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## Global Trends: Climate Change

Climate change, while known to have severe consequences for the environment, also has the potential to cause detrimental effects on the health of the human population. Despite several governments pledging to keep global warming below 2°C as a part of the Paris Agreement, the earth has already warmed 1.2°C almost six years into the pledge.<sup>1</sup> Without significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, it is expected to reach 1.5°C by 2050, with drastic changes expected to follow in the form of increasing temperatures, more frequent catastrophic weather events, and rising sea levels.<sup>1</sup> These changes pose severe threats to the underlying social determinants of health. The loss of crop availability and damage to clean drinking water systems threatens food security worldwide and puts disadvantaged populations at risk of malnutrition.<sup>1</sup> Rising temperatures increase heat-related mortality and influence the spread of infectious diseases by altering the reproduction rate of pathogens.<sup>1,2</sup> Catastrophic weather events can decimate entire cities and ecosystems, increasing the number of displaced persons worldwide. This combination of factors emphasizes the importance of climate change as a global trend of great concern.

Serious mitigation, prevention, and adaptation efforts are needed to prevent further warming and remedy the damage already caused. Updated and radical climate targets with proper surveillance measures in place are necessary to hold countries that contribute the most emissions and pollution accountable. Investment in preventative care and promoting activities that benefit health and reduce climate impacts are essential. Funding must also be available for vulnerable nations already experiencing the harsh effect of climate change to rebuild after disasters and implement climate adaptation efforts to prevent future harm. Climate change is a complex issue. Without a unified multisectoral approach and significant funding, it is unlikely that these steps will be taken.

## References

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