



Population Health in
a Changing World

Population Health Congress 2012

Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, Australia
9 - 12 September 2012

Population Health Congress Communique

The undersigned Australian and Australasian population health associations - and 1150 delegates from over 20 countries - met in Adelaide on 10-12 September 2012 to take stock of the achievements of public health in Australasia, and agree on priority areas for future action. We affirm our commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of the Australian and New Zealand populations through collective action in relation to:

1. Social determinants of health and addressing inequities

- Reducing health inequities within and between populations.
- Progressing an agenda for 'Health in All' policies, recognising that health outcomes are impacted by a range of public policies across government portfolio areas, including taxation.
- Progressing cross-portfolio and cross-sectoral efforts to 'Close the Gap' in life expectancy and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2. Loss of public health workforce and community based services

- Highlighting the impact of recent cuts to public health workforce and infrastructure within jurisdictions, recognising that cuts to public health services impact heavily on marginalised and disadvantaged communities. We call for the reversal of these cuts.
- Demonstrating the cost effectiveness of expenditure on health promotion and disease prevention programs, consistent with the recommendations of the National Preventative Health Taskforce.
- Ensuring expansion of resources for health promotion and population health, and effective inclusion of health promotion/ population health into Medicare Locals.
- Working collectively to strengthen the workforce voice.

3. Global health, climate change and economics

- Addressing Trade Agreements and Health – the potential impact of trade agreements in undermining public health policy within Australia and the region. For instance, the capacity for the current Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement discussions to impact on plain packaging legislation and access to medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
- Progressing World Health Organisation reform - increasing involvement of Australian public health organisations in global public health efforts and issues.
- Calling for urgent and immediate social, economic and environmental policy action to achieve a just and sustainable society as the greatest health priority this century.
- Illustrating the linkage with local level environment issues, such as the water supply and health impacts of coal seam gas in Australia.
- Remaining actively engaged in the Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA).

Collectively, our associations share common ideals to reduce the burden of disease through processes that protect the population, prevent disease and promote individual and collective health and well being. Through the use of evidence, our associations strive to influence public policy that creates, supports and sustains healthy environments and social conditions. We share a common belief that government support and community mobilisation are needed to effect change in policy and practice through multisectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration.

We agree in principle to reconvene a Congress in three or four years' time to review our progress in achieving collective action on the above points and to bring together population health researchers, policy makers and program practitioners once again to share their experiences and knowledge in improving the health of our populations.

The Presidents of the Public Health Association of Australia, the Australian Health Promotion Association, the Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine, and the Australasian Epidemiological Association are committed to collective action in relation to each of the above.