



The mission of Sustain Our Abilities, a 501C3, is to provide education about mitigation and adaptation to climate change, with special attention to health disparities around the world. We emphasize education and participation of rehabilitation professionals and persons with disabilities but believe community can conquer climate change, thus all people are welcomed to join us, especially the youth, who will inherit the earth. We focus on the use of technology and social media, providing free educational events which include gender balanced speakers from developed and developing countries regarding healthcare best practices and through the nature of our programming are using a decreased carbon footprint. We developed an initiative, Day for Tomorrow, to promote community as part of climate change adaptation and mitigation with emphasis on nature and highlighting the health impacts of climate change on persons with and without disabilities. We provide talks about climate change and disability to consumer groups and professional organizations around the world and are dedicated to scholarly work regarding mitigation and adaptation to climate change, especially in the field of rehabilitation and for persons with disabilities. In 2021 SOA advisory board members published a book on telerehabilitation to educate providers regarding this low carbon form of healthcare. In addition, advisory board members initiated and developed position statements in conjunction with the US Association of Academic Physiatrists and the International Society of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Marcalee Alexander, SOA President also serves as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Climate Change and Health.

In 2021, SOA partnered with Project ECHO and in 2023 we will initiate the first project ECHO to provide and study the benefits of consultations regarding persons with spinal cord injuries using the ECHO model in underserved areas in the US and countries in the Western Hemisphere. This will increase access to care and serve to educate providers otherwise unaware of optimal methods to care for this population, while delivering an equitable health care practice and reducing the carbon cost of travel. In 2022 we will also begin development of standardized tools for education of rehabilitation professionals and persons with disabilities regarding climate change and health to empower health workers and learners to better advocate for decarbonizing health care and emphasizing the health and equity benefits of climate actions. We are working to develop an international network of academic rehabilitation centers around the world to study the impact of climate change on persons with specific disabilities along with methods of adaptation. Moreover, we have begun discussions on developing biodegradable supplies for bladder management for persons with disabilities.

Sustain Our Abilities believes collaboration is a crucial part of solving the climate crisis. We are members of the Global Climate and Health Alliance and the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education. We are committed to participation as a Network Organization within the National Academy of Medicine's Climate Collaborative, fully participating in supporting the priority areas and working together to galvanize a movement to address climate change and protect human health, well-being, and equity.