

# AB026. Perception and role of physicians in the midst of the air quality crisis in Nuevo León, México

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**Background:** Air pollution represents a growing public health problem. Nuevo León, México is experiencing a crisis due to poor air quality, registering in 2022 more than 240 days with pollution exceeding the norm. It is essential to understand the awareness and knowledge that health professionals have about the impact of air pollution on health, as well as their notion on the role they should have in education, prevention, and political agency.

**Methods:** An anonymous survey was designed to explore the perception of physicians regarding the identification of the impact on their clinical experience, their knowledge on the subject, and their position on the responsibility of different agents in addressing the problem.

**Results:** A total of 90% (N=80) of respondents, considered that there is a significant impact on their patients', society's and their own health. In general, there is evidence of incipient or null knowledge about the chronic and non-respiratory repercussions. Most professionals (75%) admit that the pollution problem is serious, but just a minority report giving recommendations or talking to patients about prevention; obstacles for such conversation are also explored. Although a vast majority admit that their professional role is key to the solution (95%), there is little evidence of commitment to act from the professional sphere.

**Conclusions:** Discussion highlights the need for continuing medical education and the strengthening of professional citizenship and responsibility for health professionals to advocate in defense of public health.

**Keywords:** Air pollution; health professionals; public health; health advocacy; professional citizenship

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## Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* Both authors have completed the ICMJE uniform disclosure form (available at <https://jphe.amegroups.com/article/view/10.21037/jphe-2023-apru-ab026/coif>). The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

*Ethical Statement:* The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki (as revised in 2013). This study did not involve any clinical research and the questionnaires were anonymous, thus the Institutional Review Board approval is waived. We covered aspects regarding confidentiality and informed consents were obtained from the participants.

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