

HCWH Global South Newsletter N°7, December 2009 - If you cannot see this email [click here](#) to view it online



HCWH Global South Newsletter N°7 - December 2009 - **Climate Special**

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## Editorial

Dear Friends,

With the world's leaders about to convene in Copenhagen, the health sector is mobilizing to bring the voices of millions of doctors, nurses and public health advocates to the table to call for a just and binding climate treaty.

Our message is simple: **Climate Change Can be Hazardous to Your Health**. conversely, **What's Good for the Climate is Good for Public Health**.

A raft of studies from the Lancet, IPCC, and WHO make it clear that climate change poses myriad threats to human health, some of which are becoming increasingly real—here and now. new research shows that the health sector, especially in industrialized settings, has a significant climate footprint.

The good news is that some of these same studies point out that the health sector can lead by example by reducing its own emissions. What's more, real climate solutions --the overall reduction in greenhouse gas emissions-- will have mutually reinforcing positive impacts on other sources of health problems such as air pollution.

However, as evidence of shrinking glaciers, ever-more severe storms and migrating disease mounts, scientists, policy makers and every day people around the world are increasingly concerned that we are doing too little too late. With the Copenhagen talks riddled by strife and proposed solutions that could actually make things worse, the matter has become more than urgent.

Therefore it is essential that the health sector make its voice heard in Copenhagen and beyond. That's why HCWH and our partners have launched a Prescription for a Healthy Planet campaign that calls on world leaders to Protect Public Health, Reduce Emissions, Promote Clean Energy and Fund Global Solutions. More than 50 organizations representing millions of health professionals from more than 120 countries have endorsed it.

**Today we urge you to endorse the Prescription now by clicking on the link below.** by all means, pass it around to your fellow health professionals.

Enjoy the newsletter!

Josh Karliner

## Global News

### Global Launch of the Prescription for a Healthy Planet



During the climate change talks in Barcelona (Nov 4), HCWH launched the Prescription for a Healthy Planet, a joint initiative with HEAL and the CHC. The Prescription sets out the magnitude of the problem of climate change, highlights the unique role of the public health community and healthcare professionals in addressing it, and provides options to “treat” climate change through policy recommendations.

[>> Visit the Prescription for a Healthy Planet website](#)

### World Governments Move Toward Global Mercury Treaty



On October 23rd world governments took the first significant steps towards a legally binding treaty to control mercury pollution at a United Nations Environmental Program meeting in Bangkok, Thailand.

[>> Read IPEN's press release](#)

## Asia

### India

#### Substituting Mercury-Based Medical Devices in India



HCWH's partner in India, Toxics Link, put together a document that presents the efforts and initiatives taken so far by dozens of hospitals working to substitute mercury-based medical devices.

[>> Read more](#)

### Philippines

#### Philippine Health Care Moves Closer to Full Phase-Out



In celebration of the first anniversary of the government's order to begin phasing-out in all Philippine hospitals, HCWH-Southeast Asia's 4th leg of blood pressure and temperature screening activity using mercury-free devices draws a big crowd in Pasig City, part of metro Manila.

[>> Read More](#)

## Featured News

### Take Action

**Endorse the Prescription For a Healthy Planet!**



Web site:

<http://www.climateandhealthcare.org/sign-up.html>

## US & Europe

### US

#### Health Care Leaders Ask Obama For Strong Climate

Health leaders from across the United States have written President Obama and placed an advertisement in the New York Times calling on him to endorse the Prescription for a Healthy Planet and take a strong stand for a healthy climate in Copenhagen.

[>> Read the letter from health leaders to President Obama](#)

[>> Read the advertisement](#)

## Nepal

### HCWH and HECAF Are Carrying Out an International Technical Collaboration to Help Nepal's Hospitals



The Health Care Foundation of Nepal (HECAF-Nepal) and HCWH are working together to promote sustainable health care waste management in the Himalayan nation.

[>> Read article on The Himalayan Times](#)

[>> Read article on the Kathmandu Post](#)

## Latin America

### Mexico

#### Mexico's Health Secretariat Commits To Withdraw Mercury From Public Hospitals



The Health Secretariat of Mexico City joined the HCWH-WHO Global Initiative to substitute mercury-based medical devices with safer, economically viable alternatives. Mexico is the third mega-city, after Buenos Aires and New Delhi commit to mercury-free health care.

[>> More Information \(in Spanish\)](#)

### Brazil

#### Hospitals of São Paulo Health Public Network Replace Mercury Devices



The City of São Paulo is the first in Brazil to eliminate the use of devices containing mercury in its public hospitals. To date 34 public hospitals/emergency rooms and 85 primary health care centers have been recognized for their elimination of mercury devices. This adds to the more than 100 private hospitals in São Paulo that have already made the switch.

[>> Read more](#)

## Europe

### Mercury Blood Pressure Devices Not Necessary in Clinical Settings

A new European Union report confirms that mercury sphygmomanometers are not necessary in routine clinical practice. The report also finds that mercury-based sphygmomanometers are "not essential" for calibration, but rather only temporarily for validation and ongoing epidemiological studies.

[>> Read the report](#)

[>> Read the HCWH/EEB letter to the European Commissioner](#)

### HCWH Launches the Prescription for a Healthy Planet Campaign in Europe

On October 6, HEAL and HCWH launched the Prescription for a Healthy Planet in Brussels, a campaign to bring the voice of the health sector in the crucial weeks leading up to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change meeting in Copenhagen. The Prescription was handed to European Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou.

[>> Read more](#)

**WARNING:**  
CLIMATE CHANGE MAY BE  
HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH

## HCWH Holds Two Events in Brazil



During October and November, HCWH held two events in the cities of R o ("Elimination of Mercury in the Health Sector") and S o Paulo ("Second Seminar on Healthy Hospitals").

The first one aimed at increasing awareness on the hazards associated with exposure to mercury and strategies to achieve elimination of mercury devices and products. The second one aimed at discussing the role of the healthcare sector in facing global environmental challenges and adopting mitigation strategies.

[>> Read more: "Elimination of Mercury in the Health Sector" \(in Portuguese\)](#)

[>> Read more: "Second Seminar on Healthy Hospitals" \(in Portuguese\)](#)

## News & Events

### HCWH and HEAL Are Organizing a Health Delegation to Copenhagen

HCWH and one of our members in Europe HEAL are organizing a high-level health delegation to the climate talks in Copenhagen.

[>> Read more](#)



## Africa

### Report on Hazardous Chemicals in Consumer Products



HCWH's partner, groundWork, undertook a study to demonstrate that many everyday consumer products which appear inert can potentially contain dangerous chemicals that may cause problems from both, an environmental and health perspective.

[>> Read more](#)

**Health Care Without Harm** is an international coalition of 473 organizations in more than 50 countries, working to transform the healthcare sector so it is no longer a source of harm to people and the environment.

You can visit us in [www.noharm.org](http://www.noharm.org) to find out more about our campaigns

If you no longer wish to receive updates on our work to transform health care sector worldwide, you may send an email with "unsubscribe" in the subject to [globalsouth@hcwh.org](mailto:globalsouth@hcwh.org)