

Australia's Voice for Health Promotion

The Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA®) is the national peak body for health promotion. We advocate for environments that support healthy living and empower communities to shape the conditions that influence their health.

Health Promotion: More Vital Than Ever

Australia is one of the healthiest countries in the world. This is largely because of effective public health and its core services – protection, prevention and health promotion which includes action to create and support the social and environmental conditions that enable Australians to enjoy a healthy and happy life.

Today, we better understand the complex forces that shape health – especially the unequal distribution of wealth, power, and resources. Health promotion addresses these inequities by building individual and community capacity and driving systemic change.

Who We Are

AHPA is the only professional association dedicated to health promotion across practice, policy, research and education. Since 1990, we've grown into a member-driven organisation representing over 1,000 professionals nationwide. We provide strategic leadership, advocate for evidence-informed policy, and support workforce development through accreditation, professional learning, and knowledge exchange. As the National Accreditation Organisation for the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE),¹ we administer voluntary registration for practitioners in Australia. Our work includes:

- ☐ Hosting national symposiums
- ☐ Publishing the Health Promotion Journal of Australia²
- ☐ Delivering sector insights, job listings, and regular updates to members
- ☐ Advocating on federal budgets, national strategies, and health equity issues

Our Strategic Direction (2025 - 2029)³

- ☐ **Vision:** A healthy, equitable Australia.
- ☐ **Purpose:** To provide leadership, advocacy and workforce development for health promotion practice and research.
- ☐ **Focus Areas:**
 - Promote and grow the health promotion profession
 - Strengthen and advocate for health promotion practice and research
 - Build workforce capacity and career pathways in health promotion
 - Promote equity, diversity and inclusion

About This Submission

AHPA welcomes the introduction of the *Australian Centre for Disease Control Bill 2025* and the opportunity to provide feedback.

¹ <https://iuhpe.org/>

² <https://healthpromotion.org.au/AHPA/HPJA-Journal/Overview.aspx>

³ https://ahpa.imiscloud.com/common/Uploaded%20files/PDFs/FINAL_AHPA%20Strategic%20Plan%202025-2029.pdf



AHPA has long advocated for a national, independent public health institution that prioritises prevention, health promotion, and health equity. We commend the government for progressing this initiative.

This submission draws on AHPA's 2022 response to the Australian Centre for Disease Control consultation and highlights areas of alignment, as well as opportunities to strengthen the Bill - particularly in relation to workforce development and the formal recognition of AHPA's role as the National Accreditation Organisation for International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) Health Promotion Practitioner registration in Australia.

Yours faithfully,

Glen Ramos

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Response to Australian Centre for Disease Control Bill 2025

A Bill for an Act to establish the Australian Centre for Disease Control, and for related purposes.

1. Health Promotion as a Core Function

AHPA strongly supports the inclusion of health promotion in the Australian Centre for Disease Control's mandate. However, we urge the Bill to more explicitly define health promotion as a distinct discipline and profession, grounded in evidence and community engagement. The current framing risks conflating health promotion with communication or education alone.

We recommend:

1. Adopting the WHO Ottawa Charter definition of health promotion.⁴
2. Recognising health promotion as a core public health function, alongside protection and prevention.
3. Ensuring the Australian Centre for Disease Control include IUHPE registered Health Promotion Practitioners in its workforce.⁵

2. Governance and Independence

AHPA supports the establishment of the Australian Centre for Disease Control as a statutory body with clear accountability and independence.

We welcome the inclusion of an Advisory Council and recommend:

1. Ensuring representation from health promotion experts, First Nations leaders, and community-controlled organisations.
2. Structuring the Australian Centre for Disease Control to operate with arms-length independence from government, while maintaining strong partnerships with jurisdictions and existing public health bodies, including AHPA.

3. Workforce Development

The Bill should commit to building and sustaining the health promotion workforce as a critical component of Australia's public health infrastructure.

AHPA recommends:

1. Long-term investment in health promotion training, career pathways, and workforce planning.
2. Inclusion of health promotion in national public health traineeship and fellowship programs.
3. Endorsement and collaboration between the Australian Centre for Disease Control and AHPA to promote the uptake of IUHPE registration and ensure alignment with

⁴ "Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health." World Health Organization. *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion*. First International Conference on Health Promotion, Ottawa, 21 November 1986. Available from: <https://www.who.int/teams/health-promotion/enhanced-wellbeing/first-global-conference>

⁵ International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE). *Health Promotion Practitioner Registration*. IUHPE Global Accreditation System. Available from: <https://iuhpe.org/register/practitioner-registration/>

internationally recognised health promotion competencies, without mandating or regulating the accreditation process.

4. Health Equity and Social Determinants

AHPA welcomes the Bill's recognition of health equity and recommends strengthening provisions to:

1. Embed a Health in All Policies approach across Australian Centre for Disease Control functions.
2. Ensure all public health advice and data collection considers social, cultural, economic, and ecological determinants of health.
3. Prioritise partnerships with priority populations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people with disabilities, and culturally diverse groups.

5. Transparency and Public Trust

We support the Bill's provisions for publishing public health advice and agreements. To enhance transparency:

1. The Australian Centre for Disease Control should establish community engagement mechanisms, including citizen panels and co-design processes.
2. Annual reports should include metrics on health equity, community impact, and workforce development.

6. Research and Evaluation

AHPA recommends the Australian Centre for Disease Control be empowered to:

- ☐ Advise on and administer public health research funding, with a focus on prevention and health promotion.
- ☐ Develop a National Prevention Research Strategy.
- ☐ Evaluate programs using fit-for-purpose methodologies, including qualitative and systems-based approaches.

Conclusion

The establishment of the Australian Centre for Disease Control is a landmark opportunity to reshape Australia's public health landscape. AHPA urges the Government to ensure the CDC is comprehensive, inclusive, and future-focused, with health promotion, equity, and workforce development at its core. We welcome ongoing collaboration and offer our expertise to support the implementation of this legislation.