Special session proposal

Transport, Heath and Socio-territorial Disparities

Mohamed Mouloud Haddak (IFSTTAR-UCBL), Camille Payre (EIFER), Corinne Praznoczy (ONAPS)

The objective of this session is to address the effects on health of nuisances due to transport (road, rail and air) whether it is chemical or noise pollution, road traffic injuries or other nuisances (traffic congestion, landscape degradation, vibrations, etc.).

Recent studies have suggested that more deprived people tend to live in areas characterised by higher levels of environmental pollution. If generally true, these environmental inequities may combine to cause adverse effects on health and exacerbate problems of confounding in epidemiological studies. Previous studies of environmental inequity have nevertheless indicated considerable complexity in the associations involved, which merit further investigation using more detailed data and more advanced analytical methods [Briggs D et al., 2008].

Some studies investigated various ways that transportation policy and planning decisions affect public health and better ways to incorporate public health objectives into transport planning. Conventional planning tends to consider some public health impacts, such as crash risk and pollution emissions measured per vehicle-kilometre, but generally ignores health problems resulting from less active transport (reduced walking and cycling activity) and the additional crashes and pollution caused by increased vehicle mileage. As a result, transport agencies tend to undervalue strategies that increase transport system diversity and reduce vehicle travel [Litman T, 2013].

For example, policies to increase the acceptability, appeal, and safety of active urban travel, and discourage travel in private motor vehicles would provide larger health benefits than would policies that focus solely on lower-emission motor vehicles [Woodcock J. et al., 2009].

This session is open to contributions that help transport authorities better assess the impact of transport on health or reduce negative impacts in urban, sub-urban or rural areas. Contributions aimed at identifying the areas most exposed to the various nuisances due to transport or proposing strategies for preventing or reducing these nuisances are encouraged. This session is also open to studies aimed at measuring the overall environmental impacts of transportation (road, rail and air) and their cumulative or combined effects on health.

References

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