

The role of public health professionals in advocating for policy change: a case study

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An outline for the workshop -

- **Why Climate Change and Health?**

- Rationale/Platform from Paris (*why climate change is a health issue*)
- The Policy Gap (*why it remains as an issue*)
- The role of health communication/ messaging in filling that gap (*Why a health lens is critical to protecting us from climate change*)
- The role of health professionals as advocates (*Why we need to be telling this story*)

- **The National Strategy for Climate, Health and Well-being**

- Results from a survey of healthcare stakeholders regarding a NSCHW (*Support for, and what healthcare practitioners see as solutions/challenges*)
- Key steps in campaign (*How we're going about pulling this all together*)

- **Tools for developing climate advocacy campaigns in other settings**

- Setting the scene for other National Campaigns for Climate, Health and Wellbeing – Power Mapping exercise



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Climate and Health – why it matters

“The evidence is overwhelming:
climate change endangers
human health. Solutions exist
and we need to act decisively to
change this trajectory.”

**Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-
General**



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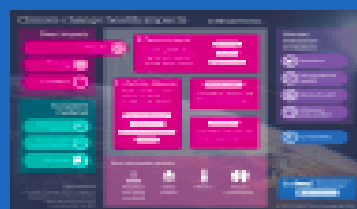
Observations

Climate change

The most important global public health agreement of the century

BMJ 2015 ; 351 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.h6878> (Published 17 December 2015)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2015;351:h6878



Infographic: Climate change health impacts

Click here to see an interactive graphic, summarising the impacts on health predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

[Article](#)[Related content](#)[Metrics](#)[Responses](#)

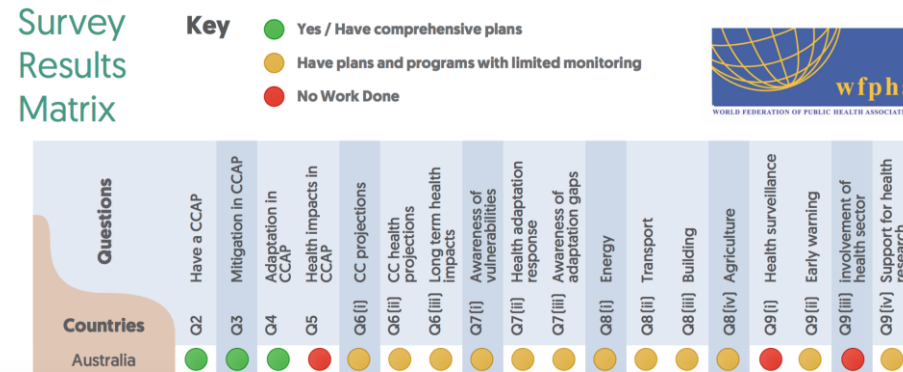
Health and Climate Change: The Policy Gap



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Health in climate policy gap - international

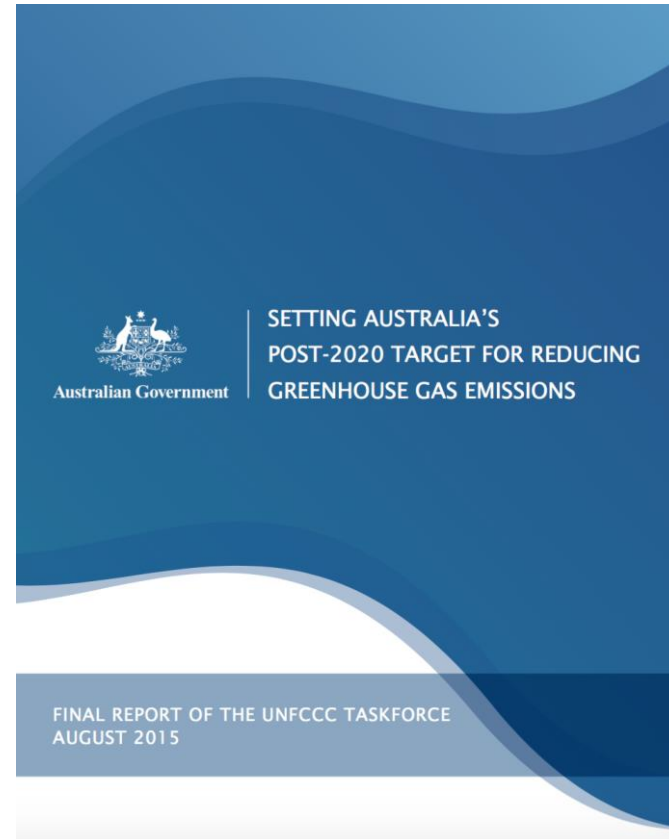
WFPHA Climate Change and Health Policy Global Survey 2015 Assessment Project Report



Source: Chand et al., 2015, *Climate Change and Health Policy Assessment Project Report: A Global Survey 2015*

- 77%** No comprehensive identification of health risks given climate projections
- 65%** Limited identification of vulnerable populations or infrastructure
- 51%** No nation plan for protection against health impacts of climate change
- 37%** No policies for public health adaptation
- 35%** No policies for long-term climate change and health impacts

Health in climate policy gap - Australia



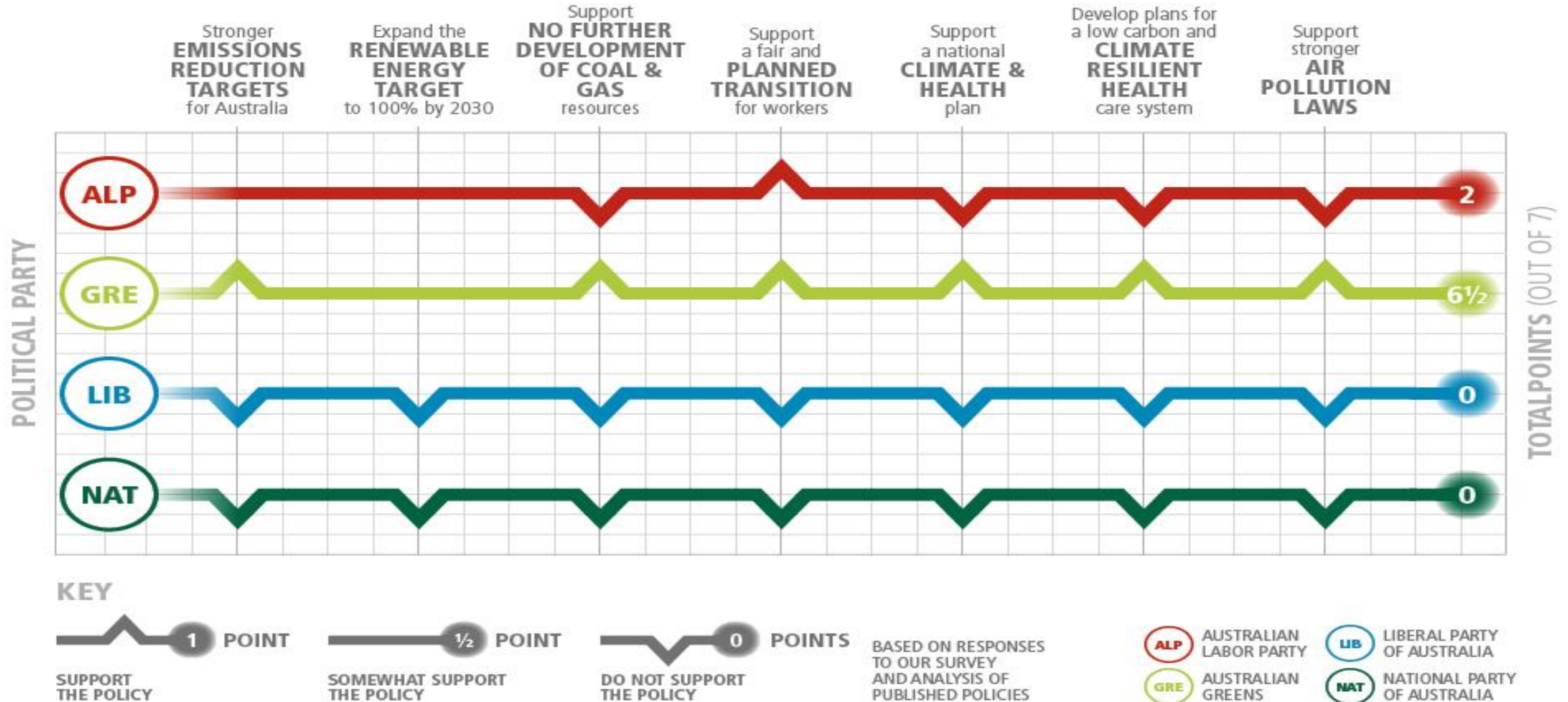
“I don’t think...talking about health outcome would work in the context of the government’s current policies and, and targets, cos I, I suspect...any analysis of health benefits of action would probably say the targets aren’t high enough to achieve much benefit...”

FEDERAL ELECTION 2016

The health of all Australians is threatened by climate change. This election, how can you use your vote to protect communities from climate change and promote a healthier future? We analysed the policies of the main political parties in Australia – and here are the results.



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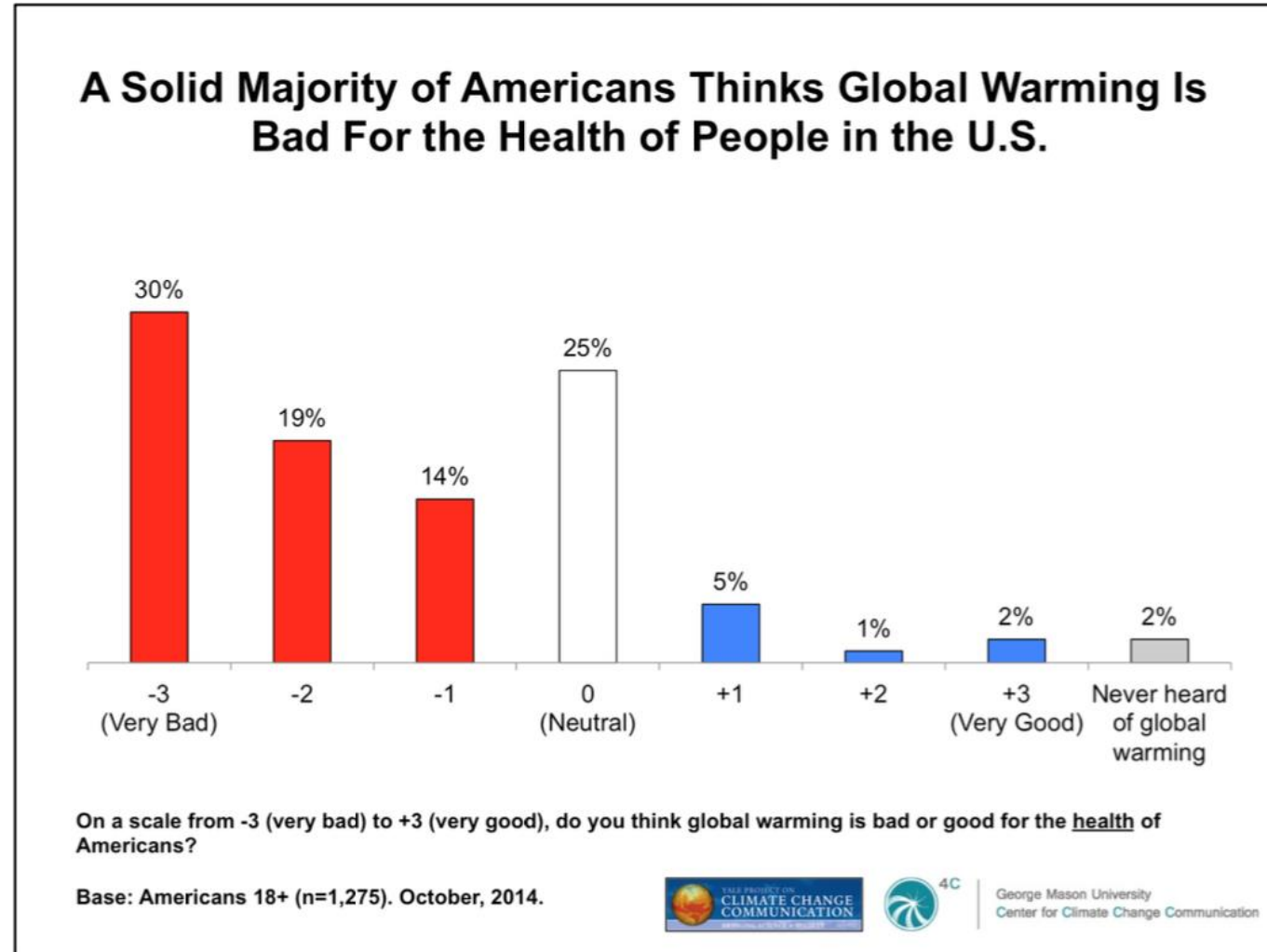


Critical to addressing the policy gap is the framing of climate change as a health issue



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Climate change communication

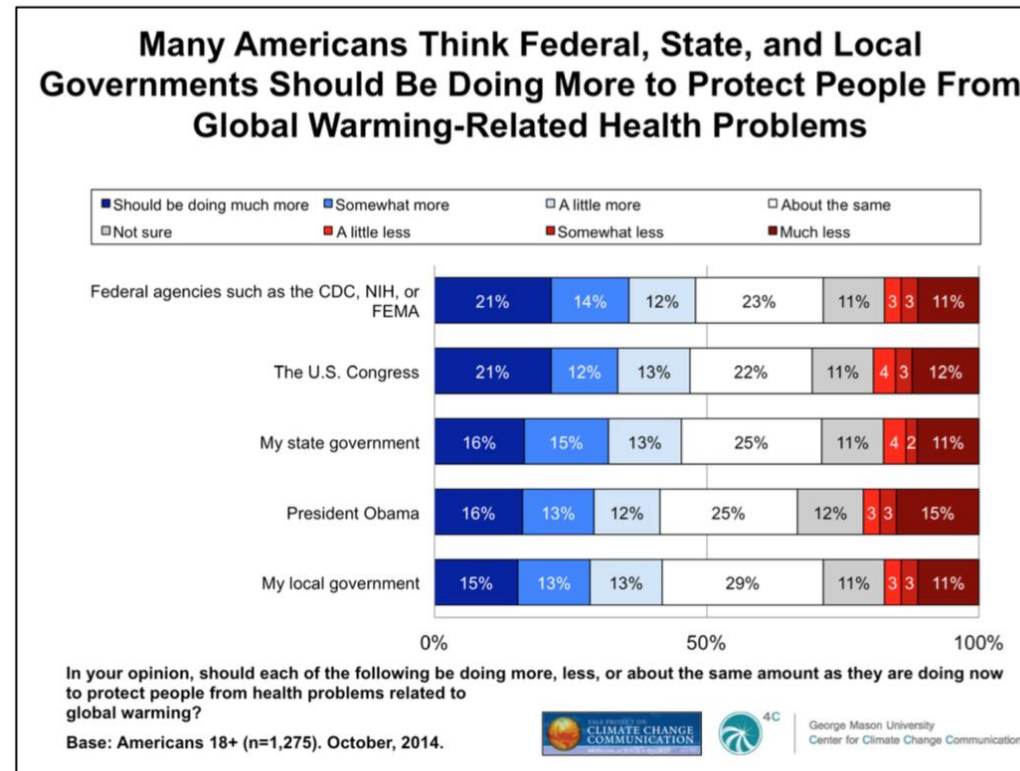


Source: Leiserowitz et al., 2014, *Public Perceptions of the Health Consequences of Global Warming*

Climate change communication

“...the public health community has an important perspective to share about climate change, a perspective that makes the problem more personally relevant, significant, and understandable to members of the public.”

Maibach et al., 2010, *Reframing climate change as a public health issue: an exploratory study of public reactions*



Source: Leiserowitz et al., 2014, *Public Perceptions of the Health Consequences of Global Warming*

Health specific key words and phrases		
[A trusted health organization] stated as a messenger	Scientists agree	Americans think “science” is debatable but trust the American Lung (or Heart) Association on pollution and health. See pg. 15 for more examples of trusted health organizations.
We have a plan for a healthier future	A treatment plan	Solution language that mimics healthcare language, such as “prescription” or “treatment,” implies cost. A plan alone is concrete enough to gain support.
Air we breathe	Threats to the air Threats to the environment	“Air we breathe” is more visual and connects more closely with our primary health needs.
Walking and biking improves fitness and reduces pollution	Walk and bike (alone)	Walking and biking for fitness is more universal/compelling than for recreation.
Live our best lives	Don’t endanger our health by burning fuel	Alarming language is scary. A hopeful visual is more motivating.
Care for ourselves to care for the climate/ Care for our health	Our prosperity depends on [our action]	Directly connects health benefits with climate solutions to form a win-win scenario.
Wind and solar energy	Natural fuels	Coal and oil are considered by some to be “natural fuels.”
Create healthy and safe communities, protect our families’/ children’s health	Stop/mitigate/slow down climate change	Focusing on positive outcomes and personal benefits motivates people to act.

LET’S TALK HEALTH & CLIMATE

COMMUNICATION GUIDANCE FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Health Professionals need to be the messengers telling the story of
climate change as a health issue



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Health (both the professions and the 'frame') are key to influencing attitudes and behaviour

The health sector is a key sector in terms of influencing community attitudes and voting behaviour, as health professionals are seen as trusted and respected voices, with no vested interests, other than the public interest.



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The health sector is large



There are around 600,000 health professionals in Australia – the largest group (330,000) nurses and midwives.



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The health sector is influential



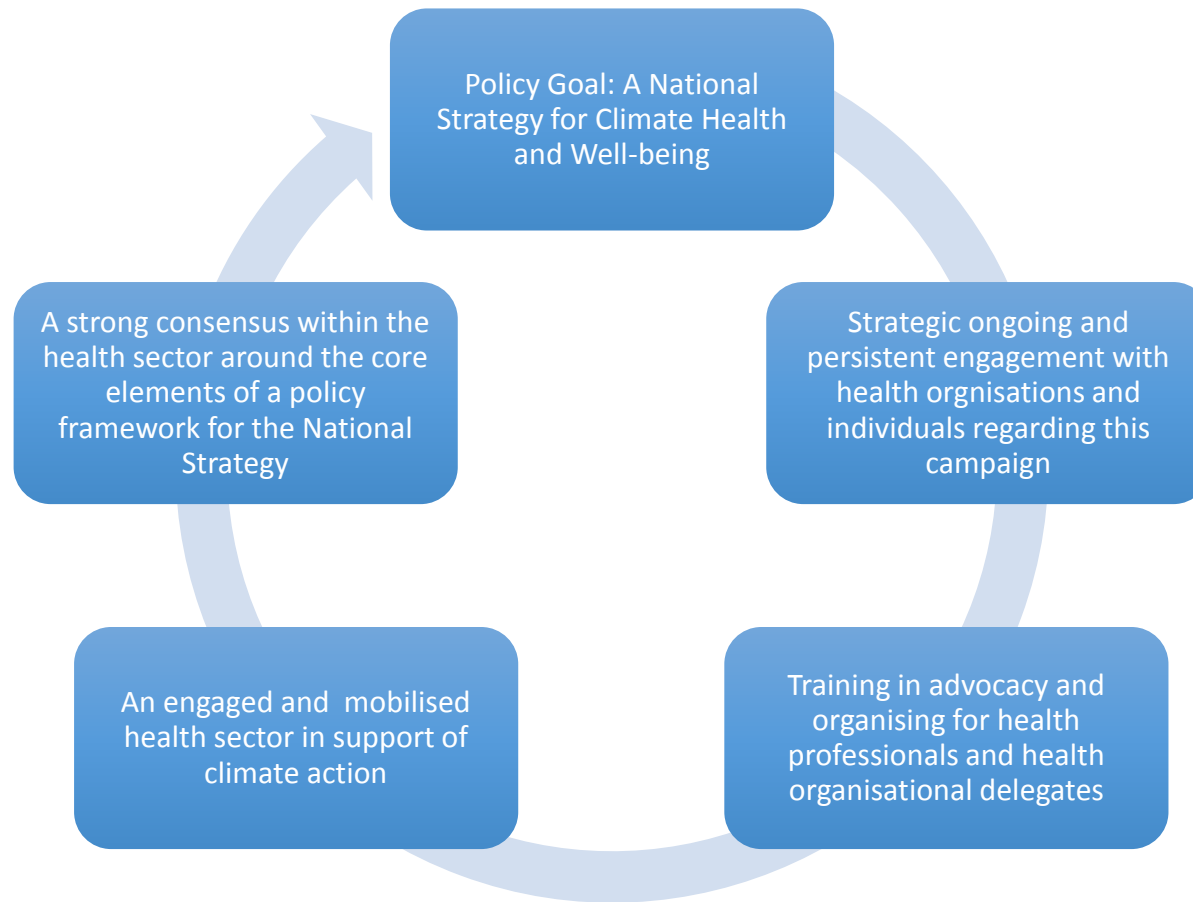
A new approach + new campaign

Getting political to achieve policy outcomes on
climate change and health -
the campaign for a National Strategy on Climate,
Health and Well-being



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Theory of change



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6a: Level of support for a National Strategy for Climate, Health and Well-being

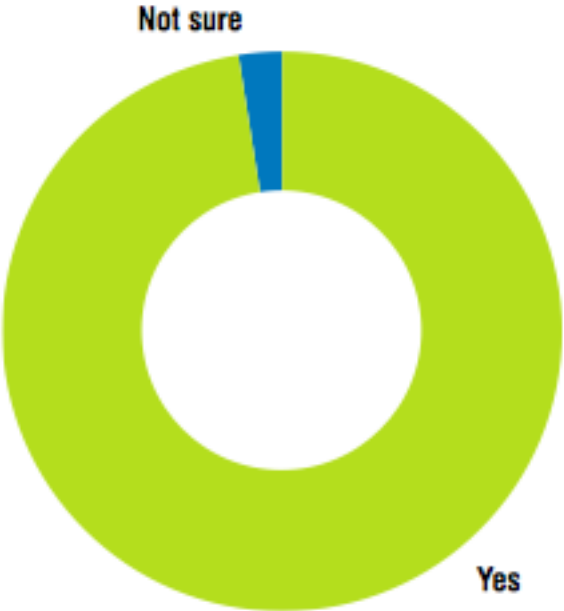
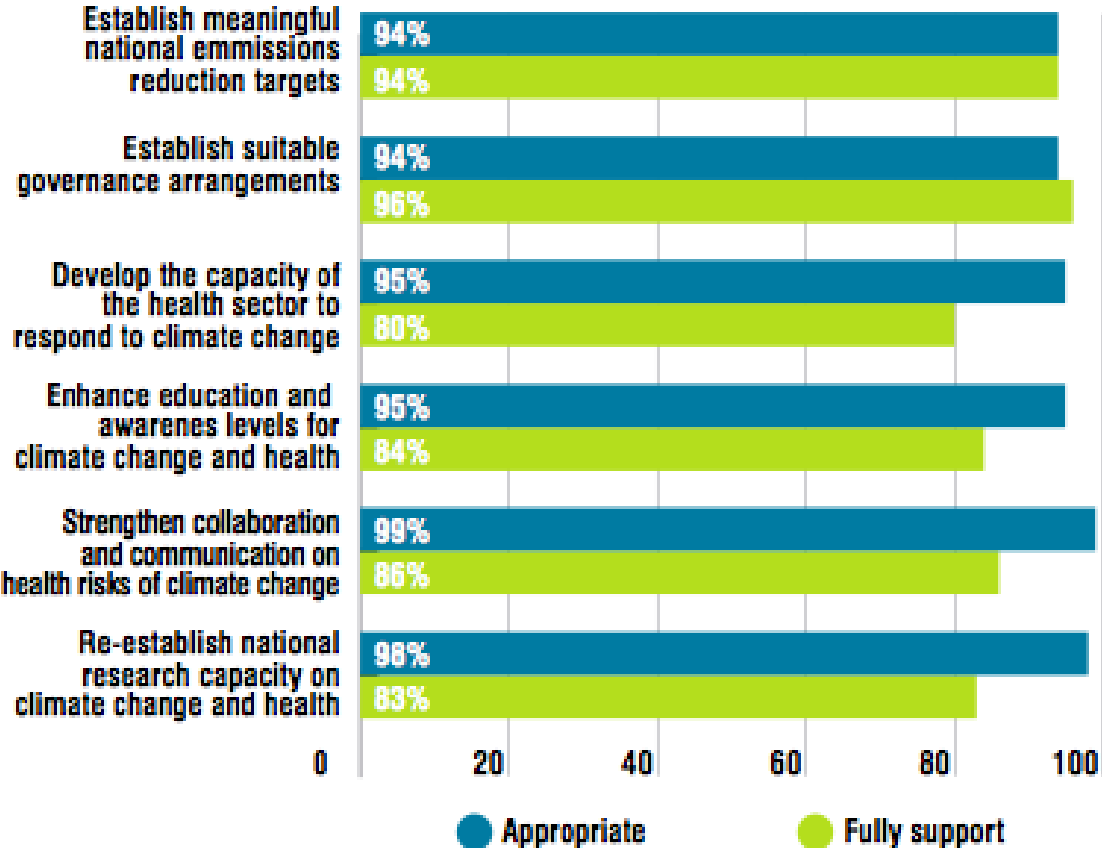


Fig. 22. Support for a national strategy by respondents

There was overwhelming support for a National Strategy with 98% of respondents indicating Australia needs a National Strategy for Climate, Health and Well-being.

In terms of the themes identified in the Discussion Paper, there was strong support for both the appropriateness of each of the themes, and for their inclusion in the proposed Framework for the National Strategy.



What does the campaign involve?

Three phases, including:

- outreach and engagement through a national policy consultation with the health sector;
- skills and development and capacity building among health professionals; and an
- advocacy for policy campaign directly targeting decision-makers, with a goal of achieving political commitments in relation to a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being for Australia.



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Public Health Association
AUSTRALIA



NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE INC.



Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

RACGP



NATIONAL



AIHI



AASW

Australian Association
of Social Workers

ACHSM

Australasian College of
Health Service Management



VICTORIAN
ALLIED HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS
ASSOCIATION



HEALTHY
FUTURES



Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation



australian healthcare &
hospitals association



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msav
medical scientists
association of victoria

CRANAplus
improving
remote health



CATSINaM

CONGRESS OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES
STRAIT ISLANDER NURSES AND MIDWIVES



Australian
College of
Nursing

Advancing nurse leadership

amSa

AUSTRALIAN
MEDICAL STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

Psychology
for a Safe
Climate



WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN THE NORTH

voice • choice • power



S.A.R.R.A.H.
Services for Australian
Rural and Remote Allied Health

DRS

DOCTORS
REFORM
SOCIETY



Australian
Society for
Medical
Research



Australian
HEALTH
PROMOTION
Association



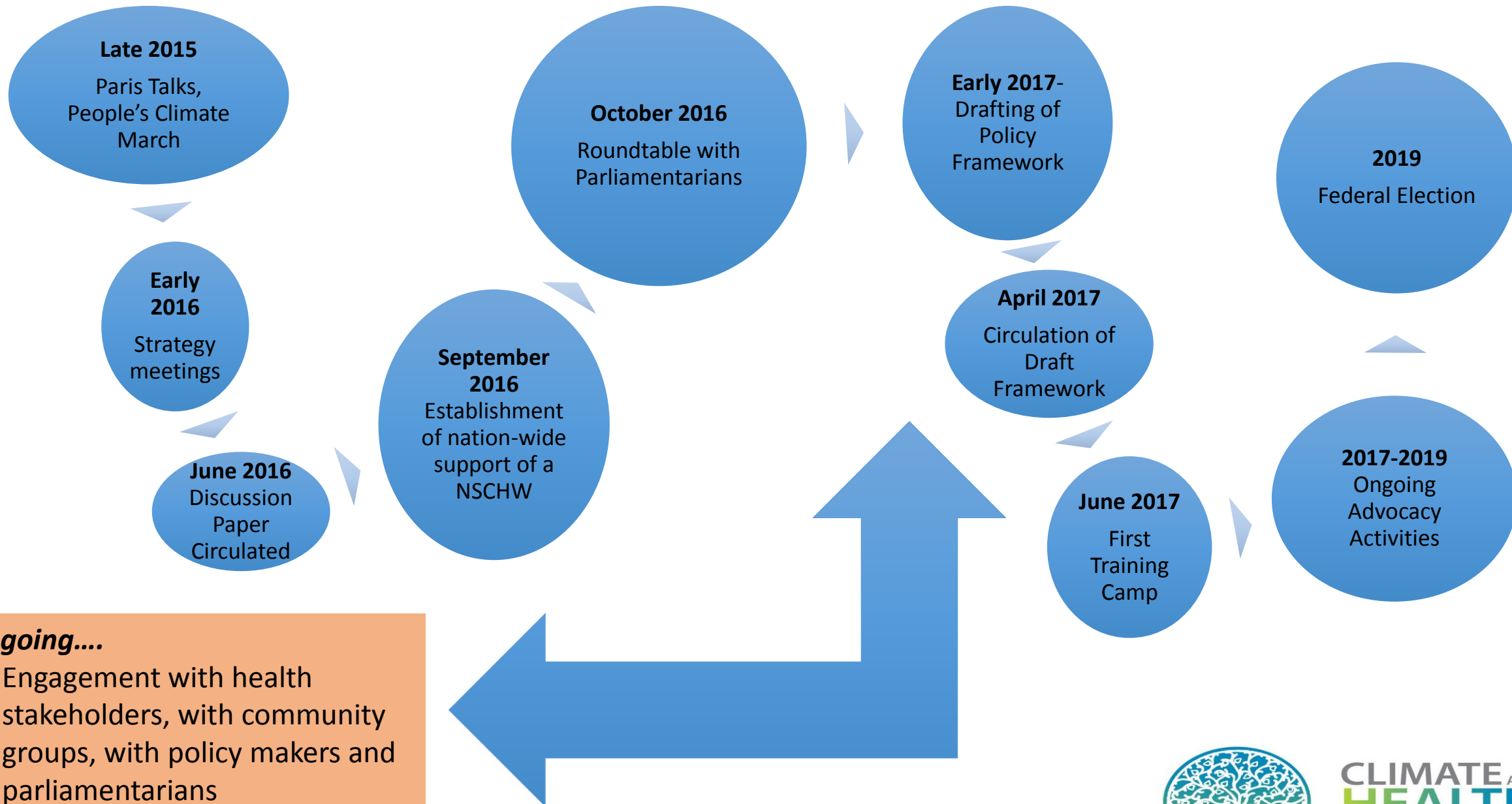
Dietitians
Association
of Australia



Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation
VICTORIAN BRANCH

apna
Australian Practice Nurses Association





Ongoing....

- Engagement with health stakeholders, with community groups, with policy makers and parliamentarians
- Recruitment of health leaders
- Training of health advocates



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The Draft Framework for the National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being is out!

A broad coalition of health sector groups is working together to develop a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Well-being for Australia.

To view the draft document, please [click here](#).

This Draft is being made public for four week consultation period. Organisations and individuals wishing to provide input should email nick.horsburgh@caha.org.au by 7th April 2017. A finalised Framework will be presented to policymakers and parliamentarians to seek their support and commitment to its implementation.

This process is supported by the following organisations:



The seven areas of policy action

The Strategy is structured around seven key areas of policy action. These have been identified through research and thorough consultation with health professionals, health leaders, decision makers and experts in climate change and health.

- 1) Health-Promoting and Emissions-Reducing Policies
- 2) Supporting Healthy Communities
- 3) Education and Capacity Building
- 4) Inter and Intra Governmental Collaboration
- 5) Emergency and Disaster-preparedness
- 6) A Sustainable and Climate-resilient Health Care Sector
- 7) Research

Under each of these areas of policy action, the desired outcome is identified, along with an overarching policy direction and specific policy recommendations for achieving this outcome.



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Training Workshop



**Become a climate
health champion!**

Join other health professionals and learn about campaigning, advocacy, and the effects of climate change on health.

3 day workshop: 16–18 June

Contact your organisation to apply or find out more, or visit
www.ourclimate-ourhealth.org.au

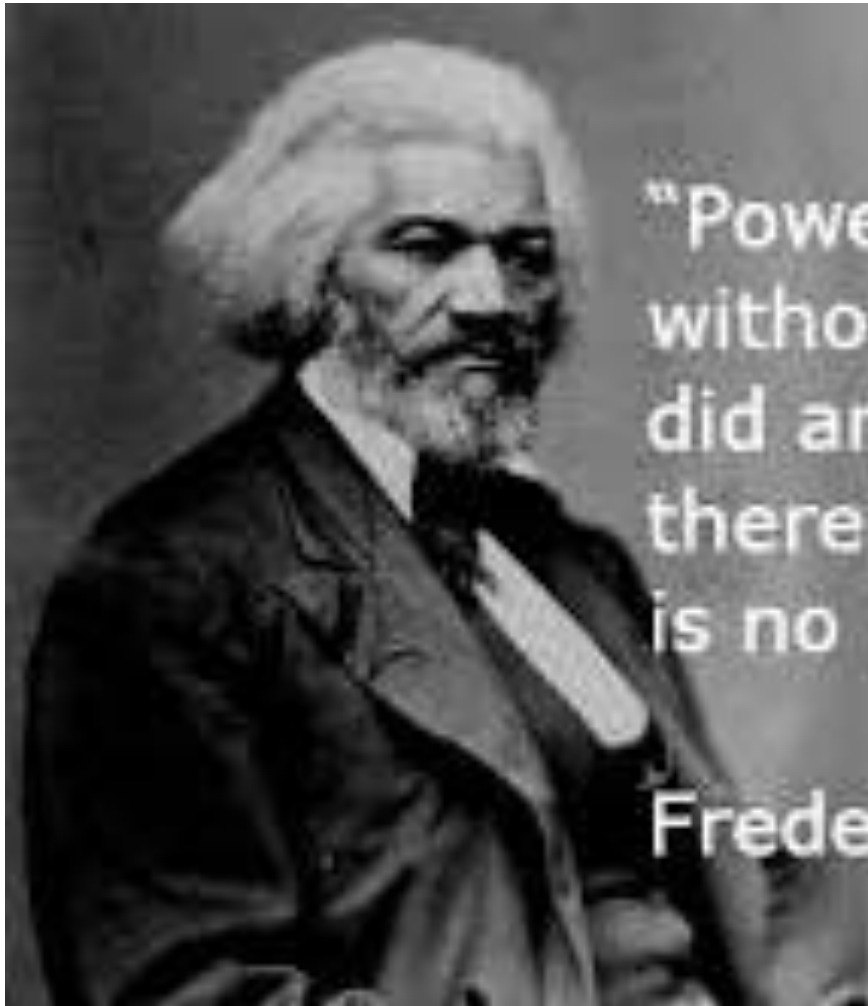


Where we're headed

- **A stronger constituency of advocates** in the climate and health space (organisations and individuals)
- **Publicising** our demands, the responses of policy-makers, and our opinions of these responses
- Creating a **national network of climate-health mentors for MPs and Senators**
- **Training campaigners and organisers** in the health sector, **building lasting power**
- **Creating a new social norm** in the health sector of **climate advocacy and action**




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"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. If there is no struggle, there is no progress."

Frederick Douglass

An aerial photograph of a beach cleanup. A large group of people, many wearing blue gloves, are standing on the sand and forming a large heart shape. The ocean is visible on the left, and a road with a few cars is on the right. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

"Achieving a decarbonised global economy and securing the **public health** benefits it offers is no longer primarily a technical or economic question - **it is now a political one**"

- The Lancet Commission on Health and Climate Change