Climate Health WA Inquiry findings and recommendations

Findings

Next decade (2020–2030) is vital to address irreversible climate risk

Climate action is necessary for health system sustainability

Different Western Australian regions exhibit different environmental and health impacts from climate change

Connections between climate change and health, between physical and mental health, and between vulnerability and resilience, need reinforcing

The health sector in Western Australia is close to the starting line in a race to reduce its own emissions and waste, but is keen to go further and faster

Adaptation can be strengthened

Benefits of change far outweigh costs when health is factored in

Climate risk is both strategic and operational

Good governance, clear metrics and broad partnerships are the key to sustain change over time

Aboriginal stewardship is as vital now as in our past

Recommendations

1. Act early and establish a Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) in WA Department of Health (Chapters 5 and 7; Findings 1 and 5)

2. Allow and incentivize a ‘new normal’ in hospitals and health services (Chapters 5, 6 and 7; Findings 5 and 8)

3. System Manager to lead in reform of policy, procurement, performance, training and research (Chapters 5, 6 and 7; Findings 5 and 9)

4. Strengthen adaptation in the specific areas of extreme weather events, heatwaves, mosquito control and air pollution (Chapters 4 and 8; Findings 6 and 10)

5. Establish data and early warning systems across environment and health, linked to effective mitigation and rapid adaptive response as required (Chapters 3–8; Findings 3, 5 and 6)

6. Create a new governance structure across mitigation and adaptation (Chapters 5 and 9; Findings 9 and 10)

7. Think strategically across a 10-year horizon (Chapters 2, 6 and 9; Findings 2, 8 and 9)

8. Communicate, consult and partner to raise public awareness of climate-health links and co-benefits of action, and reach vulnerable individuals and groups across the State (Chapters 4, 6 and 9; Findings 4, 7, 9 and 10)

9. Seek complementary action at a national level in a federal system (Chapters 5, 6 and 10; Finding 9)

10. Contribute to learning, innovation and research (Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 10; Findings 3, 9 and 10)

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