

Aphekom Second Plenary Meeting in Vienna

Interviews performed by Geoff Davies, external communication expert

Videos from May 6-7, 2009

May 7, 2009

Brian MILLER - IOM - Edinburgh, Scotland
Aphekom expert

Geoff: I'm now talking to Brian Miller of the Institute of Occupational Medicine in Edinburgh, who is also a member of the expert scientific committee of Aphekom, and I'd like to ask you Brian a very simple question,

Why should we care about air pollution?

Brian: Well, that's a simple question but it doesn't really have a simple answer. There are lots of reasons why we should care about air pollution. One is that in a first place it's causing climate change and that should be of concern to everyone. The second is that there's been increasing evidence over the last fifteen to twenty years that it causes health problems, and it contributes to a number of diseases including respiratory diseases, and to mortality rates, to death rates and the data that demonstrates this have been shown in a number of countries all across the world so it's not just one of fluke results, it's a demonstrably real effect and we need to be concerned about it because in the end of the day, air pollution affects everyone, it does not just affect a few people in a particular job, we all breathe the air and the air should be nice and clean so it doesn't have effects on us. And that's what we're all working towards. What's increasingly interesting I think, is that the climate change community and the air pollution community are actually starting to talk to each other as well, so what we're looking at now if we take a policy measure that will improve air quality, what benefits does it have on both the climate and on people's health and I think that can only be a good move because there are one or two little complications scientifically where an improvement in one area may actually not be good for another area. So the more that we integrate these thoughts the better.

Geoff: Brian, thank you for your comments.