

Weather Related Health Impacts: A Monroe County Lens

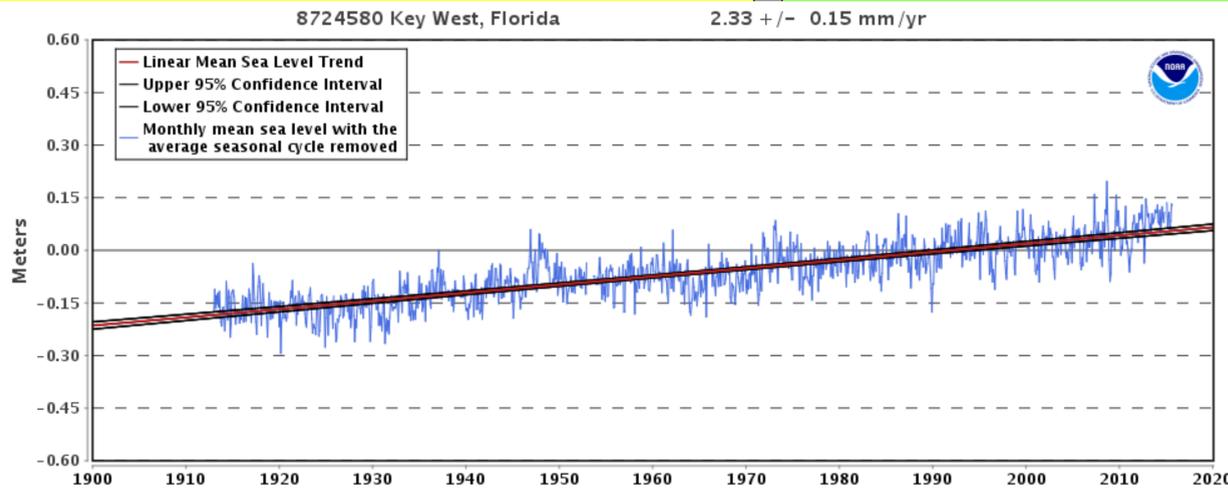


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Public Health
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Climate Science



“a study by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center showed that sea surface temperature hit a 150 year high off the US east coast...during 2012...36 species that were studied were chosen (for monitoring) ...10 of the 36 (fish) stocks had significantly expanded their range while 12 had significantly reduced it. 17 of the stocks moved (into) the increasingly greater depths with time, 3 moved shallower. But the temperature at which each stock was found did not change over time, **suggesting that the fish are moving to remain within their preferred temperature range.** Some of the stocks nearly disappeared from US waters as they moved further offshore” (Congressional Testimony of Margaret Leinen, Ph.D., before the U.S. Senate on July 18, 2013).

Weather Events

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact’s Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) conducted by the Florida Institute for Health Innovation identified the following as hazards of concern for Monroe County:

- extreme events
- floods
- droughts
- rising sea levels
- high temperatures

- Impacts are based on relationships.
- Vulnerability is an intersection of factors.
- Planning and data support resilience.
- Adaptation is a tool.
- Impacts can be direct or indirect.

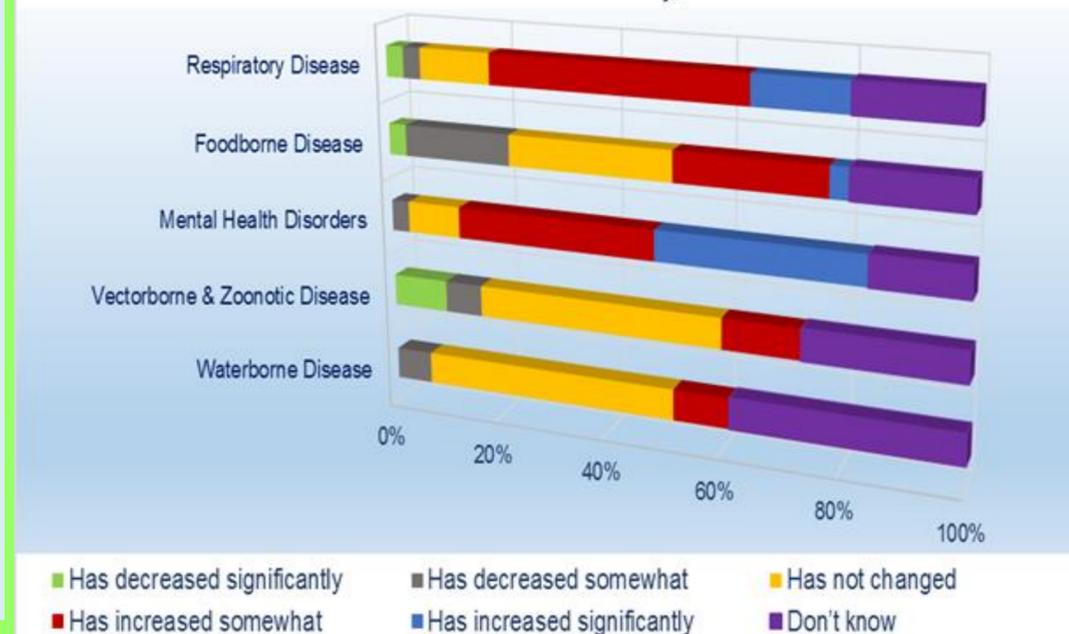
Health Impacts

Findings from the HIA of the RCAP also indicated the following health impacts to be of concern for Monroe County:

- respiratory diseases
- foodborne diseases
- mental health disorders
- vectorborne and zoonotic disease
- waterborne disease

The graph below displays perceptions of practitioners in the Monroe County healthcare community.

Perceptions of the prevalence of health conditions identified for concern in Monroe County, Florida



Adaptations

Primary Recommendations for the Health Care Community

- **Communicate and advocate** with patients through education; including identification of environmental triggers of disease
- **Participate** in the local and regional planning agenda
- **Utilize** Florida Department of Health, Monroe County Emergency Management, and Federal Emergency Management Administration preparedness resources including trainings, templates, and continuity of operations planning tools
- **Identify** baseline health data, monitor conditions, record and report trends, as well as causal relationships
- **Coordinate** across levels from local to federal civically and within the profession(s)
- **Recognize** variability in vulnerability within your patient population and scope of practice.

References:
A Region Responds to a Changing Climate, Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact Counties Regional Climate Action Plan, October 2012.
Congressional Testimony of Margaret Leinen, Ph.D. before the U.S. Senate, July 18, 2013.
Health Impact Assessment of the SEFRCC RCAP, Florida Institute for Health Innovation, 2014.
Monroe County Adaptation Guide for the Healthcare Community, V. Boguszewski, 2015.
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