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**Media release**

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## **Coal and gas harming health and driving climate change: health experts**

Public health and environmental health experts share their concerns about the health impacts of coal and gas in a new short film released by the Climate and Health Alliance and Public Health Association of Australia today.

***The Human Cost of Power*** features new interviews with four health and medical experts on the impacts of the coal and unconventional gas industries on human health and wellbeing.

These industries are undergoing a massive and rapid expansion in Australia and health experts warn the implications for the health of communities and climate change are not being taken into account.

Serious health concerns are highlighted in relation to pollutants associated with coal mining, coal fired power and exploration and mining of unconventional gas.

Experts such as Associate Professor Linda Selvey from Curtin University said: "Pollution produced from coal mining and combustion in Australia poses a threat to respiratory and cardiac health - with pollutants drawn deep into the lungs and into the bloodstream where they can lead to cancer and heart attacks."

Dr Mariann Lloyd-Smith from the National Toxics Network said there were health concerns such as respiratory and neurological symptoms in a number of communities in proximity to unconventional gas exploration which were not being properly investigated: "These are serious symptoms and are not to be dismissed."

GP Dr George Crisp said if Australia developed its remaining coal and gas resources it would push the world past safe climate limits: "Any efforts to wind back climate action in Australia is misguided - we need to transition away from fossil fuels to renewable energy, and that means leaving coal and gas in the ground."

Associate Professor Ruth Colagiuri from the University of Sydney said there was insufficient research on health and social harms from coal and gas in Australia. "We simply don't have the evidence here. We don't know what it's doing to our communities, so we can't make sensible policy decisions. We need to know what is happening here before these industries expand any further."

A [preview screening](#) of ***The Human Cost of Power*** will be held in the Laby Theatre, University of Melbourne at 6.00pm tonight.

A **short version of the film** is available via this link: <http://youtu.be/9eDTv5Q-zFQ>

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