



National Health and Climate Strategy

Consultation is open until 24 July 2023

Why?

Australians are already experiencing the impacts of climate change on health and wellbeing. The Australian health system (encompassing both health and aged care) needs to be resilient to both prepare for, and be ready to respond to, stresses and shocks from climate change, while continuing to provide quality services to the community.

The health system is also a contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. In 2022, the Australian Government committed to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions by **43%** below 2005 levels by 2030 and achieve **net zero emissions** by 2050. This creates an opportunity for the health system to contribute to this target.

How & What?



The Australian Government is developing Australia's first National Health and Climate Strategy, in recognition of the urgent need to mitigate health system emissions and support the health system and the community be better prepared for and resilient to the health impacts of climate change.

The Strategy will align with the Government's broader climate mitigation and adaptation policies and take account of work already underway.

OBJECTIVES:

01

Proposed Objective 1 -

Measurement: Measure and report on health system greenhouse gas emissions, so progress in reducing emissions can be tracked and quantified.

02

Proposed Objective 2 - **Mitigation:**

Accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the health system.

03

Proposed Objective 3 - **Adaptation:**

Strengthen the resilience of the health system and communities to anticipate and respond to the health impacts of climate change.

04

Proposed Objective 4 - **Health in All**

Policies: Maximise the synergies between good climate policy and public health policy by working across policy areas to lessen the impact of climate change on the social and cultural determinants of health and wellbeing.

It is proposed our pursuit of the objectives are informed by the following principles:

PRINCIPLES:

01

First Nations leadership: First Nations knowledge and experience must be central to decision-making on climate and health policy.

04

One Health: Responses to climate change must recognise the connection between the health of people, animals and the environment.

02

Tackling health inequities: Responses to climate change need to take account of disparities in health outcomes – some populations are more vulnerable to and have less capacity to adapt to, the health impacts of climate change.

05

Evidence-informed policymaking: Responses to climate change must be based on the best available data, evidence and research – but we must also be willing to take action on a prudent and precautionary basis in the face of uncertainty and incomplete information.

03

Population health and prevention: Responses to climate change must be underpinned by a public health perspective, recognising the prevention of disease and the maintenance of good health assists both mitigation and adaptation.

06

Partnership-based working across all levels of government and beyond: All levels of government need to work closely with each other as well as with a broad range of stakeholders and implement a holistic and nationally consistent response to climate change.

Enablers provide the foundation for action in the health system to tackle climate change.



1. Workforce, leadership and training - Supporting and engaging the health and aged care workforce to further develop relevant skills and capacity to tackle climate change, and support patients and communities to do the same.



4. Collaboration - Establishing governance structures to facilitate stakeholder collaboration will build ownership and facilitate effective partnerships.



2. Research - Investing in and supporting coordinated climate and health research will improve the evidence base.



5. Monitoring and reporting - The health system response to climate change must be measured and tracked to drive action, inform future decisions and hold all stakeholders accountable.



3. Communication and engagement - Effectively communicating and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders will ensure actions are widely understood.