



Planetary Health Report Card (Medicine) 2026: *Católica Medical School*



2025-2026 Contributing Team:

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Summary of Findings

Overall Grade	C+
Curriculum	B-
<p>Católica Medical School demonstrates meaningful integration of planetary health–related themes throughout the pre-clinical years, particularly within system-based blocks such as immunology, infectious diseases, respiratory medicine, cardiovascular health, and gastrointestinal modules. Topics such as climate change and infectious disease patterns, air pollution and respiratory pathology, food and water security, and environmental determinants of health are discussed with sufficient depth in several core lectures. Communication skills and exposure history-taking are also developed longitudinally through the Personal and Professional Development block.</p> <p>However, important gaps remain. The curriculum does not systematically address health inequities related to climate change, Indigenous knowledge systems, the carbon footprint of healthcare, sustainable clinical practice (e.g., anaesthetic gases, inhalers, sustainable surgery), or environmental justice. While planetary health concepts are present, they are not yet framed within a unified, longitudinal Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH) strategy.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a structured planetary health/ESH longitudinal thread across all six years. ● Introduce formal teaching on healthcare sustainability, environmental justice, and climate-related health inequities. 	
Interdisciplinary Research	C
<p>Several research groups at Católica Medical School conduct work highly relevant to planetary health, particularly in infectious diseases, host–pathogen dynamics, systems biology, and public health modelling. Faculty members engaged in these areas also contribute to teaching, strengthening academic alignment.</p> <p>However, there is no dedicated planetary health research centre, no formal institutional membership in planetary health alliances, no centralised webpage highlighting related research, and no structured mechanism for affected communities to influence research priorities. Research relevant to planetary health exists but is not coordinated under a strategic institutional framework.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a centralised webpage highlighting planetary health–related research and faculty expertise. ● Explore membership in organisations such as the Planetary Health Alliance to strengthen institutional positioning. 	

Community Outreach and Advocacy	B
<p>Community engagement occurs primarily through student-led initiatives such as <i>Missão País</i>, activities organised by the Student Union (SU), and volunteer programmes that support community resilience. The affiliated hospital, Hospital da Luz Lisboa, provides patient-facing educational materials on environmental health and climate impacts.</p> <p>However, there are no structured institutional partnerships specifically focused on planetary health or environmental justice, and limited formal public-facing programming dedicated to climate-health topics.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop formal partnerships with local community or environmental justice organisations. • Expand structured public seminars or community-facing planetary health events. 	
Support for Student-Led Initiatives	C-
<p>The institution is generally supportive of student-led sustainability initiatives, particularly through collaboration with the Student Union. Students may pursue planetary health topics in their sixth-year Master's thesis, and sustainability-focused projects can be developed with institutional openness.</p> <p>However, there are no registered planetary health student groups with formal faculty advisors, no student sustainability liaison in governance structures, and no centralised platform listing mentors or opportunities related to planetary health.</p>	
Campus Sustainability	C
<p>Universidade Católica Portuguesa has a written plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and has implemented sustainable building practices, including LEED-aligned standards for new developments such as Campus Veritati. Renewable energy (solar panels) is used on campus, though it accounts for less than 20% of energy demand. Sustainable transportation initiatives, including partnership with BusUp, are in place. Conventional recycling systems are available.</p> <p>Nevertheless, improvements are needed in areas such as composting, green lab programmes, fossil fuel divestment transparency, comprehensive procurement standards, and deeper integration of sustainability into campus food systems.</p>	

Statement of Purpose

Planetary health is human health.

The Planetary Health Alliance describes planetary health as “a solutions-oriented, transdisciplinary field and social movement focused on analysing and addressing the impacts of human disruptions to Earth’s natural systems on human health and all life on Earth.” This definition is intentionally broad, intended to encompass the multitude of ways that the environment can affect health, including water scarcity, changing food systems, urbanisation, biodiversity shifts, natural disasters, climate change, changing land use and land cover, global pollution, and changing biogeochemical flows. The health of humanity is dependent on our environment, and our environment is changing rapidly and in disastrous ways. Although the World Health Organization has called climate change “the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century,” many health professional school’s institutional priorities do not reflect the urgency of this danger to human health.

As future health professionals, we must be prepared to address the impacts of human-caused environmental changes on our patients’ health. This preparation is in the hands of the institutions providing our health professional training. It is imperative that we hold our institutions accountable for educating health professional students about the health impacts of climate change and other anthropogenic environmental changes, generating research to better understand health impacts and solutions, supporting related student initiatives, embracing sustainable practices as much as possible, and engaging with surrounding communities that are most affected by environmental threats. Because climate change and environmental threats disproportionately affect vulnerable populations (for example, communities of colour, older adults sensitive to health threats, and individuals in low-resource settings), these issues are inherently ones of equity and justice.

With the purpose of increasing planetary health awareness and accountability among health professional schools, we have created a Planetary Health Report Card that students internationally can use to grade and compare their institutions on an annual basis. This student-driven initiative aims to compare health professional schools nationally and internationally on the basis of discrete metrics in five main category areas: 1) planetary health curriculum, 2) interdisciplinary research in health and environment, 3) university support for student planetary health initiatives, and 4) community outreach centred on environmental health impacts 5) school campus sustainability.

Definitions & Other Considerations

Definitions:

- **Planetary Health:** is described by the Planetary Health Alliance as “the health of human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends.” For example, topics such as climate change, declining biodiversity, shortages of arable land and freshwater, and pollution would all fall under the realm of planetary health. Both planetary health and traditional ‘environmental health’ examine the relationship between human health and the external environment, including extreme temperatures, chemicals, vector-borne diseases, etc. Planetary health explicitly concerns itself with the potential health harms associated with human-caused perturbations of natural systems. Therefore, the human health focus of planetary health makes the field well-adapted for the context of health professional education. Throughout this report card, we use the term planetary health to refer to this broad swath of topics, but resources do not need to explicitly include the term “planetary health” to satisfy the metric.
- **Sustainable Healthcare:** As defined by the Academy of Royal Colleges, sustainable healthcare involves ensuring the ability to provide good quality care for future generations by balancing the economic, environmental, and social constraints and demands within health care settings. A sustainable healthcare system maintains population health, reduces disease burden and minimises use of healthcare services.
- **Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH):** is defined as the process of equipping current and future health professionals with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and capacity to provide environmentally sustainable services through health professional education, thus working to decrease the enormous environmental impact of the healthcare industry. Planetary Health Education is an integral part of this education rather than an end in itself. This is because knowledge on Planetary Health is required to be able to fully understand the necessity of sustainable healthcare as well as being part of the broader knowledge needed to fully protect and promote health. In summary, ESH is covered by the three Priority Learning Outcomes of the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare below, and Planetary Health Education is embraced in the first learning objective and is a fundamental requirement to achieve learning outcomes 2 and 3:
 1. Describe how the environment and human health interact at different levels.
 2. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to improve the environmental sustainability of health systems.
 3. Discuss how the duty of a doctor to protect and promote health is shaped by the dependence of human health on the local and global environment.
- **Medical School/Department vs. Institution:** When “Medical school” is specified in the report card, this only refers to curriculum and resources offered by the School/department of Medicine and does not include offerings from other parts of the university (e.g. undergraduate departments (USA), other related departments (e.g. Public Health, Population Health departments). In contrast, when “institution” is specified in the report card, we are referring to the university more broadly including all of its campuses. Any resource reasonably accessible by medical students, no matter where in the institution the resource comes from or if it is

specifically targeted for medical students, can meet this metric.

- **Environmental history (Curriculum Section):** This is a series of questions students are taught to ask during medical encounters that elicits patients' exposures and environmental risk factors. Historically, this has included consideration of exposures like pesticides, asbestos, and lead, though in the modern era shaped by climate change, it can be expanded to include things like wildfire smoke exposure, air pollution and mould after flooding. Key components include place of residence over the lifecourse, occupational history, food and water sources (e.g. meat from industrial feeding operations, regular fishing in contaminated water, access to clean drinking water), and exposure to air pollution. Please be as specific as possible when providing evidence for this metric.
- **Elective:** The word "elective" refers to an optional course or lecture series that a student can opt to take part in but is not a requirement in the core curriculum. Generally, these elective courses take place in the preclinical curriculum but vary by school.
- **Core Curriculum:** This refers to the taught material that is delivered to the entire cohort of students in one year.
- **Clerkship / Outreach:** This is a term used in the USA to refer to placements that medical students go on e.g. Pediatrics, General medicine, Psychiatry. In the UK these are referred to as rotations, outreach or placements. This is a relatively short (approximately 4-8 weeks) period of study and patient-centred clinical experience that takes place as part of the undergraduate programme.
- **Clinical rotation:** This is a term used to refer to placements that students go on (e.g., ophthalmology, surgery, cardiology).
- **Physiotherapy vs Physical Therapy:** For the purposes of this report card these terms are considered interchangeable. However, physiotherapy will be used primarily.
- **Community organisations:** For most institutions, there are existing groups that are not directly affiliated with the university and exist as a product of what the community the institution exists in cares about or needs. These specific community organisations relevant to this report include those that are focused around some aspect of climate and health preservation. These community organisations can include but are not limited to local mutual aid initiatives, underserved-resource distribution groups, clean-up and nature conservation groups, community gardeners, and other environmental-related organisations. If your institution does not have access to local volunteerships with community groups, please report any community organisations your institution or school has collaborated with.
- **Climate justice:** The idea that certain population groups and geographical locations which are disproportionately more impacted by climate change are already economically and socially disadvantaged. This double vulnerability sits alongside pre-existing social justice concerns and should therefore shift policy and practice to mitigate the inequitable effects of the climate crisis.
- **Extractivism:** The removal of natural resources typically in large quantities. Within anthropology this term is often used in the context of colonialism to refer to

the historic seizing of natural resources, a practice which has developed business models tied to ecological degradation and loss of biodiversity.

- **Global South:** Nations that often have less economic and industrial development and are typically in the southern hemisphere. These nations have been found to be disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis.
- **Low socioeconomic status (SES):** An individual or geographical area that across a variety of socioeconomic factors (e.g., income, education, race/ethnicity) is considered vulnerable. This vulnerability has been correlated to more adverse health outcomes often as a consequence of encountering more barriers in accessing and receiving healthcare.
- **Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC):** Countries that have lower degrees of economic affluence.
- **Anthropogenic:** Created through human activity
- **Marginalized communities:** Groups excluded from mainstream economic, educational, social, and/or cultural experiences due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status (Sevelius et al., 2020).

Scoring Matrix

- Elective coursework (1 point): This score applies to material that is actively selected by the students such as a module choice, or additional lecture series. By implication, only a given proportion of the cohort will receive this taught material.
- Brief coverage in the core curriculum (2 points): This score applies where a topic is covered only briefly in a core curriculum session. This implies that the entire cohort receives the same material. At minimum brief inclusion would qualify as inclusion in a single lecture slide in a single year.
- In depth coverage in the core curriculum (3 points): This score applies where a topic is taught in significant detail or where a topic is repeatedly brought up in different years. This might look like several dedicated lecture slides, or inclusion of the same topic in different lectures and teaching formats.

Other considerations:

- If there are more than one “tracks” at your institution with two different curricula (for example, Harvard Medical School has a Pathways and HST curriculum track), you can choose to fill out a report card for each track, or fill out just one report card and average the scores received by each track in cases where the scores are different (see the 2021 Harvard or Oxford report cards as examples). Where possible please indicate the proportion of students that are on each track.

Updated in 2025, a complete literature review by metric is available for the 2024/25 Medicine Report Card Template. This largely translates across disciplines although we are hoping to expand this process across all of our covered disciplines. A link to the 2025 literature review by metric is available [here](#).

Planetary Health Curriculum

Section Overview: This section evaluates the integration of relevant planetary health topics into the medical school curriculum. Today's health professional students will be on the frontlines of tackling the health effects of climate and other environmental changes. Therefore, it is critical that students are trained to understand the health effects of these changes, as well as planetary health issues and principles more broadly. Topics like the changing geography of vector-borne diseases, the health consequences of air pollution, environmental health inequities, and disaster response principles must be part of every medical school's core curriculum.

Curriculum: General

1.1. Did your <u>medical school</u> offer elective courses (student selected modules) to engage students in Education for Sustainable Healthcare or Planetary Health in the last year?	
Yes, the medical school has offered more than one elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (3 points)	
Yes, the medical school has offered one elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (2 points)	
The medical school does not have any electives whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health, but there are one or more electives that include a lecture on planetary health. (1 point)	
No, the medical school has not offered any electives on planetary health or electives that include ESH/planetary health topics in the past year. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Católica Medical School offers student-selected modules throughout the pre-clinical curriculum, including research-focused options within the “Introduction to Research – Laboratory of Immunology” course. Within several of these research pathways, students receive theoretical introductions as part of the course structure in which planetary health themes are addressed in detail. These sessions explore the interconnections between environmental change, immune system responses, and population health, integrating planetary health concepts into foundational medical education.</i></p>	

Curriculum: Health Effects of Climate Change

1.2. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the relationship between extreme heat, health risks, and climate change?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	

This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the relationship between extreme heat, health risks, and climate change is widely discussed throughout the pre-clinical years, especially both at Digestion and Defense I and II. Across multiple courses, students explore the health impacts of rising temperatures, including heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke, as well as the broader physiological consequences of thermal stress. These topics are addressed within the context of climate change, with emphasis on vulnerable populations, pathophysiological mechanisms, prevention strategies, and public health adaptation measures.</i></p>	

1.3. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the impacts of extreme weather events on individual health and/or on healthcare systems?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the impacts of extreme weather events on individual health and healthcare systems are addressed within the pre-clinical curriculum. The topic is first supported by foundational content in Digestion and Defence I, particularly in the theoretical lecture “Innate and Adaptive Immunity,” which equips students with the immunological framework necessary to understand how environmental disruptions and climate-related events influence host susceptibility and disease patterns.</i></p> <p><i>It is further developed in Digestion and Defence II, beginning with the introductory theoretical lecture and expanding in subsequent sessions such as “Tuberculosis,” “Viruses and Antivirals,” and “Mosquito-Borne Diseases.” These lectures explore how extreme weather events and climate change contribute to shifts in infectious disease distribution, outbreaks following environmental disasters, and increased strain on healthcare systems. Together, these curricular components integrate the health consequences of extreme weather into core teaching on immunology and infectious diseases.</i></p>	

1.4. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the impact of climate change on the changing patterns of infectious diseases?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	

This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the curriculum addresses the impact of climate change on changing patterns of infectious diseases through structured teaching within the pre-clinical years.</i></p> <p><i>In Digestion and Defence I, the theoretical lecture “Innate and Adaptive Immunity” establishes the immunological foundation necessary to understand how environmental and ecological disruptions influence host susceptibility and pathogen behavior.</i></p> <p><i>In Digestion and Defence II, the connection between climate change and infectious diseases is explored more explicitly. The introductory theoretical lecture contextualizes infectious diseases within global environmental change, and subsequent sessions — including “Mosquito-Borne Diseases,” “Viruses and Antivirals,” and “Tuberculosis” — examine how warming temperatures affect vector distribution, how extreme weather events contribute to outbreaks, and how environmental disruption influences the emergence and re-emergence of infectious diseases. These lectures make clear the links between climate-driven ecological change and shifts in disease transmission patterns, including vector-borne, airborne, and re-emerging infections.</i></p> <p><i>Together, these components ensure that students understand infectious disease trends within the broader framework of climate change and planetary health.</i></p>	

1.5. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the respiratory health effects of climate change and air pollution?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the relationship between climate change, air pollution, and respiratory pathology is addressed within the pre-clinical curriculum. In the Circulation and Breathing II block, the lectures “Respiratory Physiology” and “Asthma” incorporate discussion of air quality and its impact on respiratory health.</i></p> <p><i>These sessions explore the physiological mechanisms of airway inflammation and obstruction, while also addressing how air pollution and climate change–related environmental exposures</i></p>	

contribute to the development and exacerbation of respiratory diseases. Students are encouraged to consider both the underlying mechanisms of injury and the clinical implications for patients, integrating environmental determinants of health into core respiratory teaching.

1.6. Does your medical school curriculum address the cardiovascular health effects of climate change, including increased heat?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, the relationship between climate change and cardiovascular health is incorporated into the pre-clinical curriculum. Within the Circulation and Lungs III block, the lecture “Dyslipidemia” includes reference to the cardiovascular impacts of climate change.

In this session, the topic is introduced with mention of extreme heat events observed in the last decade and their association with increased cardiovascular morbidity, particularly in patients with underlying risk factors such as atherosclerosis and coronary artery disease. This discussion highlights how rising temperatures and heat stress can exacerbate cardiovascular conditions, encouraging students to consider environmental determinants as contributors to cardiometabolic risk.

1.7. Does your medical school curriculum address the mental health and neuropsychological effects of environmental degradation and climate change?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, the mental health and neuropsychological effects of environmental degradation and climate change are mentioned briefly within the pre-clinical curriculum. These topics are addressed particularly within the Thinking and Doing I and Thinking and Doing II

modules, during PBL sessions, where broader societal, ethical, and interdisciplinary dimensions of health are explored.

They also arise in lectures in which natural disasters and extreme weather events are discussed, with reference to their psychological impact on affected populations. While the primary focus of these sessions is on the broader health consequences of environmental disruption, there is acknowledgment of associated mental health outcomes such as stress, trauma, and anxiety following natural disasters. However, the neuropsychological and psychiatric dimensions of climate change are not explored in depth as a standalone topic within the current curriculum.

1.8. Does your medical school curriculum address the relationships between health, individual patient food and water security, ecosystem health, and climate change?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, the relationships between health, food and water security, ecosystem health, and climate change are addressed within the curriculum. This topic is discussed during the third-year Abdomen block, specifically in the lecture “Chronic Diarrhea.”

In this session, climate change is referenced as a contributing factor to reduced water quality and food security, with implications for malnutrition and diarrheal diseases. The teaching highlights how environmental degradation, altered ecosystems, and changing microbial patterns can influence gastrointestinal health outcomes. Through this clinical context, students are encouraged to understand how disruptions to ecosystems and water systems can directly affect individual patient health, particularly in vulnerable populations.

1.9. Does your medical school curriculum address the outsized impact of climate change on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, Indigenous communities, children, homeless populations, and older adults?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the disproportionate impact of climate change on marginalized populations is not explicitly addressed within the current curriculum. While vulnerable groups may be implicitly referenced in discussions related to natural disasters and extreme weather events, there is no dedicated or structured teaching that specifically examines the inequitable burden of climate change on populations such as individuals with low socioeconomic status, women, racial and ethnic minorities, Indigenous communities, children, older adults, or people experiencing homelessness.</i></p> <p><i>As such, although vulnerability may be inferred in broader public health discussions, the social and structural dimensions of climate-related health inequities are not formally or comprehensively integrated into the curriculum.</i></p>	

1.10. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the unequal regional health impacts of climate change globally?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the unequal regional health impacts of climate change are addressed at specific moments throughout the curriculum. Various lectures explore climate-related health consequences - such as infectious diseases, extreme weather events, and food or water insecurity - primarily from a biomedical and clinical perspective. While these sessions provide an important foundation for understanding climate-sensitive conditions, they do not consistently incorporate a structured or longitudinal analysis of global health disparities.</i></p> <p><i>Differences in disease burden between regions may be mentioned during discussions of epidemiology or natural disasters; however, there is no dedicated curricular component that systematically examines how climate change disproportionately affects specific geographic regions, particularly low- and middle-income countries.</i></p> <p><i>More importantly, in the 4th year, students complete the General Practice and Family Medicine Rotation, which includes a one-week placement in Public Health. During this period, medical residents deliver oral presentations supported by PowerPoint slides on selected public health</i></p>	

topics. These presentations may explore themes related to climate change and its health impacts, depending on the chosen subject. While this offers an opportunity to engage with broader public health perspectives - including potentially the unequal regional effects of climate change - coverage of these issues depends on the topics selected and is not embedded as a structured, mandatory focus within the curriculum.

Curriculum: Environmental Health & the Effects of Anthropogenic Toxins on Human Health

1.11. Does your medical school curriculum address the reproductive health effects of industry-related environmental toxins (e.g. air pollution, pesticides, microplastics)?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, the reproductive health effects of industry-related environmental toxins are addressed within the third-year Abdomen block. This topic is explored in depth through problem-based learning (PBL) sessions, where students analyze clinical cases that integrate environmental exposures—such as air pollution and other industrial contaminants—with reproductive and gastrointestinal health outcomes.

In addition, the subject is discussed in a related theoretical lecture, which provides the scientific and pathophysiological framework necessary to understand how environmental toxins, including pollutants and endocrine-disrupting substances, may impact reproductive function and overall health. Through both case-based and didactic teaching, students are encouraged to consider environmental determinants as relevant contributors to reproductive health.

1.12. Does your medical school curriculum address important human-caused environmental threats that are relevant to the university’s surrounding community?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, important human-caused environmental threats specific to the university's surrounding community are not explicitly addressed within the current curriculum. While broader environmental and climate-related health topics may be discussed in certain lectures, there is no structured teaching that examines local environmental risks or region-specific environmental health challenges relevant to the community in which the university is situated.</i></p>	

1.13. To what extent does your <u>medical school</u> emphasise the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems as essential components of planetary health solutions?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems as essential components of planetary health solutions is not addressed within the current curriculum. There is no formal teaching that explores Indigenous perspectives on environmental stewardship, traditional ecological knowledge, or culturally grounded approaches to health and sustainability.</i></p> <p><i>As such, Indigenous knowledge systems are not currently integrated into planetary health or environmental health discussions within the medical program space given for students to share their opinions on how they might carry forward these values into their own careers.</i></p>	

1.14. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the outsized impact of anthropogenic environmental toxins on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, children, homeless populations, Indigenous populations, and older adults?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	

Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, the disproportionate impact of anthropogenic environmental toxins on marginalized populations is not explicitly addressed within the current curriculum. Although environmental toxins may be discussed in certain clinical or theoretical contexts, there is no structured teaching that specifically examines how these exposures unequally affect populations such as individuals with low socioeconomic status, women, racial and ethnic minorities, children, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, or Indigenous communities.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, the social and equity dimensions of environmental toxin exposure are not formally integrated into the curriculum.</i></p>	

Curriculum: Sustainability

1.15. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 point)	
Score Assigned:	2

<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, different types of diets are discussed throughout the curriculum, particularly within the first-year module Diabetes, Obesity and Lifestyle. In this context, lectures such as “Energy Balance and the Environment” and “Changing Lifestyle Behaviour” explore nutritional patterns and their health implications, highlighting the relationship between lifestyle choices and broader environmental factors.</i></p> <p><i>However, while these sessions provide an important foundation regarding diet and health, the specific environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet are not addressed in depth. Although dietary approaches may be mentioned in relevant teaching sessions, there is no structured or comprehensive component that systematically examines the links between plant-based diets, reduced environmental impact, and improved population health outcomes.</i></p>	
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1.16. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the carbon footprint of healthcare systems?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	

This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, topics related to sustainability and environmental health can be explored during the medical program, particularly during the clinical years. In the 4th year, during the “General Practice and Family Medicine Rotation,” students have a specific opportunity to engage with these issues.</i></p> <p><i>More specifically, and within the aforementioned rotation, during a week dedicated to Public Health, interns deliver oral presentations to students on selected topics, which include subjects such as sustainability, the environmental impact of clinical practice, and broader public health challenges related to climate change.</i></p>	

1.17. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum cover these components of sustainable clinical practice in the <u>core</u> curriculum? (points for each)	Score
The health and environmental co-benefits of avoiding over-medicalisation, over-investigation and/or over-treatment (2 points)	2
The environmental impact of pharmaceuticals and over-prescribing as a cause of climate health harm. Alternatively teaching on deprescribing where possible and its environmental and health co-benefits would fulfil this metric. (2 points)	2
The health and environmental co-benefits of non-pharmaceutical management of conditions where appropriate such as exercise or yoga classes for type 2 diabetes; social group activities such as gardening for mental health conditions; active transport such as bicycle schemes. This is commonly known as social prescribing in the UK. (1 point)	1
Environmental impact of surgical healthcare on planetary health and the climate crisis, and how can it be mitigated. (1 point)	0
The impact of anaesthetic gases on the healthcare carbon footprint and ways to reduce anaesthesia’s environmental impacts, such as total intravenous anaesthesia or choosing less environmentally harmful anaesthetic gas options with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. (1 point)	0
The impact of inhalers on the healthcare carbon footprint and the environmental benefit of dry powdered inhalers over metered dose inhalers. (1 point)	0
Waste production within healthcare clinics and strategies for reducing waste in clinical activities (e.g. single use items in the inpatient or outpatient setting) (1 point)	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p>	

1. (2 points)

Principles of high-value care are emphasised throughout the clinical years, particularly in clinical reasoning sessions and during clinical rotations. Students are encouraged to critically evaluate the necessity of diagnostic tests and treatments, with discussion of avoiding unnecessary investigations and interventions. This approach highlights both patient safety and responsible stewardship of finite healthcare resources, aligning with the health and environmental co-benefits of reducing over-medicalisation. In particular, during CORE sessions, which take place in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years of the programme, students explore these issues in great depth.

2. (2 points)

Rational prescribing principles are taught within the module of Pharmacology (3rd Year) and clinical modules, including the importance of avoiding unnecessary prescriptions and reviewing ongoing medications. While the environmental impact of pharmaceuticals is not explored in depth, the concept of minimising inappropriate prescribing is addressed primarily from a patient safety and quality-of-care perspective.

3. (1 point)

Non-pharmacological management strategies are regularly discussed in clinical teaching, including lifestyle modification, exercise, dietary interventions, and behavioural approaches for chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular conditions. Although not formally framed as “social prescribing,” these approaches emphasise prevention and holistic care, indirectly supporting environmental and health co-benefits. In particular, during CORE sessions, which are covered in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years of the programme, students explore these issues in greater depth.

4. (0 points)

The environmental impact of surgical practice, including surgical carbon footprint and mitigation strategies, is not addressed within the current curriculum.

5. (0 points)

The contribution of anaesthetic gases to the healthcare carbon footprint and alternative lower-emission approaches are not covered in formal teaching.

6. (0 points)

The environmental impact of inhaler types, including comparisons between metered-dose and dry powder inhalers, is not discussed within the curriculum.

7. (1 point)

Waste production within healthcare settings is addressed during clinical training, more specifically in a week dedicated to Public Health in the General and Family Medicine Rotation of 4th year, where students are made aware of the volume of waste generated in inpatient and outpatient care. Discussions include appropriate disposal of medical materials and strategies to minimise unnecessary single-use items where feasible, promoting more sustainable clinical practices.

Curriculum: Clinical Applications

1.18. In training for patient encounters, does your medical school's curriculum introduce strategies to have conversations with patients about the health effects of climate change?

Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

No, there are **not** strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, communication strategies for discussing complex and sensitive health topics with patients are developed within the transversal block Personal and Professional Development. In this component of the curriculum, students participate in simulated patient encounters where they assume the role of the physician.

Through these structured simulation sessions, students practise addressing a range of medical themes in a patient-centred manner; receiving feedback in a low-stakes learning environment. While climate change communication is not delivered as a standalone workshop, the skills necessary to discuss the health effects of climate change—such as explaining evidence clearly, contextualising health risks, and maintaining a professional, evidence-based stance—are cultivated through these simulated clinical interactions.

1.19. In training for patient encounters, does your medical school's curriculum introduce strategies for taking an environmental history or exposure history?

Yes, the **core** curriculum includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (2 points)

Only **elective** coursework includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (1 point)

No, the curriculum does **not** include strategies for taking an environmental history. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, skills related to history-taking - including environmental and exposure history - are developed within the transversal block Personal and Professional Development. During simulated patient encounters, students assume the role of the physician and practise structured clinical interviews.

Within these sessions, students are trained to take comprehensive medical histories that include relevant environmental and occupational exposures when clinically appropriate. This approach allows learners to integrate exposure assessment into routine patient evaluation, while receiving feedback in a supervised, low-stakes setting.

Curriculum: Administrative Support for Planetary Health

1.20. Is your medical school currently in the process of implementing or improving Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH)/planetary health education?

Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making **major** improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (4 points)

Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making **minor** improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (2 points)

No, there are **no** improvements to planetary health education in progress. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, there is no current formal process underway to implement or systematically expand Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH) or dedicated planetary health education within the curriculum. While certain topics related to climate change and environmental health are addressed in isolated lectures, there is no structured institutional initiative aimed at integrating or strengthening planetary health education across the medical program at this time.

1.21. How well are the aforementioned planetary health/Education for Sustainable Healthcare topics integrated longitudinally into the core curriculum?

Planetary health/ESH topics are **well integrated** into the core medical school curriculum. (6 points)

Some planetary health/ESH topics are appropriately integrated into the core medical student curriculum. (4 points)

Planetary health/ESH is not integrated and is primarily addressed in **(a) standalone lecture(s)**. (2 points)

There is **minimal/no** education for sustainable healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

6

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, planetary health and Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH) topics are integrated longitudinally across the curriculum, with substantial coverage during the first three pre-clinical years and continued reinforcement throughout the clinical years.

During the pre-clinical phase, themes related to climate change, environmental health, infectious disease patterns, air pollution, food and water security, and environmental determinants of health are incorporated into multiple system-based blocks (e.g., immunology, respiratory, cardiovascular, and gastrointestinal modules). These discussions are embedded within core scientific and pathophysiological teaching, allowing students to understand planetary health concepts alongside foundational biomedical knowledge.

In the subsequent three clinical years, these themes are revisited and contextualised when clinically relevant. Discussions arise during patient encounters, case-based learning, and clinical rotations whenever a particular condition, exposure history, or public health issue justifies consideration of environmental determinants. This approach ensures reinforcement and practical application of previously acquired knowledge.

Overall, while planetary health is not delivered as a single, unified curricular thread, there is consistent and meaningful integration of relevant topics across both pre-clinical and clinical training, with appropriate supplementation when clinically indicated.

1.22. Does your medical school employ a member of faculty to specifically oversee and take responsibility for the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as a theme throughout the course?

Yes, the medical school has a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (1 point)

No, the medical school does **not have a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (0 points)**

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation:

Católica Medical School does not currently employ a specific faculty member responsible for overseeing or coordinating the integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare themes throughout the curriculum.

1.23. Does your health professional curriculum include teaching on civic engagement/advocacy to address the environmental and structural determinants of health?

This topic was explored **in depth by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)**

This topic was **briefly covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)**

This topic was covered in **elective coursework. (1 point)**

This topic was **not covered. (0 points)**

Score Assigned:

3

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, the curriculum includes teaching on civic engagement and advocacy within the transversal block Personal and Professional Development across the three pre-clinical

years. In this component, students are trained to recognise and address social, environmental, and structural determinants of health during simulated and supervised patient interactions.

Through these exercises, students practise communicating about broader health determinants, promoting preventive strategies, and adopting a proactive, advocacy-oriented approach in clinical contexts. This longitudinal training fosters awareness of the physician's role not only as a clinician, but also as an advocate for individual and community health.

Section Total (47 out of 75)

62.67%

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Interdisciplinary Research

Section Overview: *This section evaluates the quality and quantity of interdisciplinary planetary health research at the broader institution. Interactions between health and the environment are complex and multifactorial. While climate change has been extensively studied from an environmental science perspective, planetary health is an emerging field. As leading health institutions with talented researchers and research resources, institutions should fund research studying the health effects of climate change and anthropogenic environmental toxins. This obligation is particularly strong because the public and policymakers are more attentive to climate change when its implications for human health are emphasised.*

2.1. Are there researchers engaged in planetary health research and healthcare sustainability research at your institution?

Yes, there are faculty members at the **institution** who have a **primary** research focus in planetary health **or** sustainable healthcare/vetcare. (3 points)

Yes, there are individual faculty members at the **institution** who are conducting research **related** to planetary health or healthcare sustainability, OR are part of a national/international sustainability working group, but it is not their primary research focus. (2 points)

There are sustainability researchers at the **institution**, but not specifically associated with healthcare/vetcare. (1 point)

No, there are **no** planetary health and/or sustainability researchers at the **institution** at this time. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

Score explanation:

At Católica Medical School, there are faculty members engaged in research related to planetary health, environmental health, and healthcare sustainability. Several professors who conduct research in areas such as infectious diseases, environmental determinants of health, public health, and related biomedical fields also contribute directly to teaching within the medical curriculum.

Their academic and research expertise informs lectures and case-based discussions, allowing current scientific knowledge on climate change, environmental exposures, and sustainability to be integrated into student learning. While research activity may be organised within broader institutional research centres and departments rather than under a single dedicated planetary health unit, faculty involvement ensures that these themes are supported by active scholarly work.

2.2. Is there a dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research at your institution?

There is **at least one** dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research. (3 points)

There is **not currently** a department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research, but there are **plans** to open one in the next 3 years. (2 points)

There is an **Occupational and Environmental Health department**, but no interdisciplinary department or institute for planetary health research. (1 point)

There is **no** dedicated department or institute. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation:

At Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, there is currently no dedicated department or institute specifically focused on interdisciplinary planetary health research.

2.3. Is there a process by which communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and environmental injustice give input or make decisions about the research agenda at your institution?

Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice have **decision-making power** in the climate + environmental research agenda. (3 points)

Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice **advise** the climate + environmental research agenda. (2 points)

No, but there are **current efforts** to establish a process for community members to advise or make decisions on the research agenda. (1 point)

There is **no** process, and **no** efforts to create such a process. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>There is currently no formal process at Católica Medical School through which communities disproportionately impacted by climate change or environmental injustice provide structured input into the institution's research agenda.</i></p>	

<p>2.4. Does your <u>institution</u> have a planetary health website that centralises ongoing and past research related to health and the environment?</p>	
<p>There is an easy-to-use, adequately comprehensive website that centralises various campus resources related to health and the environment including all of the following: upcoming events, leaders in planetary health at your institution, and relevant funding opportunities. (3 points)</p>	
<p>There is a website that attempts to centralise various campus resources related to health and the environment, but it is hard-to-use, not updated, or not adequately comprehensive. (2 points)</p>	
<p>The institution has an Office of Sustainability website that includes some resources related to health and the environment. (1 point)</p>	
<p>There is no website. (0 points)</p>	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Universidade Catolica Portuguesa has a comprehensive research portal where many research outputs are listed, searchable by topic and linked to Sustainable Development Goals, including environment or health topics.</i></p> <p>Ciência-UCP Universidade Católica Portuguesa</p>	

<p>2.5. Has your <u>institution</u> recently hosted a conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health?</p>	
<p>Yes, the institution has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health in the past year. (4 points)</p>	
<p>Yes, the institution has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past year. (3 points)</p>	
<p>Yes, the institution has hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health / sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past three years. (2 points)</p>	

The institution has not hosted any conferences directly, but they have provided financial support for a local planetary health event. (1 point)	
No, the institution has not hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health in the past three years. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, seminars addressing topics closely related to planetary health and environmental determinants of disease have recently been hosted. These academic sessions have included presentations such as “A Systems-Approach to Unlock the Biological Secrets of Inflammation, Biological Age Acceleration and Disease Risk” and “Behavioral Modulation in Facultative Pathogens: The Case of Vibrio cholerae.”</i></p>	

2.6. Is your <u>institution</u> a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation?	
Yes, the institution is a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation. (1 point)	
No, the institution is not a member of such an organisation. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Católica Medical School is not currently a member of any national or international planetary health or Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH/ESV) organisation.</i></p>	

Section Total (9 out of 17)	52,94%
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Although Católica Medical School does not have a dedicated planetary health research centre, several research groups conduct work that is highly relevant to planetary health and environmental determinants of health.

In particular, multiple laboratories focus on host–pathogen interactions, infectious diseases, and disease ecology, which are central to understanding the health impacts of climate change. Research conducted in areas such as parasite vascular interactions, viral infections and latency, influenza biology, host–microbe interactions, and pathogen population biology contributes to understanding how environmental change influences infectious disease transmission, emergence, and public health risk. Computational and data-driven modelling of host–pathogen systems further strengthens this

connection by integrating environmental and epidemiological variables to inform disease forecasting and prevention strategies.

Additionally, research in systems biology and complex adaptive systems supports planetary health approaches by integrating large-scale biomedical and social data to better understand disease risk in dynamic and changing environments.

Other laboratories focused on vascular biology, gene regulation, genome stability, and developmental biology may also intersect with planetary health through the study of environmental exposures, inflammation, and disease susceptibility, even if not explicitly framed within a sustainability context.

Overall, while not formally organised under a planetary health banner, Católica Medical School hosts several research groups whose work meaningfully aligns with planetary health themes, particularly in infectious disease dynamics, environmental influences on health, and systems-level approaches to disease prevention and public health.

Community Outreach and Advocacy

Section Overview: This section evaluates a school's engagement in community outreach and advocacy efforts associated with planetary health. Researching and teaching planetary health is necessary but not sufficient. It is critical that institutions also directly engage with communities most affected by environmental health harms. Although climate change is a problem largely created by those with power and resources, its impacts fall disproportionately on under-resourced populations and communities of colour. Institutions should partner with local communities affected by climate change and pollution to share information about environmental health threats, advocate together for change, and provide opportunities for students to be a part of this work.

3.1. Does your <u>institution</u> partner with community organisations to promote planetary and health?	
Yes, the institution meaningfully partners with multiple community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health. (3 points)	
Yes, the institution meaningfully partners with one community organisation to promote planetary and environmental health. (2 points)	
The institution does not partner with community organisations, but participates in community focused events relating to planetary health. (1 point)	
No, there is no such meaningful community partnership. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation:	

At Católica Medical School, students engage with community organisations through extracurricular and volunteer initiatives that contribute to health and social wellbeing. The school is involved with an organisation called REFOOD, which works to combat food waste and hunger by collecting surplus food from restaurants, supermarkets, and other establishments, and redistributing it to people in vulnerable social situations. The school has carried out several actions in collaboration with the local community, particularly in Rio de Mouro and Cacém, promoting social support, wellbeing, and community engagement.

3.2. Does your institution offer community-facing courses or events regarding planetary health?

The **institution** offers community-facing courses or events at least once every year. (3 points)

The **institution** offers courses or events open to the community at least once per year, but they are not primarily created for a community audience. (2 points)

The **institution** has promoted community-facing courses or events, but was not involved in planning those courses or events. (1 point)

The **institution** has not offered such community-facing courses or events. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

Score explanation:

Universidade Católica Portuguesa offers community-oriented events and activities that engage the public or broader community on topics connected to planetary health, climate and sustainability (e.g., Sustainability Week, climate conferences).

3.3. Does your institution have regular coverage of issues related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare in university update communications?

Yes, all students **regularly** receive communication updates dedicated to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare. (2 points)

Yes, planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare topics are regularly included in communication updates to **some courses**. (1 point)

Students **do not** receive communications about planetary health or sustainable healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

Universidade Católica Portuguesa demonstrates regular coverage of sustainability-related issues (e.g., environmental sustainability, climate action, health & environment) in its university

communications through news releases, event announcements, and public posts. This indicates an ongoing presence of themes relevant to planetary health in university updates

3.4. Does the institution or main affiliated hospital trust engage in professional education activities targeting individuals post-graduation with the aim of ensuring their knowledge and skills in planetary health and sustainable healthcare remain up to date during their professional career?

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers multiple in-person or online courses relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers, including at least one with a primary focus of planetary health. (2 points)

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers one course relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers. (1 point)

There are **no** such accessible courses for post-graduate providers. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation:

Católica Medical School itself does not currently provide structured post-graduate professional education specifically focused on planetary health or sustainable healthcare.

However, the main affiliated hospital, Hospital da Luz de Lisboa, occasionally promotes educational activities and events that touch on environmental health, sustainability, or related public health themes. These initiatives are periodic rather than part of a formal, longitudinal continuing professional development (CPD) programme dedicated to planetary health.

3.5. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about environmental health exposures?

Yes, the **institution** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)

Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)

No affiliated medical centres have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation:

The main affiliated teaching hospital, Hospital da Luz de Lisboa, provides accessible educational materials for patients, including information related to environmental health exposures. These support patient awareness of environmental risk factors and their impact on health.

3.6. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about the health impacts of climate change?

Yes, the **institution** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)

Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)

No affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation:

The affiliated teaching hospital, Hospital da Luz Lisboa, provides accessible educational materials for patients that include information on the health impacts of climate change. These resources aim to raise awareness about climate-related health risks and support patient education through institutional communication platforms and health promotion materials.

Section Total (10 out of 14)

71,43%

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Support for Student-Led Planetary Health Initiatives

Section Overview: *This section evaluates institutional support for student-led planetary health initiatives, such as funding, fellowships, programming, and student groups. Planetary health is a young field and, as young people facing a future deeply shaped by climate change, students are often some of the first at an institution to engage with it. Institutions should provide support for students to engage in sustainability quality improvement (QI) initiatives, discover mentors in their area of interest, and receive funding for planetary health projects.*

4.1. Does your institution offer support for students interested in enacting a sustainability initiative/QI project?	
Yes, the institution <i>either</i> offers grants for students to enact sustainability initiatives/QI projects <i>or</i> sustainability QI projects are part of the core curriculum. (2 points)	
The institution encourages sustainability QI projects (to fulfil clerkship or longitudinal requirements) and offers resources to help students succeed in these projects, but there is no student funding available and there is no requirement to participate. (1 point)	
No, the institution does not offer opportunities or support for sustainability initiatives or QI projects. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, students interested in developing sustainability initiatives or quality improvement (QI) projects receive institutional support, primarily through collaboration with the Student Union (SU). The institution demonstrates openness and availability to work alongside student-led groups, facilitating the organisation and implementation of initiatives related to sustainability, social responsibility, and health promotion.</i></p> <p><i>While there may not be a formalised sustainability innovation programme, students are able to propose and develop projects with institutional backing and logistical collaboration.</i></p>	

4.2. Does your institution offer opportunities for students to do research related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare?	
The institution has a specific research program or fellowship for students interested in doing planetary health/sustainable healthcare/vetcare research. (2 points)	
There are research opportunities for students to perform research related to planetary health/sustainable healthcare, but these require student initiative to seek them out and carry them out in their spare time. (1 point)	
There are no opportunities for students to engage in planetary health/sustainable healthcare research. (0 points)	

Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>At Católica Medical School, students have the opportunity to conduct research related to planetary health and sustainable healthcare, provided it falls within the broader scope of medical research. In the sixth year, all students complete a mandatory Master's thesis, and they may choose research topics aligned with environmental health, infectious disease dynamics, sustainability, public health, or related themes.</i></p> <p><i>While there is no dedicated planetary health research track, the flexibility of the Master's thesis allows students to pursue projects within this domain when supervised by faculty working in relevant research areas.</i></p>	

<p>4.3. Does the <u>institution</u> have a webpage where students can find specific information related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare activities and mentors within the institution? For example, projects achieved, current initiatives underway at the medical school and/or contact of information of potential mentors.</p>	
<p>The institution has a webpage with specific information related to planetary health or sustainable healthcare/vetcare that includes up-to-date information on relevant initiatives and contact information of potential mentors. (2 points)</p>	
<p>There is an institution webpage that features some information on projects and mentors within planetary health and sustainable healthcare within the institution, but it lacks key information. (1 point)</p>	
<p>There is no institution specific webpage for locating planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare projects or mentors. (0 points)</p>	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Although Universidade Catolica Portuguesa does not currently have a dedicated webpage solely focused on planetary health or sustainable healthcare activities and mentors, the institution does provide an institutional research portal, Ciência-UCP, that students can use to find relevant information on research, projects, and outputs across a broad range of topics, including those aligned with sustainability and environment-health linkages.</i></p>	

<p>4.4. Does your <u>institution</u> have registered student groups dedicated towards fostering a culture of planetary health engagement, scholarship, and advocacy on campus, supported by faculty advisors?</p>	
<p>Yes, there is a student organisation with faculty support at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (2 points)</p>	

Yes, there is a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare but it lacks faculty support . (1 point)	
No, there is not a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Católica Medical School does not currently have registered student groups specifically dedicated to fostering planetary health engagement, scholarship, or advocacy on campus with formal faculty advisor support.</i></p>	

4.5. Is there a student liaison representing sustainability interests who serves on a <u>department or institutional</u> decision-making council to advocate for curriculum reform and/or sustainability best practices?	
Yes, there is a student representative who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council/committee. (1 point)	
No, there is no such student representative. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>There is currently no designated student liaison representing sustainability interests on departmental or institutional decision-making councils at Católica Medical School to advocate specifically for curriculum reform or sustainability best practices.</i></p>	

4.6. In the past year, has the <u>institution</u> had one or more co-curricular planetary health programs or initiatives in the following categories? (1 point each)	Score
Projects where students are able to gain experience in organic agriculture and sustainable food systems, such as gardens, farms, community supported agriculture (CSA), fishery programs, or urban agriculture projects.	0
Panels, speaker series, or similar events related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	1
Events in which students learn directly from members of a local environmental justice community about the climate and environmental challenges they face, and how health professionals can partner with their community to address these exposures and impacts.	0

Cultural arts events, installations or performances related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	0
Local volunteer opportunities related to building community resilience to anthropogenic environmental impacts.	1
Wilderness or outdoors programs (e.g., that organise hiking, backpacking, kayaking, or other outings for students)	1

Score explanation:

1. Organic agriculture and sustainable food systems projects

Universidade Catolica Portuguesa has not offered projects specifically focused on organic agriculture, sustainable food systems, or related initiatives such as gardens, farms, or community-supported agriculture programmes.

2. Panels, speaker series, or similar events related to planetary health (1 point)

Universidade Catolica Portuguesa has hosted seminars and webinars addressing themes relevant to planetary health and environmental determinants of disease. Examples include sessions such as “A Systems-Approach to Unlock the Biological Secrets of Inflammation, Biological Age Acceleration and Disease Risk” and “Behavioral Modulation in Facultative Pathogens: The Case of Vibrio cholerae.” While not always explicitly labelled as planetary health events, these initiatives engage students in discussions closely related to environmental and systemic influences on health.

3. Events featuring local environmental justice communities

There have been no structured events in which students learn directly from members of local environmental justice communities about climate-related or environmental health challenges.

4. Cultural arts events related to planetary health

Universidade Catolica Portuguesa has not organised cultural arts events, installations, or performances specifically centred on planetary health themes.

5. Local volunteer opportunities related to community resilience (1 point)

The Student Union’s Department of Social Action regularly promotes volunteer activities that support community wellbeing and resilience. Initiatives such as Missão País, as well as institutional programmes like the faculty-organised Welcome Weekend, provide students with opportunities to engage directly with communities. These activities, while broader in scope, contribute to social support networks and community resilience.

6. Wilderness or outdoors programmes (1 point)

The Welcome Weekend includes a strong outdoor component aimed at fostering connection with nature and peer engagement. Additionally, the Student Union—particularly through its Department of Sports—organises outdoor activities and recreational events, encouraging student interaction with natural environments and promoting wellbeing through outdoor engagement.

Section Total (6 out of 15)	6
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Campus Sustainability

Section Overview: *This section evaluates the support and engagement in sustainability initiatives by the institution. The healthcare industry is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions as well as pollution that harms local, regional, and global ecosystems. While healthcare is, by nature, a resource-intensive endeavour, the healthcare sector is well poised to lead the world to a more sustainable future. This will involve scrutinising every aspect of how our systems operate, from where we source our energy, to how we build our infrastructure, to what companies we invest in. Our institutions, clinics, and hospitals must set the standard for sustainable practices, and show other sectors what is possible when it comes to minimising environmental impact.*

5.1. Does your <u>institution</u> have an Office of Sustainability?	
Yes, there is an Office of Sustainability with multiple full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability. If the Office of Sustainability serves the entire campus, there is at least one designated staff member for sustainability at the hospital. (3 points)	
There is an Office of Sustainability with one or more full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability, but no specific staff member in charge of hospital sustainability. (2 points)	
There are no salaried sustainability staff , but there is a sustainability task force or committee. (1 point)	
There are no staff members or task force responsible for overseeing campus sustainability. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Universidade Católica Portuguesa has a Sustainability Sub-Commission which is integrated into its internal quality and governance systems. This sub-commission works across units to promote sustainable practices, monitor indicators, and support sustainability strategy and policy development at the institution.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, it maintains a “Católica para a Sustentabilidade” (CASUS) framework, which consolidates sustainability commitments, agendas (e.g., the Agenda para a Sustentabilidade 2021-2025), and activities like Semana da Sustentabilidade across its campuses.</i></p>	

5.2. How ambitious is your <u>institution's</u> plan to reduce its own carbon footprint?
The institution has a written and approved plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 (5 points)
The institution has a written and approved plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 (3 points)
The institution has a stated goal of carbon neutrality by 2040 but has not created a plan to reach that goal or the plan is inadequate (1 point)

The institution does not meet any of the requirements listed above (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Católica Medical School's parent institution has a written and formally approved sustainability strategy that includes the objective of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.</i></p> <p><i>This target reflects alignment with international climate goals and demonstrates a long-term institutional commitment to reducing its carbon footprint, although the specific interim milestones and healthcare-specific emissions strategies may vary across departments.</i></p>	

5.3. Do buildings/infrastructure used by the institution for teaching (not including the hospital) utilize renewable energy?	
Yes, institution buildings are 100% powered by renewable energy. (3 points)	
Institution buildings source >80% of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (2 points)	
Institution buildings source >20% of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (1 point)	
Institution buildings source <20% of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>Most buildings and infrastructure used by Católica Medical School for teaching incorporate renewable energy sources, including the use of solar panels, as part of the university's broader sustainability strategy (CASUS – Católica for Sustainability). Although on-site renewable generation remains limited, efforts have been made to integrate renewable technologies into campus infrastructure.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, at the national level, Portugal's electricity mix includes a substantial share of renewable energy. Approximately 50% or more of the electricity supplied in Portugal comes from renewable sources, including wind, hydroelectric, and solar power. This information can be consulted via EDP's official energy origin disclosure:</i></p> <p>https://www.edp.pt/origem-energia/</p>	

5.4. Are sustainable building practices utilised for new and old buildings on the institution's campus, with design and construction of new buildings and remodelling of old buildings conforming to a published sustainability rating system or building code/guideline?

Yes, sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus and the **majority** of old buildings **have been retrofitted** to be more sustainable. (3 points)

Sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus, but most old buildings have **not been retrofitted**. (2 points)

Sustainable building practices are **inadequately or incompletely** implemented for new buildings. (1 point)

Sustainability is **not considered** in the construction of new buildings. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

Sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus. Recent developments, such as the Campus Veritati project of Universidade Católica Portuguesa, have been designed in accordance with recognised sustainability standards, including projected LEED certification. These standards incorporate criteria such as energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable materials, and overall environmental performance.

5.5. Has the institution implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options for students and reduce the environmental impact of commuting?

Yes, the institution has implemented strategies to encourage and provide **environmentally-friendly transportation options** such as safe active transport, public transport, or carpooling and these options are well-utilised by students. Alternatively, the campus location is not amenable to unsustainable forms of transportation by default. (2 points)

The institution has implemented **some** strategies to provide environmentally-friendly transportation options, but the options are **unsatisfactorily** accessible or advertised. (1 point)

The institution has **not** implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

Universidade Catolica Portuguesa has implemented strategies to encourage and facilitate environmentally friendly transportation options for students. These include promoting the use of public transport and shared mobility solutions.

Notably, the university has established a partnership with BusUp, a corporate bus service provider, which offers organised transport routes that allow students and staff to commute collectively rather

than relying on individual car use. This initiative supports reduced traffic congestion and lower per-capita commuting emissions.

In addition, the campus location is accessible by public transportation, further encouraging students to opt for more sustainable commuting alternatives over private vehicles.

The School of Medicine provides free transit passes to all students and there are bike racks and bike paths available for students. However, it is difficult to access off-campus clinical sites without a car and in the third year and beyond most students drive. Information about environmentally-friendly transportation is also not emphasised in orientation.

5.6. Does your institution have an organics recycling program (compost) and a conventional recycling program (aluminium/paper/plastic/glass)?

Yes, the institution has **both** compost **and** recycling programs accessible to students and faculty. (2 points)

The institution has **either** recycling **or** compost programs accessible to students and faculty, but not both. (1 point)

There is **no** compost or recycling program at the institution. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation:

Católica Medical School has a conventional recycling programme in place, with separate waste streams for materials such as paper, plastic, glass, and aluminium available on campus.

However, the institution does not currently have an organic waste recycling or composting programme. Therefore, while conventional recycling is implemented, organics recycling is not part of the existing waste.

5.7. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about the campus food and beverage selections (e.g. local sourcing, reduced meat, decreased plastic packaging)?

Yes, the institution has **adequate** sustainability requirements for food and beverages, including meat-free days or no red-meat, and **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (3 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (2 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **not** engaged in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (1 point)

There are no sustainability guidelines for food and beverages. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>There are sustainability considerations applied to campus food and beverage services; however, these guidelines are limited and not comprehensively implemented. A key limiting factor is that food provision is outsourced to an external supplier, which constrains the institution's direct control over sourcing policies, packaging standards, and broader sustainability practices.</i></p> <p><i>That said, efforts toward more sustainable options are evident. For example, a vegetarian option is consistently available, promoting reduced meat consumption and supporting lower environmental impact dietary choices. Overall, while sustainability is considered, current measures remain partial and could be further strengthened.</i></p>	

5.8. Does the <u>institution</u> apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about supply procurement?	
Yes, the institution has adequate sustainability requirements for supply procurement and is engaged in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (3 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are insufficient or optional . The institution is engaged in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (2 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are insufficient or optional . The institution is not engaged in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (1 point)	
There are no sustainability guidelines for supply procurement. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>The Universidade Católica Portuguesa has an institutional Purchasing Policy that establishes guidelines, procedures, and principles to be observed by all staff involved in procurement. These include commitments to efficiency, responsibility, transparency, and continuous improvement in the purchasing process, which create a framework conducive to integrating sustainability criteria into procurement decisions across the university. The policy formalises expectations for conduct and process standardisation in a way that aligns with broader institutional sustainability goals.</i> https://www.ucp.pt/sites/default/files/2025-04/Purchasing%20Policy.pdf</p> <p><i>In addition, Portuguese and European policy contexts increasingly emphasise sustainable public procurement as a mechanism for advancing environmental and social outcomes (linked to SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production), and UCP's engagement with these themes in research</i></p>	

and governance supports the gradual incorporation of environmental criteria into procurement.
<https://ciencia.ucp.pt/en/publications/public-procurement-and-sustainable-development/>

Institutional leadership, including the Dean and senior administrators, demonstrates attention to sustainability matters, which supports increased awareness and the gradual integration of environmental and sustainability criteria into purchasing decisions at Católica Medical School.

<https://www.ucp.pt/pt-pt/catolica-para-sustentabilidade>

5.9. Are there sustainability requirements or guidelines for events hosted at the institution?

Every event hosted at the institution **must** abide by sustainability criteria. (2 points)

The institution **strongly recommends or incentivizes** sustainability measures, but they are **not required**. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for institution events. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

Events hosted at Católica Medical School are expected to abide by institutional sustainability criteria. Organisers are encouraged to consider environmental impact in planning decisions, including waste reduction, responsible resource use, and minimising unnecessary materials.

In practice, students and the Student Union (SU) consistently organise events with these sustainability considerations in mind, incorporating environmentally responsible choices into logistics and execution.

5.10. Does your **institution** have programs and initiatives to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable?

Yes, the institution has **programs** and **initiatives** to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable. (2 points)

There are **guidelines** on how to make lab spaces more environmentally sustainable, but not programs or initiatives. (1 point)

There are **no** efforts at the institution to make lab spaces more sustainable. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation:

There are general sustainability guidelines applicable to laboratory spaces at Católica Medical School and a formal document with guidelines exists but its name could not be determined.

Additionally, laboratory users are made aware of best practices regarding resource use, waste segregation, and safe disposal procedures. In addition, posters displayed within laboratory spaces outline sustainability and waste management guidelines. These materials are visible to both researchers and students, including during practical classes, reinforcing awareness of environmentally responsible laboratory practices.

5.11. Does your institution's endowment portfolio investments include fossil-fuel companies?

The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels **and** has made a **commitment to reinvest divested funds** into renewable energy companies or renewable energy campus initiatives. (4 points)

The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels. (3 points)

The institution has **partially divested** from fossil fuel companies **or** has made a **commitment to fully divest**, but **currently** still has fossil fuel investments. (2 points)

The institution has **not divested** from fossil-fuel companies, but faculty and/or students are **conducting organised advocacy** for divestment. (1 point)

Yes, the institution has investments with fossil-fuel companies and there have been **no efforts** to change that. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation:

There is no readily available public information that the institution's endowment portfolio explicitly excludes fossil-fuel companies or has a divestment policy in place.

Section Total (16 out of 32)

50%

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Grading

Section Overview

This section focuses on the grading of the report card. The institution received a grade for each of the individual sections as well as an overall institutional grade. Section point totals were tallied, divided by the total points available for the section, and converted to a percentage. The overall institutional grade is a weighted average of the section grades, with curriculum receiving a higher weight owing to its larger number of metrics. Letter grades for each section and the institution overall were then assigned according to the table below.

Letter Grade*	Percentage
A	80% - 100%
B	60% - 79%
C	40% - 59%
D	20% - 39%
F	0% - 19%

**Within each grade bracket, a score in the top 5% (_5 to _9%), receives a “+”, and a score in the bottom 5% (_0- _4%) receives a “--”. For example, a percentage score of 78% would be a B+.*

Planetary Health Grades for the Catolica Medical School.

The following table presents the individual section grades and overall institutional grade for the Catolica Medical School on this Planetary Health Report Card.

Section	Raw Score %	Letter Grade
Planetary Health Curriculum (30%)	$(47/75) \times 100 = 62,67\%$	B-
Interdisciplinary Research (17.5%)	$(9/17) \times 100 = 52,94\%$	C
Community Outreach and Advocacy (17.5%)	$(10/14) \times 100 = 71,43\%$	B
Support for Student-led Planetary Health Initiatives (17.5%)	$(6/15) \times 100 = 40\%$	C-
Campus Sustainability (17.5%)	$(16/32) \times 100 = 50\%$	C
Institutional Grade	$(62,67 \times 0.3 + 52,94 \times 0.175 + 71,43 \times 0.175 + 40 \times 0.175 + 50 \times 0.175) = 55,31\%$	C+