



SOEH

School of
Environmental
Health



www.soeh.ubc.ca

Outdoor Air Quality and Health and the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)



In partnership with the
UBC Centre for Health &
Environment Research

Funding provided by
Health Canada

Canada

Beginning September 1, 2009, the University of British Columbia School of Environmental Health presents a bilingual, on-demand and online course on outdoor air quality and health and the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI).

Access course link at

http://www.soeh.ubc.ca/Continuing_Education

Why is this course important and is it useful to physicians and health professionals?

Health Canada estimates that 6,000 premature deaths per year in Canada are caused by air pollution. Many common health conditions, such as asthma, COPD, and cardiovascular disease are exacerbated by air pollution. Ambient air quality affects not only individuals with heart and breathing problems but also pregnant women, the very young and the elderly. Rigorous research has shown that individuals are experiencing adverse health effects from air pollution even at exposure levels lower than current standards and guidelines. Physicians and other health professionals can become better informed on the principles and applications of air quality and health effects.

Developed by UBC SOEH in consultation with leading air pollution and health experts who are researchers, physicians and public health professionals, this course provides a comprehensive overview of air pollutants, the health effects of air pollution, and how to advise patients. It also consists of a section that explains how the new AQHI works, how it is different from the AQI, and how it can be used in clinical practice.

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What is the course format?

This web-based course features multimedia content and extensive text content developed in consultation with air pollution and health experts. A discussion forum and “Ask an Expert” enable learners to further explore topics.

What is the course goal?

The course is designed to provide physicians and other health professionals with an understanding of:

- the basics of air pollution including common air pollutants and their sources;
- health effects associated with air pollution, susceptible populations, and mechanisms by which air pollutants exert their effects;
- a general scheme within which health professionals can advise their patients/clients on actions to reduce the adverse impacts of outdoor air pollution on their health;
- the AQHI as a risk communication tool designed to provide advice regarding the short-term impacts of air pollution.

How long does it take to complete the course?

3 to 4 hours (if completed in a single session; multiple sessions are permitted) plus time in an asynchronous discussion forum to discuss case studies and other course content with other learners and a subject matter expert.

This course is available online from September 1, 2009 to August 31, 2011.

Is there a cost to taking the course?

This course is free, made possible by funding support from Health Canada.

Are there continuing education credits?

College of Family Physicians of Canada

This program has been accredited by The College of Family Physicians of Canada for up to 3 Mainpro-M1 credits.

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

This event is an Accredited Group Learning Activity (Section 1) as defined by the Maintenance of Certification program of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. This program has been reviewed and approved by UBC Division of Continuing Professional Development.

CE credits from the following professional organizations are also available.

Canadian Network for Asthma Care

Canadian Nurses Association

College and Association of Respiratory Therapists of Alberta

American Board of Industrial Hygiene

Canadian Registration Board of Occupational Hygienists

Complete list of available continuing education credits at
http://www.soeh.ubc.ca/Continuing_Education