



World Health Day 2022 – A Message from Sherri Kensall, NNPBC Board Chair

This year, we recognize World Health Day on April 7, 2022, with the theme 'Our planet, our health.' This is an important theme, especially after the past year, as we were reminded of how environmental effects caused by climate change can have a profound impact on our human health.

Here in BC, over the course of 2021, we saw communities across the province afflicted by wildfires, floods, mudslides, bomb cyclones, heat domes and more, and we can only expect many of these extreme weather events to happen once again as our climate continues to change from global warming. These events, while not only disastrous for our physical infrastructure and the natural environment around us, also negatively impact our health. As a result of these extreme occurrences, British Columbians faced displacement from their homes, food insecurity, disruption of access to emergency and health services, and a loss of their livelihoods. Tragically, people lost their lives to heat stress from extreme temperatures, and others were isolated and unable to access health or social services. For many, the stress that such events have caused will continue to affect their mental health into the future. There is no doubt that the climate crisis presents a huge threat to humanity.

Nurses have long understood the connection between planetary health and human health, and it is our job to provide safe, competent, ethical, and evidence-based care, irrespective of the circumstances. Nursing knows that without action, the climate crisis will only worsen and in turn further negatively impact human beings and subsequent generations. It is because of our position as leaders in health care and as advocates for patients and clients, that we have the opportunity to support communities feeling the impacts of climate change, help the health care system adapt so that we may continue to provide exceptional care, and work toward creating a climate-resilient future. I have personally seen [BC's nurses rise to this challenge](#), and I am proud of our profession and its ability to think critically and be nimble in the face of a changing climate.

This year for World Health Day, I encourage you to speak openly with patients, colleagues, and family members about the realities of climate change, consider the ways you can prepare yourself and your local community for climate events, and find opportunities to help implement sustainable practices for a healthier world. Planetary health and human health are interconnected, let's use our collective voices to continue to advocate for changes that we know will build a healthier and more sustainable future.

Sherri Kensall, RN, MSN, C Neph (C), CDE, GNC (C)

NNPBC Resources:

- [Nurses and Climate Change: Actions in a Changing World \(Infographic\)](#)
- [The Role of Nursing in Climate Change: Actions for Nurses in a Changing World \(Guide\)](#)
- [Nurses and Climate Change: Solutions for Action, featuring Raluca Radu, RN, MSN \(Recording\)](#)
- [Nursing and Climate Change: The Impacts on Human Health](#)
- ['Climate Emergency: The Time to Act is Now', by Helen Boyd, RN, MA & Raluca Radu, RN, MSN](#)
- ['Nursing During a Climate Emergency', by Sherri Kensall, RN, CNS, NNPBC Board Chair](#)
- [NNPBC Position Statement: Engaging BC Nurses with Climate Change Issues](#)