analyses – and release an urgent call to action for nurses to educate themselves and advocate for immediate change.

“What is health on a planet that can no longer support us?” writes Dr. Jasmine Travers, of the Yale School of Nursing, in one of the featured articles. “As the largest population of
health professionals and the nation’s most trusted voice, nursing must lead on addressing climate change and health. We're long past the beginning of this crisis.”

In the issue’s guest editorial, Patricia Stone, director of the Center for Health Policy at Columbia University School of Nursing, and Therese Fitzpatrick, assistant professor at the University of Illinois, write that damage to the U.S. in 2017 alone as a result of extreme weather was estimated to cost more than $300 billion.

“As healthcare leaders, nurses are increasingly finding ourselves in the position of managing the consequences of climate-related events and the lasting impact to our communities,” they write.

The special issue provides a sweeping overview of the effects of global warming, from mass migrations, vulnerable populations, and increased violence, to the unstable polar vortex and vector-borne illnesses. Health care responses to disaster-related illnesses and injuries and such catastrophes as wildfires, hurricanes, mudslides, and droughts are also discussed.

According to Travers, those least equipped to survive - children and elderly, the impoverished, indigenous, immunocompromised, and other vulnerable populations - are suffering the most.

Throughout the issue, the authors highlight a lack of preparedness worldwide and call for nurses to ‘galvanize our clinical practice,’ become educated, and make changes in nursing curriculum to include the causes of, and solutions for, climate change.

Several articles outline how many nursing organizations are mobilizing with position papers, tool kits, and calls to action to help nurses become change agents at their facilities and in front of policymakers.

Read Articles from Special Issue Here

*Nursing Economic* has provided full text of three articles from the issue online at [www.nursingeconomics.net](http://www.nursingeconomics.net). Readers can also visit the site to purchase a copy of the issue.

**Special Issue Contents**

- Guest Editorial - *Climate Change and Health-Related Environmental Risks: A Nursing Leadership Perspective*, Patricia W. Stone and Therese A. Fitzpatrick
- *Addressing Climate Change: We Can’t Afford Not To*, Elizabeth C. Schenk
• *Climate Change, Climate Justice, and a Call for Action*, Jasmine L. Travers, Elizabeth C. Shenk, William E. Rosa, and Patrice K. Nicholas


• *The Economics of Climate Change and the Intersection with Conflict, Violence, and Migration: Implications for the Nursing Profession*, Patrice K. Nicholas and Suellen Breakey

• *Emergency Department Visits and Costs for Heat-Related Illness Due to Extreme Heat or Heat Waves in the United States: An Integrated Review*, Adrienne Wald

• *Clarity and Clouds: Progress in Understanding Arctic Influences on Mid-Latitude Weather*, Jennifer A. Francis