

IRISH SOCIETY OF COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICINE

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Dr Hafi Saad & Dr Kathleen Harkin
President & Secretary of the ISCPHM
27th April 2026

Dear Ms Anne O'Conner, *Chief Executive Officer of the HSE*, and Ms Jennifer Murnane O'Connor, *Minister of State at the Department of Health with special responsibility for Public Health, Well Being and the National Drugs Strategy*

The Irish Society of Community and Public Health Medicine (ISCPHM) calls on the HSE and the government to urgently address the climate crisis to protect us all and the next generations.

Urgent action is required to address climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. Health depends on clean air, water, and a safe environment. Children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution, which is linked to infant mortality, impaired neurodevelopment, infections, obesity, and childhood cancers.

Healthcare contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, including those associated with travel to and from services, and the use of environmentally harmful materials. While the HSE has committed to net zero carbon by 2050, accelerated progress is now required.

Public Health and Community Medicine place prevention at the centre of care. Environmentally and socially sustainable healthcare must be a national priority. There are clear health gains from reducing pollution and improving air quality. Clean air is also a matter of human rights and equity. The Society supports greener healthcare, the reduction of harmful materials, and measures that protect current and future generations.

The Irish Society of Community and Public Health Medicine asks you to prioritise funding and implementation of the HSE Climate Action Strategy and greener healthcare models (particularly in Public Health and Community Medicine), advance active travel for healthcare workers and patients, and raise these issues at government level as part of an urgent response to the climate crisis.

We would appreciate your leadership on this matter and the opportunity to engage further to support implementation.

Yours Sincerely
Hafi & Kathleen

On behalf of the Irish Society of Community and Public Health Medicine
Dr Hafi Saad, IMC 137804
President

Dr Kathleen Harkin, IMC 013106
Secretary

1. For example, the Born Green Generation: <https://borngreengeneration.org/>