Climate change is a public health crisis that amplifies exposure to known carcinogens, leading to increased cases of cancer and other diseases. This clear link is a powerful reason for all oncology nurses concerned with cancer prevention and treatment to be involved in climate change solutions. The purpose of this review is to bring awareness to the consequences climate change has on the incidence and mortality of cancer, how it affects people living with cancer, and how oncology nurses can help mitigate these suboptimal outcomes.

AT A GLANCE

- Effects of climate change have led to increased exposure to air pollution, ultraviolet rays, and environmental toxins; these environmental factors increase the risk of cancer.
- Nurses have a professional responsibility to promote and protect health, which includes considering the environmental impact of practice.
- Oncology nurses play an essential role in educating patients on environmental health, identifying sustainable healthcare practices, and acting as environmental stewards and advocates.

Climate Change

Climate change, the long-term alteration of temperature and typical weather patterns, is brought about by the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. It is irrefutable that these gases largely come from burning fossil fuels (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], n.d.). Climate change is a public health crisis amplifying exposure to known carcinogens, leading to increased cases of cancer and other diseases (Hiatt & Beyeler, 2020). This clear link provides a powerful justification for why all oncology nurses concerned with cancer prevention and treatment should be involved in climate change solutions. This review will shed light on the consequences climate change has on the incidence and mortality of cancer, how it affects people living with cancer, and how oncology nurses can help mitigate these suboptimal outcomes.

KEYWORDS
oncology; nursing; climate change; sustainability; environmental health

DIGITAL OBJECT IDENTIFIER
10.1188/22.CJON.109-113