



CAMPAIGN BRIEF

CLIMATE HEALTH CHAMPIONS

***Our Climate Our Health* is a campaign for a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being for Australia.**

Our goals are:

- to scale up capacity within the health sector to respond to the challenges of climate change to human health and well-being;
- to secure the development and implementation of comprehensive National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being for Australia.

Why we need a National Strategy

While climate change poses a substantial risk to human health, there is strong evidence to show that actions to address it would be tremendously beneficial for human health and reduce health costs.

Australia has no national policy to respond to the health risks of climate change.

Australia lags behind comparable countries in its response to the health risks of the climate crisis. In the absence of government action, CAHA has led the development of a [Framework for a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being.](#)

A National Strategy will:

- help Australia meet its international obligations under the Paris agreement;
- provide a comprehensive approach to addressing the health risks of climate change;
- ensure policies to reduce emissions also reduce risks to health;
- maximise co-benefits for health and well-being, and support climate resilience in the health sector.

The progress we've made

We have secured the support of many of Australia's leading healthcare stakeholders. The Greens support the framework for a National Strategy and the [Australian Labor Party has declared that they will implement a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being](#) based on our framework if elected to government.

We also secured commitments from key Independents Zali Steggall, Helen Haines, and Andrew Wilkie to support and advocate for the development of a National Strategy.

On the policy implementation front, local governments in Victoria are drawing on the framework to develop their own health and wellbeing plans.

This work is also influencing state government policy, with the 2018 Human Health and Wellbeing Climate Change Adaptation Plan (H-CAP) for Qld drawing on this Framework.

Why we need Climate Health Champions

We believe health professionals have a responsibility, but also a tremendous opportunity, to act on the climate crisis. Health professionals are uniquely placed to talk about climate and health. You are among the most trusted professions and can speak on health issues with authority. And climate change is a health issue.

The more health professionals who advocate on climate, health and well-being to their colleagues, parliamentarians and people of influence, the harder it is for governments to resist.

Support

We need to demonstrate the strong and broad consensus in support of a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being that exists in the health sector in Australia if we are to achieve our policy goal. In order to do that, we need a strong network of Climate-Health Champions to be effective.

The Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) provides training for Climate-Health Champions, and our Campaign Organiser can provide some support and advice to assist Climate-Health Champions be effective in this role. CAHA's Campaigns and Programs Manager provides guidance on program development and support.

CAHA staff can:

- guide you to useful information and resources
- provide advice on the best approach to take when meeting your MP or discussing the issue at work
- help find others in your area who want to be involved

In addition, regular web-based teleconferences and webinars are available to provide ongoing networking and skills and knowledge development which, as Climate Health Champions, you are able to attend.

Support through a network of peers:

We are most effective and powerful when we work together. We are encouraging the establishment of local hubs of Climate-Health Champions to bring shared experiences, skills and knowledge to the group.

With regular check-ins with your Campaign Organiser and a wealth of combined experience from participants, this is a useful way to build a network of allies and further develop skills and knowledge.

Resources

At present you can find a wealth of online resources at www.ourclimate-ourhealth.org.au to assist your advocacy. The [Advocacy Toolkit](#) guides you through the process of meeting your Member of Parliament from start to finish, including templates for emails. The website also contains a downloadable [Pledge for your MP](#) to sign, posters for your workplace, background papers and reports – see 'Resources' tab.

We can also provide **PowerPoint presentations** for you to share information about the campaign in your workplace / with your colleagues.

Actions you can take straight away

Write to the Federal Health Minister

We have a handy postcard to write to the Federal Health Minister asking to make a national strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being a priority.

[Email your MP](#) – and encourage others to!

Let your Member of Parliament know this is an issue of concern to you. Our online email tool allows any person in Australia to directly email. It even supplies a message template and CC's the Federal Health Minister.

Meet your local MP

One of the most effective actions you can take is to visit your local Member of Parliament and urge them to support a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being. The Workshop includes a session to build confidence to do this and the Toolkit provides further guidance.

By taking actions that elevate awareness of the need for a national strategy, you help to make the message that climate change is a health issue more difficult to oppose and impossible to ignore.

If you have ideas for resources not currently available, or have any questions about this information, contact the *Our Climate, Our Health Campaign Team* at campaigns@caha.org.au