



The status quo of heat health action planning in North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany)

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Abstract: Climate change will have significant impacts on human health. The increasing number and intensity of heat waves are probably the most relevant climate trends in Central Europe at present. In 2020 the German ministers and senators of health on the federal and state level considered developing local heat health action plans within a 5-year period to be necessary (GMK 2020).

Heat health action plans are an effective tool to mitigate negative health effects due to heat extremes. They can incorporate different types of strategies and measures, e.g. 1) risk communication to the population and institutions, 2) management of acute heat events especially for vulnerable populations, and 3) long-term measures to adapt to and protect against heat extremes (Blättner et al. 2021).

However, heat health action plans are a relatively new instrument and have not been established yet. Only few examples have been set up in practice to date. The involved stakeholders learn by doing and by sharing their knowledge. Administrative bodies especially at the local level are asked to prepare for the tasks ahead.

The presentation addresses local and international scientists and practitioners who are interested in heat health action planning. Different approaches to enhance resilience to heat stress and consequently keep people more healthy will be displayed. The input sums up preconditions, fundamentals, comprehensive guidelines and best practice examples of heat health action planning in Germany. In addition, it outlines specific activities by LZG.NRW to support local plans in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

References:

GMK (2020): Beschlüsse der 93. Gesundheitsministerkonferenz am 30.09.2020. URL: <https://www.gmkonline.de/Beschluesse.html>

Blättner, B.; Grewe, H.A.; Janson, D.; Rosin, V.; Jordan, H.A. (2021): Arbeitshilfe zur Entwicklung und Implementierung eines Hitzeaktionsplans für Städte und Kommunen. Fulda