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The Climate Connection

The Climate Connection is a partnership for Public Health action and learning on climate change. Under the distinguished leadership of public health innovator, Sir Muir Gray, The Climate Connection is tasked with creating a new vision of the role for Public Health in tackling climate change, equipping the profession to take action both on reducing emissions and on preparing for unavoidable climate change.

The initiative was officially launched with Sir Liam Donaldson, Chief Medical Officer, at a national event on 2nd December 2008.

Connecting Climate Change and Public Health

Climate change is the defining challenge to those who have chosen to protect the public health in the twenty-first century, because:

- Health protection demands detailed understanding of climate impacts, and not only in emergency planning. How will the climate affect food and energy security, patterns of disease, and health inequalities? Will the developed world be insulated from conflict over land, water and food elsewhere?
- Climate change mitigation strategies are almost synonymous with health improvement, whether through improved housing, active transport, reduced meat consumption or economic localisation. Can Public Health provide new drive to the urgent efforts on climate change mitigation?

Connecting Individuals and Organisations

The Climate Connection is a diverse and dynamic network through which individuals can share ideas and resources, and can link up to deliver action for climate change. The Climate Connection website (www.theclimateconnection.org) was launched on 2 December 2008 to enable participants to connect to people and projects in other sectors or geographical areas, as well as hosting case studies, slide packs and other tools for individual or group learning.

Connecting Knowledge and Action

The North West and South West are helping to develop and pilot regional workforce development for climate change. A number of approaches are being explored, including: introducing new modules into the Public Health Masters courses; mainstreaming into the regional workforce strategies; finding new ways to bring together Public Health with wider partners; involving the Public Health Observatories in monitoring climate impacts; holding themed CPD events; and beginning focussed work with practitioner groups. Regional pilots will be officially launched in early 2009, and work will be extended to the remaining regions over the following months.

For more information, please contact theclimateconnection@ukpha.org.uk