



CLIMATE AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

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Medibank divestment from fossil fuels a win for people's health

As a coalition of groups committed to better health and a safer climate, the Climate and Health Alliance has welcomed the decision by Medibank to divest from fossil fuels.

“The decision by Medibank to limit its exposure to assets that contribute to global warming is an important acknowledgement of the harmful impacts of climate change on people's health and well-being,” said Climate and Health Alliance Executive Director, Fiona Armstrong.

“Fossil fuel divestment is an important public health intervention, so it's very positive to see Medibank joining other health insurers in shifting investments away from industries that pose a health hazard.”

Climate change is already contributing to loss of life and livelihoods around the globe, exposing millions of people to potentially deadly heatwaves, placing over 400 million people at risk of undernutrition, leading to economic losses from climate related events of US\$129 billion in 2016.¹

“It's too rare we see an industry leader acknowledging the science of climate change and it's impacts on human health, so we thank Medibank's chairwoman Elizabeth Alexander as she announces their decision to divest from fossil fuels on health grounds,” Ms Armstrong said.

The Climate and Health Alliance, together with Doctors for the Environment Australia, has highlighted the important role of all health professionals and health organisations in divesting from fossil fuels in their recent report, [Investing in Health](#).

CAHA and DEA encourage all those in the health sector, including health superannuation funds, to screen out fossil fuels from their investment portfolios, and shift their investments to industries that promote health while tackling climate change, such as renewable energy, in order to promote industries that protect – rather than harm – the public's health.

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¹ Watts, N. et al. The *Lancet* Countdown on health and climate change: from 25 years of inaction to a global transformation for public health, *The Lancet*, 2017. Available at: [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)32464-9/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)32464-9/fulltext)