

Health and the Environment at UEA

Case Study: new Year 4 SSC



Teaching staff: Stefi Barna, Rob Coleman, Faye Jackson

Number and year of students: 20, Year 4

Duration: 20 hours plus self-directed learning

This new module will introduce three main aspects of the question, 'what does a doctor need to know about the links between human health and the natural environment?' It will also include at least two field-based sessions.

Course content and structure:

Part I: Environmental Impact

Human impacts on the environment can arise from industrial and commercial development, transportation, telecommunications, and domestic household activities. We will take an overview of the EU and UK government methods involved in dealing with environmental impacts and a practical look at how these are managed in practice, including within the NHS.

Part II: Nature and Human Health

There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that contact with nature has a positive effect on our health. At the same time, wild places and wildlife in the UK are increasingly under threat. As human activities degrade habitats and drive species to extinction, are we also damaging human health? This section examines the role of nature in human well-being; from an appreciation of how the planet works and the services nature provides humans with, to how an understanding of ecology provides a sense of place. We will examine the evidence that nature plays an important role in our mental health. Finally we will look at conservation - how wildlife and natural places in the UK can be protected despite mounting pressures from an expanding population, increased development and a changing climate.

Part III: Effects of Climate Change on Healthcare

Climate change is expected to undermine population health, globally and locally, in a number of ways. The NHS is responding in ways that will affect clinical practice and as a health professional you will increasingly be called upon to respond. There are also unparalleled opportunities to harness the public health benefits of a low-carbon society to reduce the burden of chronic, lifestyle-related disease.

Other content related to sustainability/climate change within UEA's curriculum:

1 core lecture on health and environment in Year 1 (primarily on climate change).

Also included in 2 core lectures on global health in Years 1 and 4.

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