



## Summary of Key Actions in the National Health and Climate Strategy

### OBJECTIVE 1 Health system resilience



**Build a climate-resilient health system and enhance its capacity to protect health and wellbeing from the impacts of climate change.**

The Strategy will inform and guide action by the health system to protect and promote population health while adapting to the impacts of climate change by:

- Supporting climate and health risk assessment and adaptation planning nationally and at all levels of the health system, including through the National Climate Risk Assessment and the National Adaptation Plan
- Supporting leadership of First Nations stakeholders in taking action to adapt to the health impacts of climate change on First Nations communities
- Strengthening the health system's disaster preparedness, response and recovery capacities, in particular by strengthening the role of primary care
- Building a climate-resilient aged care sector and improving aged care emergency preparedness and response, including by introducing new quality standards and accommodation guidelines
- Enhancing monitoring of the impacts of climate change on health systems and population health, by exploring opportunities to develop and improve relevant indicators, data collection, and surveillance systems.

### OBJECTIVE 2 Health system decarbonisation



**Build a sustainable, high quality, net zero health system.**

The Strategy will guide the development of a plan to decarbonise the Australian health system, informed by existing state and territory strategies and plans, by:

- Establishing consistent reporting of health system greenhouse gas emissions, allowing tracking of progress over time
- Developing a health system emissions reduction trajectory, underpinned by a health system decarbonisation roadmap
- Reducing health system emissions by preventing ill health, and ensuring appropriate delivery of care and tackling unwarranted variations
- Developing a framework for mapping and reducing emissions in clinical care delivery
- Decarbonising care delivery through targeted actions on specific sources of emissions:
  - **Built environment and energy:** expanding the health system's use of NABERS ratings, and supporting strengthened energy efficiency standards for commercial buildings in the National Construction Code – in collaboration with the Australian Building Codes Board
  - **Travel and transport:** working with the Council of Ambulance Authorities to promote best practice in reducing emissions associated with patient transport
  - **Medicines and gases:** working with patient and professional groups, states and territories, and industry to reduce emissions from desflurane, nitrous oxide and respiratory inhalers
  - **Food and catering:** reviewing sustainability considerations in policies on food access, availability and procurement in hospitals, with a view to informing future updates
  - **Waste and resource use:** identifying options to reduce emissions by reducing, reusing, refurbishing, recycling, replacing, and segregating waste in health and aged care
  - **The supply chain:** developing guidelines on green procurement and sustainable resource use – in collaboration with states and territories.

## OBJECTIVE 3

### International collaboration



#### Collaborate internationally to build sustainable, climate-resilient health systems and communities.

The Strategy will identify opportunities for knowledge sharing and the development of international standards as well as highlight the ways in which Australia can support its neighbours to protect and promote health in their climate change responses by:

- Working with health systems in comparable jurisdictions to:
  - Consider public reporting and accounting for the emissions footprint of health technology products
  - Align procurement requirements to decarbonise health system supply chains
- Considering how to incorporate health commitments into Australia's next Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement
- Joining and actively participating in the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health.

## OBJECTIVE 4

### Health in all policies



#### Support healthy, climate-resilient and sustainable communities through whole-of-government action which recognises the relationship between health and climate outcomes.

The Strategy adopts a Health in All Policies approach, promoting the health co-benefits of emissions

reductions across society and adaptation action beyond the health system to protect health and wellbeing from climate change by:

- **Heat and heatwaves:** tackling the health impacts of rising heat by developing a National Heat and Health Action Plan in collaboration with states and territories
- **Air quality:** addressing the health impacts of air pollution driven by climate change through the National Clean Air Agreement workplan and other relevant projects
- **Communicable disease:** enhancing surveillance, prevention, and response capabilities, reflecting the impacts of climate change on communicable disease emergence and transmission
- **Mental health:** addressing the mental health impacts of climate change by building workforce awareness and capacity, as well as community connectedness and resilience
- **Food and diet:** supporting the inclusion of sustainability considerations in the National Dietary Guidelines, and working in partnership with First Nations communities to address First Nations food security
- **Housing:** promoting the health benefits of climate-resilient housing through input to the National Housing and Homelessness Plan, Housing Policy Partnership, and updates to the National Construction Code – in collaboration with the Australian Building Codes Board
- **Active travel:** working in partnership with states and territories to promote and support the health and climate benefits of active travel.

## ENABLERS

### Workforce, leadership and training

Supporting and mobilising the health workforce to build a sustainable and climate-resilient health sector, including through training, accreditation and continuing professional development processes.

### Research and innovation

Exploring opportunities to support funding of climate and health research and innovation, including by identifying gaps in current research to inform future funding prioritisation.

### Communication and engagement

Developing materials for the public and health workforce to support them in reducing health system emissions and addressing the health impacts of climate change.

### Collaboration and governance

Considering how to enhance governance structures to support delivery of the Strategy and future collaboration on climate and health, between jurisdictions and across the wider stakeholder community.