

# Preventive Medicine & Public Health

July 16-17, 2018  
London, UK

Bigboy Ngwenya, J Prev Med 2018, Volume 3  
DOI: 10.21767/2572-5483-C1-002

## EMERGING HEAT-RELATED CLIMATE CHANGE INFLUENCES; A PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGE TO HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS AND POLICY MAKERS: INSIGHT FROM BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

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**C**urrent climate trends of extreme temperature and humidity during summer present a public health dilemma in Zimbabwe and other developing countries. National and local governments have defined roles to protect the health of populations under their jurisdictions as stipulated in relevant policies. The involvement of public health practitioners in policy development and management of heat-related illnesses is vital for the protection of the public, particularly vulnerable groups. The current role of health providers in developing countries regarding climate change impacts on health is considered suboptimal. Focus group interviews with public health practitioners and policy makers in the city of Bulawayo in Zimbabwe showed that officials lacked knowledge and awareness regarding heat-related impacts

on health, particularly in relation to differences in individual susceptibility and currently employed heat adaptation and coping mechanisms.

### Biography

Bigboy Ngwenya a PhD candidate completing this June 2018 from Edith Cowan University. My background spans the field of public health, environmental health, occupational health and safety and health promotion. I have done programs and projects in tertiary institutions, Government Departments, local authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations in developing countries and Australia. Current research interests are on climate change impacts - on human health in developing countries.

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