

# Climate Resilience Plan Elements for Healthcare Organizations

In developing climate resilience plans, health systems and other stakeholders may consider the following elements:

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## Element 1: Prospective risk assessment

- Traditionally, risk assessment relies on retrospective data. Consideration of forward-facing climate data as well as cascading risks supports preparation for current and future vulnerabilities.
  - For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention hosts the [Environmental Public Health Tracking Network \(EPHT\)](#) that provides county level indicators on extreme temperature, flood, drought, precipitation, and wildfire smoke. There are multiple indicators available through EPHT for each of these hazards, both historic as well as information from climate projections.
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## Element 2: Health equity and community engagement

- Identification of populations most at-risk from climate-related hazards could incorporate information from:
    - i. Assessment of patients' social and environmental determinants of health in clinical settings
    - ii. Identification of patients with specific medical vulnerabilities to climate-related hazards
    - iii. Community outreach and partnership with community organizations
  - Addressing the needs of at-risk populations can include:
    - i. Outreach to at-risk patients before, during, and after a climate-related disaster or extreme weather event to help educate, prepare, and offer resources to mitigate health risks
    - ii. Partnership with community organizations and community investments to address health-related social and environmental needs
    - iii. Community engagement and input in the development of the healthcare organization's climate resilience plan, and participation by the healthcare organization in community climate resilience efforts
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## Element 3: Assessment and remediation of vulnerabilities in infrastructure and operations

- Infrastructure and operational climate vulnerabilities to be considered can include building(s), land use, energy systems, water sanitation, transportation, supply chains, and health work force.
- Assessment of return on climate resilience investments can take into consideration increasing costs from climate-related hazards, can help prioritize future investments and can inform climate resilience efforts across the health sector.

## **Element 4: Collaboration between healthcare organizations**

- Healthcare delivery in one setting can be affected by stressors in other healthcare settings. For example, demand for acute care is affected by disruptions to a host of other local and regional healthcare services, including primary care centers, pharmacies, long-term care facilities, rehabilitation centers, infusion centers, dialysis centers, community mental and behavioral health centers, and home health services. A collaborative approach to climate resilience planning that acknowledges the interrelationships and interdependencies between diverse healthcare facility types can enhance the resilience of the entire system.
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## **Element 5: Interdisciplinary planning, oversight, and evaluation**

- In addition to disaster preparedness protocols, healthcare climate resilience requires attention to areas such as infrastructure investments, supply chain reliability, and community partnerships.
- Development and implementation of healthcare climate resilience plans should involve diverse disciplines such as emergency planners, healthcare providers, emergency medical services, facility and energy managers, administrators and executives, pharmacy, purchasing, food and nutrition services, information technology, and waste management.
- Evaluation and process improvement can include input from diverse stakeholders, sharing of lessons learned and best practices with peer institutions, and identification of measures of success for assessment during and after disasters.

### **Links to Resources:**

[CDC National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network](#)

[CDC/ATSDR Environmental Justice Index](#)

[CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index](#)

[HHS Sustainable and Climate Resilient Healthcare Facilities Toolkit](#)

[Office of Climate Change and Health Equity \(OCCHE\) Health Sector Resource Hub](#)

[OCCHE Climate and Health Outlook](#)

[WHO Operational Framework for Building Climate Resilient Health Systems](#)