

Professor Dame Carrie MacEwen  
GMC London Office  
Regent's Place  
350 Euston Road  
London  
NW1 3JN

**Thursday 17th March 2022**

Dear Professor Dame Carrie MacEwen,

As medical students we ask the General Medical Council to address the omission of Climate Change and Planetary Health from the General Medical Council's Outcomes for Graduates 2018.

The impact of climate change on health is undeniable. Extreme weather, rising temperatures, poor air quality, and food insecurity are just some examples of how ecological degradation and climate change are detrimental to health. Additionally, these effects have the greatest impact on societies most vulnerable. In the United Kingdom, we are already seeing the impacts of climate change and these harms to health are accelerating. Healthcare plays a large role in driving this ecosystem destruction and contributes around 5% of the UK's anthropogenic greenhouse gases. Planetary health is a solutions orientated, transdisciplinary field focused on addressing the impacts of human disruption to Earth's natural systems, on human health, and all life on Earth.

Last year the Planetary Health Report Card (PHRC), a global student initiative, published a total of 62 assessments, including 30 from medical schools within the UK. Each report included a thorough examination of the medical school's climate change and planetary health teaching, along with research practices, faculty supported student activities, campus sustainability and community engagement. The PHRC is increasingly acknowledged for its value to medical education through a number of publications including a recent article in the British Medical Journal. The 2022 report is in its final drafting phase and will be published on the 22nd of April 2022, providing new insight into the current state of planetary health education around the world.

The data shows that although medical schools are beginning to include teaching on addressing climate change within their core curriculum, many are not or only doing so in optional courses. This is not enough. Medical schools *must* be mandated to include this important teaching. Medical students need to be taught that their actions and future healthcare practices have local and global environmental consequences that exacerbate inequalities and are detrimental to the health of millions of people. Additionally, the threat of climate change on human health needs detailed and comprehensive coverage in core curriculum material.

In *Outcomes for graduates 2018*, current outcomes 25c, d, f and k do not sufficiently cover the broad extent to which the climate and ecological crisis and healthcare are interlinked. Specific outcomes that acknowledge climate change as 'the greatest threat to human health' alongside the impact the healthcare industry has on the global environment, are necessary in today's healthcare education.

We call on you, the General Medical Council, to fulfil your responsibility in setting the standards for all medical schools by ensuring this vital climate change and planetary health education is taught in all schools. We urge you to expedite the review process of the upcoming submission of the Medical Schools Council's proposed Education for Sustainable Healthcare curriculum, which will aid with this task.

Furthermore, in reference to the GMC's 2021 February meeting, agenda item M6, paragraph 3e, we also ask you to disclose the methods of your quality assurance engagement with medical students. The Planetary Health Report Card network has over 300 members, yet none have been invited to any quality assurance activities. We do not feel students are being appropriately engaged in the development of new medical education guidance.

Each of the signatures below is a UK medical student, representing their voice and expressing their concern. Education is our most valuable asset, and we are privileged to be in training today. But as doctors of tomorrow, we face unprecedented new challenges both in our patients' health and healthcare provision. We are committed to building a sustainable future for our friends, family and future patients. We need you to commit to outcomes that ensure we are prepared.

We look forward to your response and would be grateful if a meeting could be organised between yourself and a selection of the signatories of this letter. Please respond in the first instance to James Lee at [j.lee3@uni.bsms.ac.uk](mailto:j.lee3@uni.bsms.ac.uk).

#### References:

- The Planetary Health Report Card. <https://phreportcard.org>
- The Planetary Health Alliance. <https://www.planetaryhealthalliance.org/>
- General Medical Council. (2018). Outcomes for Graduates 2018.
- World Health Organisation. (2021). Climate Change and Health. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>
- General Medical Council. (2021). Council Meeting 25 February 2021.
- Planetary Health Alliance. <https://www.planetaryhealthalliance.org>
- Tun S. (2019). Fulling a new obligation: Teaching and learning of sustainable healthcare in the medical education curriculum. *Medical Teacher*. 41(10):1168-1177. DOI: [10.1080/0142159X.2019.1623870](https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2019.1623870)
- Shaw E, Walpole S, McLean M et al. 2021. AMEE Consensus Statement: Planetary health and education for sustainable healthcare. *Medical Teacher*. 43(3):272-286. DOI: [10.1080/0142159X.2020.1860207](https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2020.1860207)
- Chase H, Hampshire K, Tun S. 2022. Improving the medical curriculum on planetary health and sustainable healthcare. *BMJ*. 376:209. DOI: <https://www.bmj.com/content/376/bmj.o209>

**Signed:**

James Lee. Brighton and Sussex Medical School, PHRC UK Regional Lead.

Hannah Chase. University of Oxford, PHRC Co-director

Madhumita Kolluri. Peninsula Medical School, PHRC UK Regional Lead.

Lauren Franklin, Keele University, PHRC University Lead

Parsa Nazari. Barts and The London, PHRC UK University lead

Chloe Freeman, University of Oxford, PHRC UK University Lead

John Ooi. University College London

Cassia Tatley, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Alice Galbraith-Olive, Newcastle University

Jonathan Chappell, Bristol Medical School

Jacqueline Robbins, Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry

Ann-Elin Myhre, University of Glasgow, PHRC UK University Lead

Dominic Chappell, Bristol Medical School

Sara Hosseinzadeh, Oxford Medical School

Sarah Peters, University of Oxford Medical School

Rebecca Young, University of Oxford Medical School

Hadassah Buechner, University of Oxford, medical school

Krupa Ravi, University of Oxford Medical School

Alice Churchill University of Birmingham Medical School

Sachin Chambers, University of Birmingham Medical School

James Chu Brighton and Sussex Medical school

Jordache Ellis Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Lauren Page, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Jana Bourhill, University of Oxford Medical School

Ibrahim Hamami, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Rebecca McEwen, University of Aberdeen

Maia Ferguson, University of Aberdeen

Grace Peaston, Hull York Medical School, PHRC UK University Lead

Catherine Napper, University College London Medical School

Roshan Karthikappallil, University of Oxford Medical School

Sophie Titcombe, Keele University

Elise McFarland, University of Glasgow

Sujata Shrestha, Hull York Medical School

Dhruv Gupta, St George's University of London, Eco Medics Medical Student Liaison Officer

William Nash, St George's University London, PHRC UK University Lead

Holly Morley, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Naveen Garikapati, Brighton & Sussex Medical School

Anoosha Khan, University of Manchester Medical School

Jack Champion, Brighton & Sussex Medical School

Mara Shukla. Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Eleanor Pollard, Keele University

Emily-Rose Hammond, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Alice Epps, University of Oxford Medical School  
Trizzha Feliciano, University College London, PHRC Partnerships Co-Lead  
Mikaela Loach, University of Edinburgh  
Janani Murugesu, Brighton and Sussex Medical School  
Philipp Tobias, Brighton and Sussex Medical School  
Freya Harding, Brighton and Sussex Medical School  
Golboo Abbasian, Brighton and Sussex Medical School  
Luisa Álamo-Gómez, University College London Medical School  
Beth Stinchcombe, Warwick Medical School  
Matthew Dempsey, Brighton and Sussex Medical School  
Caitlin Pollock, Newcastle Medical School  
Daniel Tran, University of Glasgow  
Millicent Hughes, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Sruthi Nair, Bristol Medical School  
Rhiannon Osborne, University of Cambridge  
Ella McDuffus, Imperial College School of Medicine  
Jonathan De Oliveira, St George's Medical School  
Andrew Zhao, Warwick Medical School  
Cerys Stringer, Kent and Medway Medical School  
Ioan Elliott, Kent and Medway Medical School  
Tabitha Pring, University of Oxford Medical School  
Izzy Dickenson, Brighton and Sussex Medical School  
Katie Henson, Newcastle Medical School  
Weronika Kozuch, Cardiff University  
Henna Reddy, University of Oxford Medical School  
Yi-Huan Tang, Aston Medical School  
Rachel Boixadera, University of Cambridge, PHRC UK University Lead  
Jaime San Miguel, University of Cambridge  
Louisa Yapp, University of Cambridge  
Amelia Holloway, University of Cambridge  
George Carew-Jones, University of Cambridge  
Susanne Bosman, University of Cambridge  
George Chandler, University of Cambridge  
Daniel Hide, University of Cambridge  
Mila Zemyarska-Karcheva, University of Cambridge  
Rebecca Hotchkin, King's College London  
Laura Kay, University of Cambridge  
Beatrice Carpenter, University of Oxford Medical School  
Ananya Sood, St George's University of London, Ecosociety President 21-22  
Natalie Cotton, University of Cambridge  
Deanne Attreed, University College London  
Pip Ross, Cardiff University  
Amy Evans, St George's University of London, Environment & Ethics Officer 21-22  
Sarah Goddard, University College London  
Vidya Nanthakumar, University of Glasgow

Victoria Khaukha, University of Buckingham  
Jheel Vasani, St George's University of London  
Sophie Talib, St George's University of London  
Sally Spurr, St George's University of London  
Hattie Washer, St George's University of London  
Ella Birch, St George's University of London  
Laura Hewitt, University of Glasgow  
Andrew Macleod, University of Dundee  
Mark Baker, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Anushka Lahiri, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Sophie Haughton, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Helen Carter-Roberts, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Hansini Abeysekera, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Niharika Manu, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Shiwei Ooi, University of Leeds Medical School  
Madeleine Hubner, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Rob Miller, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Tegwen O'Brien, University of Manchester Medical School  
Zachary Osman, University of Leicester Medical School  
Alex Markland, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Esther Beer, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Ella McElnea, University of Edinburgh Medical School  
Abbie Farrow, University of Bristol Medical School  
Zuzanna Nowinka, Lancaster Medical School, Eco Medica Medical Student Liaison Officer  
Lily Hayward, University of Sheffield Medical School  
Imo Young, University of Cardiff Medical School  
Frances Hughes, University of Newcastle Medical School  
Lauren Glover, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Rhiannon Wells, Queen's University Belfast  
Niamh McCormack, Peninsula Medical School. PHRC University Lead.  
Victoria Pitfield, St George's University of London  
Lottie Cansdale, University of Oxford Medical School  
Millie Banks, Hull York Medical School  
Modupe Obideyi, Lancaster Medical School  
Josh Kirk, Lancaster Medical School  
Rhea Khosla, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Anmol Landa, University of Leicester Medical School  
Sinead McSorley University of Liverpool  
Victoria England, Queen's University Belfast, PHRC University Lead  
Becky Thomas, University of Liverpool  
Louis Davenport, University of Bristol  
Ben Scott, University of Birmingham Medical School  
Eve Miller, University of Bristol Medical School  
Jay Talbott, Bristol Medical School

Stefania Tsatsari, Brighton & Sussex Medical School, PHRC University Lead  
Liberty-Isabelle Todd, University of Plymouth  
Oliver Marsden, University of Bristol Medical School, Healthy Planet UK  
Chloe Jenvey, University of Bristol