

## CAM AGM Resolution 2019\_01

**Submitted:** October 4, 2019

**Proposers:** Lisa Sutherland RM ([lsutherland@cw.bc.ca](mailto:lsutherland@cw.bc.ca))

**Supporters:** Tanya Momtazian RM ([tanya.momtazian@gmail.com](mailto:tanya.momtazian@gmail.com)); Lehe Spiegelman RM ([elle.spiegelman@gmail.com](mailto:elle.spiegelman@gmail.com)); Linda Knox RM ([LKnox@cw.bc.ca](mailto:LKnox@cw.bc.ca)); Alyson Jones RM ([alysonbabycatcher@gmail.com](mailto:alysonbabycatcher@gmail.com)); Amelia Doran RM ([amelia\\_doran@me.com](mailto:amelia_doran@me.com)); Luba Butska RM ([lubamidwife@gmail.com](mailto:lubamidwife@gmail.com)); Andrea Dykstra RM ([andreadmidwife@gmail.com](mailto:andreadmidwife@gmail.com)); Willow McConell RM ([midwife.willowstar@gmail.com](mailto:midwife.willowstar@gmail.com)); Estefania Orta RM ([estefaniaorta@gmail.com](mailto:estefaniaorta@gmail.com)); Carlie Sandord RM ([carlie.sanford@gmail.com](mailto:carlie.sanford@gmail.com)); Emma Pitman RM ([pitman.emma@hotmail.com](mailto:pitman.emma@hotmail.com)); Sivan Bar-Sever RM ([sivan.barsever@gmail.com](mailto:sivan.barsever@gmail.com)); Alix Bacon RM ([bacon.alix@gmail.com](mailto:bacon.alix@gmail.com)); Carolyn Saunders RM ([csaund@gmail.com](mailto:csaund@gmail.com)); Zoe Hodgson RM ([zghodgson@gmail.com](mailto:zghodgson@gmail.com)); Christy Drimmel RM ([Christy.drimmel@gmail.com](mailto:Christy.drimmel@gmail.com)); Cathy Ellis RM ([cathy.ellis@ubc.ca](mailto:cathy.ellis@ubc.ca)); Stephanie Dow RM ([stephanie.a.dow@gmail.com](mailto:stephanie.a.dow@gmail.com)); Jeanne Lyons RM ([jeannelyons@shaw.ca](mailto:jeannelyons@shaw.ca)); Amy Brownhill RM ([amybrownhillmidwife@gmail.com](mailto:amybrownhillmidwife@gmail.com)); Chloe Dayman RM ([chloedayman@gmail.com](mailto:chloedayman@gmail.com)); Ruth Comfort RM ([ruthcomfort@gmail.com](mailto:ruthcomfort@gmail.com)); Marijke de Zwager RM ([marijkebabycatcher@gmail.com](mailto:marijkebabycatcher@gmail.com)); Sarah Hilbert-West RM ([Sarah.hilbert.west@gmail.com](mailto:Sarah.hilbert.west@gmail.com)); Cecilia Jevitt RM ([Cecilia.jevitt@ubc.ca](mailto:Cecilia.jevitt@ubc.ca)); Lee Saxell RM ([lsaxell@cw.bc.ca](mailto:lsaxell@cw.bc.ca)); Natalie Johnson RM ([nataliemjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:nataliemjohnson@gmail.com)); Christy Reynolds RM ([christymidwife@gmail.com](mailto:christymidwife@gmail.com)); Lorna McRae RM ([mcr.lornaj@gmail.com](mailto:mcr.lornaj@gmail.com)); Zoe Broersma RM ([zedessbee@gmail.com](mailto:zedessbee@gmail.com)); Marella Falat RM ([marella.dawn@gmail.com](mailto:marella.dawn@gmail.com)); Jules Atkins RM ([jules.atkins@gmail.com](mailto:jules.atkins@gmail.com)); Misty Wasyluk RM ([misty.wasyluk@gmail.com](mailto:misty.wasyluk@gmail.com)); Melanie Dowler RM ([melaniemidwife@gmail.com](mailto:melaniemidwife@gmail.com)); Sara Povey RM ([sepovey@hotmail.com](mailto:sepovey@hotmail.com))

**Subject:** Climate Change and the Role of Midwifery Associations

### Background:

The impacts of climate change have begun and will continue now regardless of mitigation strategies moving forward.<sup>1</sup> In Canada, we have already begun to experience the impacts of climate change including reduced air quality, melting ice, rising waters and extreme weather events.<sup>2</sup>

Climate change threatens the social and environmental determinants of health.<sup>3</sup> The climate crisis is therefore also a public health crisis.<sup>4</sup> At a federal level the health impacts of climate change on Canadians have been considered since at least 2008.<sup>5</sup> The Public Health Agency of Canada has prepared several fact sheets to help Canadians understand the health associated risks of climate change.<sup>6</sup>

Health care providers need to be aware of the health impacts of climate change in order to best meet the needs of the populations that they serve. The possible future health impacts for our midwifery families are varied and

---

<sup>1</sup> The Summary for Policymakers of the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5C (SR15) <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15>

<sup>2</sup> <https://changingclimate.ca/CCCR2019/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.who.int/health-topics/climate-change#tab=tab\\_2](https://www.who.int/health-topics/climate-change#tab=tab_2)

<sup>4</sup> <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/climate-change-is-a-public-health-emergency/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.691579/publication.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/environmental-public-health-climate-change/climate-change-public-health-factsheets.html>

include spontaneous abortion, low birth weight, premature delivery, increased neonatal mortality, food insecurity, vector-borne diseases, and respiratory disease.<sup>7</sup>

Health associations and Colleges around the world have put forward statements and recommendations to their members related to understanding the health impacts of climate change and actions that their members can take to be responsive and better prepared.

Canadian Medical Association: Climate Change and Human Health (2010)<sup>8</sup>

Canadian Pediatric Society: Global Climate Change and Health in Canadian Children (2019)<sup>9</sup>

Canadian Public Health Association: Lancet Countdown 2017 Report: Briefing for Canadian Policymakers (2017)<sup>10</sup>

College of Family Physicians of Canada (2015): CFPC urges global leaders to take action on climate change<sup>11</sup>

American Academy of Family Physicians: Environmental Health and Climate Change (2018)<sup>12</sup>

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: Climate Change and Women's Health (2016)<sup>13</sup>

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation: Policy on Climate Change (2011)<sup>14</sup>

International Confederation of Midwives: Impact of Climate Change (2014)<sup>15</sup>

There are no statements on climate change or policy directives from the Midwifery profession in Canada. However, midwives from around the world are engaged in addressing the impacts of climate change and promoting sustainable strategies.<sup>16</sup> In addition, Midwifery was absent from the recent call to action on climate change and health jointly put out by the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) and the Urban Public Health Network (UPHN).<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Rylander, Charlotta et al. "Climate change and the potential effects on maternal and pregnancy outcomes: an assessment of the most vulnerable--the mother, fetus, and newborn child." *Global health action* vol. 6 19538. 11 Mar. 2013, doi:10.3402/gha.v6i0.19538

<sup>8</sup> <https://policybase.cma.ca/documents/policypdf/PD10-07.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/global-climate-change>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.cpha.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/advocacy/2017\\_lancet\\_canada\\_brief.pdf](https://www.cpha.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/advocacy/2017_lancet_canada_brief.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.cfpc.ca/uploadedFiles/Publications/News\\_Releases/News\\_Items/oldNews/CFPC\\_Statement%20Action\\_on\\_climate\\_change\\_Eng.pdf](https://www.cfpc.ca/uploadedFiles/Publications/News_Releases/News_Items/oldNews/CFPC_Statement%20Action_on_climate_change_Eng.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/climate-pollution.html>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.acog.org/Clinical-Guidance-and-Publications/Position-Statements/Climate-Change-and-Womens-Health>

<sup>14</sup> <http://anmf.org.au/pages/climate-change>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.internationalmidwives.org/assets/files/statement-files/2019/06/impact-of-climate-change-eng-letterhead.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Practice Matters: Midwives Can Lead on Climate Change. Maria McConkey, Climate and Health Alliance. Accessed September 27, 2019

[https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/caha/pages/30/attachments/original/1479081241/Australian\\_Midwifery\\_News\\_Spring\\_2016.pdf?1479081241](https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/caha/pages/30/attachments/original/1479081241/Australian_Midwifery_News_Spring_2016.pdf?1479081241)

<sup>17</sup> <https://cpha.ca/health-professionals-federal-political-parties-action-needed-prevent-catastrophic-climate-change>

**Recommendations:**

Whereas the health of families in Canada is being impacted by climate change and this impact is expected to heighten;

Whereas midwives around the world are playing a role in education and advocacy related to health and climate change;

Whereas other associations both nationally and internationally have produced statements related to the health impacts of climate change and have taken a role in preparing their members to address these impacts;

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT**

The Canadian Association of Midwives commit to exploring both internal and external opportunities to play a role in climate change mitigation and adaption in such areas as organizational best practice; education of members and the public; research on the impacts of climate change on perinatal and newborn health; and political advocacy.

**Expected implications:**

The four pillars of midwifery – Education, Regulation, Association and Research – will need to strengthen their approaches in integrating knowledge, skills and values taking climate change in to account.

---