



NATIONAL HEALTH AND CLIMATE STRATEGY

Detailed submission form

This form allows you to provide responses to the full set of questions in the Consultation Paper available [here](#).

Alternatively, you may wish to complete the briefer online survey available [here](#).

Please submit this form in Word format to Health.Climate.Consultation@health.gov.au.

Respondent details

What is your name?
Dr Melissa Sweet, Editor-in-Chief Jennifer Doggett, Secretary of CHM members and a Croakey Editor
What is your email address?
melissa@croakey.org jcdoggett@outlook.com
What is your organisation?
Croakey Health Media
Have you read and agreed to the Privacy Statement ? (NB we will not be able to use your submission unless you tick this box)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I have read and agreed to the Privacy Statement
Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander? (Yes/No/Prefer not to say)
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
Please select which applies to you: None of the below provides an appropriate category. Further, the categories on offer present a narrow range of options that fails to recognise the breadth of organisations and expertise that could contribute to this consultation.
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual citizen <input type="checkbox"/> Health Service Provider <input type="checkbox"/> Industry and Life Sciences Organisation or Representative <input type="checkbox"/> Academic or Researcher <input type="checkbox"/> Primary and/or Allied Health Peak or Advocacy Organisation or Representative <input type="checkbox"/> Aged Care Service Provider <input type="checkbox"/> First Nations Health Service Provider <input type="checkbox"/> First Nations Community Group <input type="checkbox"/> First Nations Peak or Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> Medical College or Peak professional body

Questions for feedback from the Consultation Paper

Introduction

1. How could these objectives be improved to better support the vision of the Strategy?

The four objectives suggested for the strategy omit an important objective, which is central for achieving all other objectives: informed and engaged communities.

Objective 5: Informed and engaged communities

Communities need to be informed and engaged in mitigation and adaptation efforts, and especially in relation to their health and wellbeing. When communities are informed and engaged, policy development and implementation is more likely to be relevant, equitable, effective and useful. This is particularly relevant for health and aged care services and providers that are trying to engage with climate mitigation and adaptation. The news and information ecosystem currently does not support communities to be informed about and engaged with climate mitigation and adaptation. The prevalence of climate misinformation and disinformation, the dominance of corporate interests with a vested interest in undermining climate literacy and climate action (including fossil fuel companies and corporate media organisations such as News Corp), the power of digital platforms such as Meta and Google (which are major vectors of climate misinformation and disinformation) and a weakening of the public interest journalism sector (leaving many communities without access to reliable local news) all have contributed to harmful delays in the implementation of effective climate action. As a result of these delays, communities will increasingly bear the burden of climate disruption affecting wide-ranging determinants of health, including access to food, housing, and safe living conditions. Communities will have less capacity for responding to the increasing intensity and prevalence of extreme weather events if they are not supported by reliable, relevant and safe news and information systems.

2. How could these principles be improved to better inform the objectives of the Strategy?

The six proposed principles all are relevant for the proposed additional objective.

1. **First Nations leadership.** This principle is also important for developing and supporting reliable, relevant and safe information and news systems. We note also

the leadership of the Koori Mail newspaper in supporting communities in the aftermath of flooding in 2022.

2. **Tackling health inequities.** Privileging the voices, knowledge and experiences of those most likely to experience adverse outcomes from climate disruption is foundational to preventing and addressing health inequities. Equitable access to reliable, relevant and safe information and news systems supports this principle.
3. **Population health and prevention.** This means ensuring communities have reliable, relevant news and information for preventing and addressing health concerns during an era of escalating climate disruption.
4. **One Health.** The dominant understanding of health in the community is very individualistic. It does not generally encompass planetary health or One Health concepts. Again, this illustrates the importance of ensuring communities have access to reliable, relevant news and information so they are empowered to contribute to mitigation and adaptation within these more holistic concepts.
5. **Evidence-informed policy making.** Governments are often reluctant to implement evidence-informed policies, especially in the areas of climate mitigation and adaptation, if they do not perceive strong community support for such policies. This underscores the importance of ensuring reliable, relevant and safe news and information systems that will help inform and engage communities in supportive, effective, equitable policies.
6. **Partnership-based working across all levels of government and beyond.** This principle underscores the importance of collaboration across sectors, silos and jurisdictions. Reliable, relevant and safe news and information systems are vital to enable this way of working, by sharing news and connections and helping to break down traditional silos and vested interests seeking to maintain the status quo and oppose climate action.

3. Which of the various types of greenhouse gas emissions discussed above should be in scope of the Strategy's emission reduction efforts?

4. What existing First Nations policies, initiatives, expertise, knowledge and practices should the Strategy align with or draw upon to address climate change and protect First Nations country, culture and wellbeing?

5. What types of governance forums should be utilised to facilitate co-design of the Strategy with First Nations people to ensure First Nations voices, decision-making and leadership are embedded in the Strategy?

Proposed Objective 1: Measurement

6. Beyond the schemes already noted above, is your organisation involved in any existing or planned initiatives to measure and report on health system emissions and/or energy use in Australia?

7. What additional data and information is required to support targeted emissions reduction efforts within health and aged care?

Proposed Objective 2: Mitigation

8. What do you think of these proposed focus areas for emissions reduction? Should anything else be included?
9. Which specific action areas should be considered relating to the built environment and facilities (including energy and water) , over and above any existing policies or initiatives in this area?
10. Which specific action areas should be considered relating to travel and transport , over and above any existing policies or initiatives in this area?
11. Which specific action areas should be considered relating to supply chain , over and above any existing policies or initiatives in this area?
12. Which specific action areas should be considered relating to medicines and gases , over and above any existing policies or initiatives in this area?
13. Which specific action areas should be considered relating to waste , over and above any existing policies or initiatives in this area?
14. Which specific action areas should be considered relating to prevention and optimising models of care , over and above any existing policies or initiatives in this area?

15. What can be done to involve private providers within the health system in the Strategy's emissions reduction efforts?

16. Where should the Strategy prioritise its emissions reduction efforts?

- a. How should the Strategy strike a balance between prioritising emissions reduction areas over which the health system has the most direct control and prioritising the areas where emissions are highest, even if it is harder to reduce emissions in these areas?
- b. Which of the six sources of emissions discussed above (on pages 13 to 18 of the Consultation Paper) are the highest priorities for action?

17. What 'quick wins' in relation to emissions reduction should be prioritised for delivery in the twelve months following publication of the Strategy?

Proposed Objective 3: Adaptation

18. What health impacts, risks and vulnerabilities should be prioritised for adaptation action through the Strategy? What process or methodology should be adopted to prioritise impacts, risks and vulnerabilities for adaptation action?

19. Should the Australian government develop a National Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment and National Health Adaptation Plan? If yes:

- a. What are the key considerations in developing a methodology?
- b. How should their development draw on work already undertaken, for example at the state and territory level, or internationally?
- c. What are the key areas where a national approach will support local/jurisdictional vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning?

20. Would there be value in the Australian government promoting a nationally consistent approach to vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning for the health system specifically, for instance by issuing guidance and associated implementation support tools for states, territories and local health systems? If yes, what topics should be covered to promote a nationally consistent approach? What examples of existing guidance (either from states/territories or internationally) should be drawn from?

21. What immediate high-priority health system adaptation actions are required in the next 12 to 24 months?

Proposed Objective 4: Health in All Policies

22. What are the key areas in which a Health in All Policies approach might assist in addressing the health and wellbeing impacts of climate change and reducing emissions?

A whole-of-government approach is required to enable policies that support development of a news and information ecosystem that is reliable, relevant and safe for communities engaging with climate mitigation and adaptation.

It requires policies to tackle misinformation, disinformation, racism, and polarisation, as well as the market dominance of digital platforms such as Meta and Google. It also requires policies that support social cohesion, equity, digital inclusion, media literacy, health literacy and climate literacy. It means developing media policies that support a more diverse and sustainable news and information ecosystem, including through the development of philanthropy and reforms to support the growth and development of not for profit media organisations. It also involves concerted efforts to tackle the problem of 'news deserts' – communities (whether geographic or other forms) that currently do not have access to reliable, local news and information. Many more communities are under-served in this respect; they may have a local newspaper or a local Facebook group, for example, but these news and information sources are under-resourced and ill-equipped to cope with communities' needs for reliable news and information during an era of escalating climate disruption.

23. What are the most effective ways to facilitate collaboration and partnerships between stakeholders to maximise the synergies between climate policy and public health policy? What are some successful examples of collaboration in this area?

Enablers

24. How could these enablers be improved to better inform the objectives of the Strategy?
Should any enablers be added or removed?

Communications is critically important. However, this should be understood as a structural issue, rather than as being about having a 'communications strategy'. Developing a reliable, relevant and safe news and information system requires structural change and a whole-of-government effort as outlined in previous sections.

25. For each of these enablers:

- a. What is currently working well?
- b. What actions should the Strategy consider to support delivery?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey – your feedback is greatly appreciated!

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