29 July 2019

Dear Climate Change Team,

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) is recognised as the principal non-government organisation for public health in Australia working to promote the health and well-being of all Australians. It is the pre-eminent voice for the public’s health in Australia, and seeks to drive better health outcomes through increased knowledge, better access and equity, evidence informed policy and effective population-based practice in public health.

PHAA welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the interim emissions reduction targets for Victoria (2021-2030). Action to ensure a safe climate is a critical and urgent public health priority requiring a broad suite of policy measures to protect communities from increased heat-related illnesses and death, decreased availability of affordable fresh and nutritious food, water insecurity, occupational health impacts associated with heat and extreme weather, mental illness and stress, increased violence including family violence following disasters, and increased respiratory and cardiovascular diseases associated with air pollution.¹²³⁴

Many actions to promote a safe climate have additional benefits for health and well-being including physical activity; improved community amenity and healthier diets; reduced rates of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, improved life expectancy and reduced burden on the health system.⁵ These health co-benefits flow on to economic co-benefits.

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³ World Health Organization. Health and Climate Change: COP24 Special Report. [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/276405/9789241514972-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/276405/9789241514972-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y); WHO; 2018


The PHAA supports 5 issues considered by the Independent Expert Panel, and the submission of the Climate and Health Alliance, and recommends:

- Targets in line with limiting global warming to less than 1.5°C
  - A minimum of 40% of 2000 levels by 2025
  - A minimum of 60% of 2000 levels by 2030
  - A minimum of 80% of 2000 levels by 2035
  - Full decarbonisation by 2040
  - Negative net emissions by 2050
- Explicit recognition of the health and economic co-benefits of emissions reductions
- A whole of government approach ensuring climate change policies are integrated across all portfolios and work in conjunction with a range of other policy tools
- Develop and implement a Climate and Health Plan for Victoria
- Rapid transition to a clean renewable energy-powered economy and society
- The application of the following principles to climate change policies: the right to health; community safety and resilience; environmental protection as a foundation for health and well-being; health in all policies; intragenerational and intergenerational equity; minimising and managing risk; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights, recognition and reconciliation; and citizen engagement.

The PHAA appreciates the opportunity to make this submission and the opportunity to contribute to strong action on climate change and improved health in Victoria.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require additional information or have any queries in relation to this submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Terry Slevin  
Chief Executive Officer  
Public Health Association of Australia

Anna Nicholson  
PHAA Branch President  
Victoria

Dr Peter Tait  
Co-Convenor, PHAA  
Ecology and Environment SIG

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6 Global warming of 1.5°C an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development and the efforts to eradicate poverty: Summary for Policymakers, (2018)