


Human Health and Social Impacts Node

Development of a Conceptual Framework for NSW Health Research Priorities

A photograph of a dry, cracked landscape under a clear blue sky. Several vertical wooden posts are scattered across the scene, suggesting a coastal or industrial area. The ground is parched and fissured, symbolizing the impact of climate change.

To support research priorities and guide policy, an agreed framework is needed.

Photo: iStock/THPStock

Research on the human and community health impacts of climate change will address questions on how to adapt to the direct and indirect impacts of climate change on human health and social systems. The work program of the Human Health and Social Impacts Node will be informed by eco-social understandings of relationships between climate change and health, however, to support the delivery of identified research priorities and guide policy, an agreed framework is needed.

While there are a number of frameworks which

depict the impact of climate change on health, there is no framework to guide policy-relevant research on the health impacts of climate change in New South Wales. A framework is required which depicts the impacts of climate change on health, the policy responses (adaptation, mitigation) and potential co-benefits in New South Wales.

The framework will be useful in distinguishing what information is essential (e.g. from a regulatory perspective) and what information is desirable (e.g. for research interests).

Research outcomes

- Development of a conceptual framework to guide research priorities and policy development, targeting the health and social sectors, vulnerable communities and government agencies.
- Identification of sector-specific information and information gaps relevant to establishing evaluation baselines for adaptation programs that seek to improve public health and the delivery of health and social services in the face of a changing climate.

Who will use this information?

- Government (e.g. NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW Health, local governments)
- Private sectors
- Local health districts
- Researchers
- Existing networks.

Human Health and Social Impacts Node

Building on current sources of health and climate change information, the Human Health and Social Impacts Node will support the NSW Government by:

1. delivering robust, sector-specific information targeting the health system, vulnerable communities and government agencies
2. establishing baselines for monitoring, evaluation and analysis of adaptation programs that seek to protect and promote health, and strengthen the delivery of health services, in the face of a changing climate
3. improving understanding of vulnerability in the context of exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity
4. providing practical information on building resilience in communities and in the health sector.

The work program of the Node is informed by eco-social understandings of relationships between climate change and health. The approach taken acknowledges the range of environmental, social and economic consequences of climate change, including regional variation in impacts and vulnerability.

The Node is a partnership between:

- **Department of Planning, Industry and Environment**
- **University of Sydney**
- **NSW Health**

More information

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ISBN 978-1-922317-67-4; ESS 2019/0653; November 2019