



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

AHNA [Position Statement on Planetary Health 4/22/21](#) from AHNA Board of Directors and AHNA Planetary Health Task Force

The American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) is deeply concerned about the health impacts of climate change and global warming. As holistic nurses, we see the adverse impacts of extreme weather events, air and water pollution, and the toxic effects of manufacturing chemicals and plastics on human health. The subsequent accumulation of plastic waste is a risk to the health and wellbeing of the individuals, groups, and communities we serve. Recently, the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) (an international group focusing on the dangers of climate change) concluded that higher-income countries need to take greater responsibility in supporting lower-income nations, which suffer disproportionately from the pollution produced by wealthier nations. Discussions at COP29 focused on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), which is an economic agreement of nations set to replace the original goals outlined by the Paris Agreement on the amount of financial investment of wealthy nations toward those most impacted by climate change.

The promised Global Plastics Treaty (2024) ended without a legal agreement to limit plastic pollution, which fails to prioritize health and justice.

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) has expressed concern for the threat to planetary health that this shortfall imposes, and the AHNA stands on this statement to endorse concerns expressed by the ICN (2024) and implors global leaders to:

1. **Commit to a Binding Global Plastics Treaty**
 - a. Develop enforceable regulations to reduce plastic production and waste.
 - b. Promote the development and adoption of sustainable alternatives to plastic.
2. **Enhance Accountability for Climate Change Mitigation**
 - a. Establish clear, actionable goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
 - b. Ensure that developed nations support low- and middle-income countries in climate adaptation and resilience-building.
3. **Prioritize Public Health in Environmental Policies**
 - a. Address the intersection of environmental degradation and health inequities.
 - b. Foster research and investment in environmentally sustainable healthcare practices.

Nursing's Role in Environmental Advocacy

Holistic nurses are uniquely equipped to bridge the gap between environmental health and patient care. AHNA calls on its members to:

- Educate themselves and their communities about the health impacts of pollution and climate change.
- Advocate for sustainable practices within healthcare settings.
- Partner with organizations and policymakers to advance environmental justice and public health priorities.

By uniting our voices, we can demand stronger commitments from global leaders and contribute to a healthier, more sustainable future.

About AHNA

The American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) is a non-profit specialty nursing professional membership organization that serves as the definitive voice for registered nurses who practice holistic nursing.

Founded in 1981, AHNA's primary mission is to advance holistic nursing through Practice, Community Building, Advocacy, Research and Education. The association is dedicated to the continued development of evidence-based holistic research, self-care methods for nurses and non-pharmacological pain management. AHNA offers networking opportunities to its members along with continuing nursing education through webinars, self-study programs, publications, conferences, and scholarship and grant opportunities.

AHNA currently services more than 5,100 members through 122 local chapters in the U.S. and abroad. Holistic nursing is recognized by the American Nurses Association as an official nursing specialty with a defined scope and standards of practice.

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