Overview
How worried are you about the fate of our planet? Climate change, wars, toxins in the environment threaten our health and the health of generations to come. Nuclear weapons, the ultimate catastrophe, are still with us. This CME accredited conference will help you learn about the connections between health and the environment and look for potential solutions. We will examine the health effects of human rights violations, climate change, chemical waste, war, energy and resource depletion, economic policies, the 'built environment' and 'greening' of hospitals. Many of these issues have major consequences for basic human health and even survival hence the title: “Prescriptions for Survival”.

Dr. Helen Caldicott, Australian physician, author, Nobel prize nominee and anti-nuclear activist, is one of the keynote speakers. Dr Gil Penalosa of “Walk and Bike for Life” fame will talk on successful cities for all people. The conference also offers panel discussions, small group workshops, public lectures, films, action groups and a chance to network with like-minded people from across Canada and elsewhere. Music and other cultural events will be an integral part of the conference to balance the formal presentations and remind us of the joy and beauty in the world.

The target audience will be doctors, medical students and interested members of the public. Our goal is 150 to 175 attendees with 50 of these being medical students. We have a very ambitious agenda and will need ancillary help and expert guidance in shaping and funding this program.

Objectives and specific outcomes:

1. To offer reliable, unbiased, user-friendly information such that participants can appreciate the interconnections between major issues of environment and militarism and their effects on health.
2. To support medical residents/students/fellows, our future physician leaders, and give them the tools they will need to communicate this knowledge to the broader public.
3. To promote land-use planning and ‘built environments’ that support active, healthy lifestyles and improve community and environmental health.
4. To renew public outrage that nuclear weapons are not only the ultimate weapon of war, but also can cause unfathomable environmental effects. Medical students are planning a “Target X” (http://www.ippnw-students.org/Target/target.html) and soup kitchen campaign to coincide with this conference as a public awareness tool.
5. To reconnect the larger medical community to the fact that nuclear weapons are a public health concern and hence draw attention to ways of nuclear war prevention.
6. To recognize that climate change, sometimes described as a ‘threat multiplier’, is also a public health concern and look at ways of mitigating and adapting to these impacts.
7. To produce, as a result of the conference activities, some ‘prescriptions for survival’ for future use, which will be in the form of a conference report summarizing the key learnings.
8. To inspire and inform doctors and medical students to be more involved in their local communities and in the global village.
Organizers

1. Physicians for Global Survival (PGS): PGS, a charitable organization formed in 1980, is the Canadian affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), which is the only international medical organization dedicated to preventing nuclear war. PGS recognizes that the catastrophic health and environmental consequences of a nuclear war are at the extreme end of a continuum of armed violence that undermines health and security. IPPNW and PGS are committed to studying the root causes of armed conflict from a public health perspective and to educating others. PGS promotes nonviolent means of conflict resolution and social justice in a sustainable world. Through examination of the connections between nuclear weapons and nuclear energy, PGS and IPPNW are now concerned about global energy sustainability and climate change issues. For its work, IPPNW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.

2. Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE): CAPE, formed in 1994, is a group of physicians, allied health care practitioners and citizens committed to a healthy and sustainable environment. CAPE provides opportunities for physicians to meet with other health professionals and with citizens in general to discuss health outcomes associated with environmental change. CAPE has become the voice of the medical profession for addressing environmental health issues in Canada.

3. The Association of Doctors for the Advancement of Physically-active Transportation (ADAPT): In light of increasing rates of chronic disease due to physical inactivity and air pollution, ADAPT is partnered with Nova Scotia's Ecology Action Centre to promote active transportation. ADAPT recognizes that awareness is not enough; 'built environments' that directly encourage walking, cycling and other forms of active transportation are necessary to improve individual, community and environmental health. ADAPT advocates for safe, accessible, well-designed active transportation routes and support facilities. In 2007, ADAPT instigated the creation of Doctors Nova Scotia (DNS) Public Health Section and effected the DNS resolution "Be it resolved that DNS will lobby government to introduce the necessary infrastructure to support Active Transportation and therefore a healthier province”

Scientific Committee
Chair: Dale Dewar, BSc, MD, CCFP (rural Sask, Associate Professor U Sask, past president of PGS)
Mary-Wynne Ashford, BSc, B Ed, MD, PhD (Victoria, BC, past co-president IPPNW 1998-2004)
Warren Bell, MD (Salmon Arm, BC, founding president of CAPE)
Marie-Claude Grégoire, MD MSc FRCPA (Hlfx, Centre for Pediatric Pain Research, I.W.K. ADAPT)
Catherine Cervin, MD (CCFP Halifax, Associate Professor Family Medicine Dalhousie, PGS )
Nancy Covington, BSc MD (Halifax, current PGS president)
Rob Macaulay BSc, MD, FRCPC (Halifax, Professor of Pathology, Dalhousie, PGS)

Program/Steering Committee
Chair: Nancy Covington BSc, MD (Halifax, current PGS president)
Laena Garrison BA (Halifax, ADAPT coordinator at Ecology Action Centre)
Rob Macaulay BSc, MD, FRCPC (Halifax, Professor of Pathology, Dalhousie, PGS)
Allison Scott Butler QC (Canning N.S. Board member of CAPE)
Cathy Cervin MD CCFP (Halifax, Associate Professor Family Medicine Dalhousie, PGS)
Tamara Lorincz MBA/LLB (Halifax, Executive Director NS Environmental Network)
Ron Stewart BA, BSc,MD,DSc, (Halifax, Director, Medical Humanities)

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