Dear Candidate,

We are writing to you as leaders of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change and its members based in Scotland. The Alliance brings together over 650,000 health professionals working in the NHS in Scotland and across the UK; its 22 member organisations include the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, as well as the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing. Together we advocate for responses to climate change which simultaneously improve health.

We congratulate you on having the commitment and courage to stand for public office and hope that you will make action on climate change a priority. The harms from climate change are already here, and action is needed at every level from the global through to the national and the individual to reduce this harm.

**As health professionals we think it's essential to continue to strive to keep the global increase in temperature to below an increase of 1.5°C on pre-industrial levels.** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that beyond this level it will not be possible to halt the increasing impact of climate change on health, through flooding, heatwaves, food insecurity, the increasing spread of infectious diseases, and other harms.

That is why we call for the following:

- All countries to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions emissions by 2040 with countries with high emissions (including Scotland and the UK) making much bigger cuts than those with low emissions
- Countries with the greatest responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions (mostly high income countries) to transfer funds to countries that are most vulnerable to the impacts of the climate crisis, enabling them to adapt and prepare
- All fossil fuel subsidies to end (while protecting the vulnerable who may be unfairly disadvantaged) coupled with a massive investment in renewable energy and storage, green infrastructure, and green jobs
- All fossil fuel companies to become net-zero by 2040
- All health services to become net-zero as soon as possible and before 2040

In many ways Scotland has led the way in actions to promote environmental and human health. It produces the greatest percentage of its energy through renewables of any UK nation, was among the first countries to declare a ‘climate emergency', and has the most ambitious target date for decarbonising its economy.

We also know that **an overwhelming majority (84%) of Scottish people are concerned about climate change**, according to a recent poll by Ipsos Mori; this figure is higher than in the UK population as a whole, and rises to 96% of Scots aged 16-24.
As with other health threats, climate change will exacerbate existing health inequalities - an issue that the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties in Scotland has highlighted in its manifesto for the 2021 Scottish Parliament election\(^1\). In tackling the climate emergency, we have an opportunity to simultaneously improve the health of the Scottish people and to address these inequalities. Indeed, the primary aim of Climate Assembly Scotland, which has recently published its interim report, is to make recommendations for how the Scottish Government should tackle the climate emergency in an effective and fair way.

**We ask that you support local and national government, the NHS, civil society, and business to take urgent action to avert 1.5°C warming and protect health.**

You can find our [calls to action in full on our website](#), along with our [six principles for a healthy and green recovery](#) and our [proposals for recovery of the health and social care system](#).

We wish you luck in your campaign and hope that you will raise climate change with your fellow candidates and in the Parliament if you are elected.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Richard Smith CBE
FMedSci FRCPE FRCSE
Chair

Prof S Michael Griffin OBE
MD FFSTEd FRCS(Eng)
President

Prof Angela Thomas OBE
FRCPE FRCPATH
Acting President

Prof Jackie Taylor MB ChB FRCP, President

Dr Miles Mack FRCGP, Chair

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\(^1\) Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Facilities in Scotland, 2021. [The Scottish Academy Manifesto 2021](#)