

CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTING HUMAN HEALTH

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Introdução

Climate change has become one of the greatest contemporary emergencies, accompanied by a significant increase in diseases related to environmental factors. The health consequences of climate change will manifest themselves more in terms of an increase or severity of already known problems, such as heart disease, asthma, cancer, and respiratory infections. The UN (2013) warned of the possibility of thousands of people dying from heart attacks and respiratory diseases aggravated by climate issues. Not to mention the silent diseases of mental and behavioral disorders.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

Climate change is emerging as one of the most serious emergencies of our time, accompanied by a significant increase in diseases associated with environmental factors. In this context, questions arise such: do the records of the competent authorities indicate an increase in hospitalizations for diseases and morbidities aggravated by climate change? This study aimed to analyze official data on the growth of these hospitalizations and investigate the perception of this correlation among those involved in the public health system in the Araguaia Region, in the state of Pará.

Fundamentação Teórica

Climate change is the greatest threat to human health in history (Chan, 2015) and negatively affected human health. According to the World Health Organization, climate impacts are already harming health, contributing to human mortality and morbidity due to extreme heat, pressures on mental health (trauma from extreme events and loss of livelihoods), as well as “[...] air pollution, vector-borne diseases, increased hunger and malnutrition [...]” (UN, p. 68, 2023), claiming the lives of approximately 13 million people each year (UN, 2025).

Metodologia

This study involved secondary data collection and fieldwork. Data were obtained from DATASUS Information Technology at the Service of the SUS/SUS Hospital Information System - Brazilian Ministry of Health, delimiting the Araguaia Region, in the State of Pará, and collecting quantitative data on hospitalized patients. To understand the perception of professionals and patients about the relationship between diseases and climate change, interviews were conducted in certain health units with individuals linked to these contexts.

Análise e Discussão dos Resultados

Ministry of Health records revealed a significant increase in cases of mental and behavioral disorders in all age groups, with increases of 300% among children, 963.15% among young people, 563.19% among adults, and 266.66% among the elderly. Neoplasms also increased, especially among adults (129.13%) and children (78.72%). Circulatory system diseases decreased among young people (-75.29%) and adults (-3.22%), but increased among children (98.61%) and the elderly (29.61%). Infectious and parasitic diseases increased, but when hospitalization was not involved, the participants reported.

Considerações Finais

The data collected indicate that the population recognizes the increase in infectious, parasitic, and respiratory diseases; however, it does not establish a relationship between the worsening of mental and behavioral disorders, neoplasms, and digestive system diseases with the effects of high temperatures on food security and the dynamics of daily life.

Referências

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Palavras Chave

Climate change, Human health, Diseases