FESTIVAL OPENING SYMPOSIUM

Climate Change is a Health Emergency

A Call for Ireland to Act!

Friday 20 November 2026 **10.00–11.50am**

Stanley Quek Lecture Theatre, Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute, 152 Pearse Street, Dublin 2

Chair · Professor Tony Holohan, Director, UCD One Health Centre

10.00
Chair's welcome
Professor Tony Holohan

10.02
Welcome from the organisers
Professor Colin Doherty, Head of School of Medicine, Trinity College Dublin, and Orlagh Gaynor, Irish Doctors for the Environment

10.08
Leadership and climate justice
Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

10.15
Climate, biodiversity and health in Ireland
Professor Jane Stout, Professor of Ecology and Vice-President for Biodiversity and Climate Action, Trinity

10.20
Heat, health and the gap in protection
Professor Matthew Chersich, Wits Planetary Health Research and Trinity College Dublin

10.30
Why health workers are calling for action
Orlagh Gaynor, Operations Officer, Irish Doctors for the Environment

10.35–10.50
A WHO emergency declaration and Ireland's role at home and abroad
Dr Mike Ryan, former Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies Programme

10.50
Commitments from the floor

Professor Anto O'Regan
President, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

Dr Colm Henry
Chief Clinical Officer, HSE

Professor Gabrielle Colleran
President, Irish Hospital Consultants Association

Dr Velma Harkins
President, Irish College of GPs

Professor Matthew Sadlier
President, Irish Medical Organisation

Sally Corr
SIPTU Health Division

Dr John Cuddihy
HSE Public Health

Róisín Breen
HSE Climate and Sustainability

Dr Sean Owens
GP and former Chair, Climate and Health Alliance

Dr Lorcan Martin
President, College of Psychiatrists of Ireland

11.05 **Open discussion**
Questions from the theatre and online

11.25 **Panel discussion**
What happens after Friday?

11.40 **Closing reflections**
Mary Robinson

11.45 **Chair's close and vote of thanks**
Professor Tony Holohan, Professor Colin Doherty and Orlagh Gaynor

11.50 **Symposium ends**