



CLIMATE AND  
HEALTH  
ALLIANCE

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**25 July 2011**

**Abbott is wrong: the carbon price is a public health measure**

The national coalition of health groups, the Climate and Health Alliance, has said comments by the opposition leader Tony Abbott printed today in the Murdoch paper, *The Australian*, that the carbon tax will be bad for health were misleading and wrong.

CAHA Convenor Fiona Armstrong said the health effects of climate change would have a far greater detrimental impact on the health of Australians than the carbon price.

“Mr Abbott’s suggestions that the carbon price will affect chemist opening hours and negatively affect health is a spurious connection which does not appear to have any foundation and it completely ignores the fact that many people with chronic illnesses who are dependent on medications are the most vulnerable to the effects of heatwaves, which are more frequent and more severe from climate change.”

The Climate and Health Alliance urges the Opposition leader to stop his campaign against the carbon tax for the sake of Australians’ health.

“Medical and health professionals around the world are calling for urgent action to reduce emissions to protect and promote public health. Continued delay in reducing emissions puts more lives at risk.”

“We urge the Opposition leader to move beyond his destructive tactics in opposing the policy as proposed by the federal government as it represents an important public health measure.”

“Climate change represents a significant threat to public health, and the adverse health effects from climate change will eclipse every other risk to health if we fail to take effective action to cut emissions,” Ms Armstrong said.

The costs of reducing emissions were very modest now compared to what would be much higher costs with every year that we delay action, Ms Armstrong said.

There were also many health benefits possible from effective action on climate change, according to the Climate and Health Alliance.

“Not only will we reduce the adverse health effects from climate change, but we can realise other important benefits to health, such as reducing respiratory and cardiovascular disease, by shifting to clean renewable energy generation systems,” Ms Armstrong said.

CAHA members include: Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW); Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM); Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS); Australian Hospitals and Healthcare Association (AHHA); Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA); Australian Institute of Health Innovation (AIHI); Australian Women’s Health Network (AWHN); Australian Nursing Federation (ANF); Australian Psychological Society; Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN); CRANAplus; Doctors for the Environment Australia (DEA); Doctors Reform Society; Friends of CAHA; Health Consumers’ Network (Qld); Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA); Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP); North Yarra Community Health (NYCH); Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH); Women’s Health in the North; World Vision.

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