Impact Report: **February 2022**

This report gives an overview of Croakey’s publishing during February 2022 and the range of individuals and organisations commenting on our articles and activities.

**Social Media Impressions**

We record our social media analytics using Buffer. The figures below are for total impressions across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

704,836 impressions

See our latest readership figures [here](#).

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3 February, 2022: Medicare turned 38 this week. So it’s timely to canvass some wide-ranging suggestions for how to improve health and healthcare, especially as we approach the federal budget and election. As for aged care, clearly much more is needed than a political fix.

Political commentator Bruce Wolpe reflects upon his recent healthcare journey following the discovery of a worrying lump, while physiotherapist Scott Willis is also speaking from personal experience when arguing the need for systemic reform to support better care for people with Long COVID.

Meanwhile, remote communities in many parts of Australia are running low on food and other essential supplies, due to widespread flooding. And Aboriginal organisations in the Northern Territory have been advocating tirelessly for better support for those dealing with COVID.

We recently marked another anniversary – two years since the first person was diagnosed with COVID in Australia. Linda Doherty investigates our ongoing failure to provide appropriate care and support to those in greatest need, including people in prisons and people with disabilities.

We also report on local solutions to the global problem of a COVID-related surge in healthcare waste, and how the crisis in regional journalism is affecting communities.

Don’t miss the year’s first edition of The Health Wrap; it’s a cracker. And so is Dr Ian Mackay’s re-write of recent history, which helps explain why there were so many stony faces at the National Press Club this week.
We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the country where we live, work and travel upon, and to Elders, past, present and future.
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VHA @vtchealthassoc – Feb 5
Via @CroakeyNews: Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is one of the leading public health threats of the 21st century, with health leaders fearful that the world is "silently walking into another pandemic".

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Health communications experts – this massive global health problem ...
Introduction by Croakey: Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is one of the leading public health threats of the 21st century, with health

Charles Maskell-Knight @CharlesAndrewMK – Feb 2
My view on the meagre “bonus payment” to aged care workers via @CroakeyNews

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Bonus payment to aged care workers is symptomatic of wider policy fa...
Introduction by Croakey: The Federal Government’s promised cash bonus for aged care workers between now and May is a short-term

Lesley Russell Wolpe @LRussellWolpe – Feb 2
The decline in diverse regional media highlights the need for public interest journalism especially as misinformation via social media is a major problem.

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The crisis in regional journalism, why it’s a big health concern, and so...
As a motley crew of anti-vaxers, United Australia supporters and "freedom" protesters gathered in Canberra this week, legendary singa...
10 February, 2022: On multiple fronts, failures in governance are damaging people’s health and wellbeing, and costing lives.

Our bulletin this week examines longstanding failures to tackle systemic problems in aged care, as well as a lack of federal leadership in addressing homelessness and related health problems.

We also cover the COVID crisis in the Northern Territory where Aboriginal health groups have repeatedly called for assistance in the face of inadequate responses from governments.

While the law can be a useful tool in addressing health inequities, the Federal Government’s Religious Discrimination Bill is set to entrench harm to LGBTIQ+ people and communities.

Meanwhile, Jennifer Doggett’s investigation of political donations underscores the need for governance systems that are responsive to communities’ needs rather than favouring powerful vested interests.

The latest COVID-19 wrap from Alison Barrett discusses international responses to the Omicron variant and the challenges of this year’s return to school.

As we approach the Federal budget and election, health leaders highlight the need to address racism and inequality, invest in the nursing workforce and support early and mid-career medical researchers.

And the Victorian Government’s plans for health and human services adaptation to climate change are likely to be of widespread interest.
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Other activities

Croakey Health Media director James Blackwell participated in a meeting of Uluru Youth. James also recently began a PhD at ANU, in international relations.
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17 February, 2022: Systems under pressure are the focus of our bulletin this week. From hospital emergency departments, to aged care, medical training and schools, the COVID-19 pandemic is stressing systems that were already struggling to cope.

As nurses rallied across New South Wales calling for safer working conditions, the Northern Territory Government was being urged to implement a “Code Brown” for hospitals.

In The Health Wrap, Associate Professor Lesley Russell reports on research showing that Australia’s health workers are experiencing high levels of burnout, anxiety, depression, and trauma symptoms.

People at increased risk from COVID are also feeling pressure from political decisions to relax public health measures, as Jennifer Doggett found out when speaking with people making some tough decisions about how to stay safe as infection rates rise.

Drawing inspiration from these stressful times is emergency medicine specialist Dr Clare Skinner, who writes creatively about finding moments of personal connection amid the chaos.

And Dr Michael Holland, the new Labor MP for the NSW seat of Bega, describes his experiences in the 2019-20 bushfires and why the problems in rural health motivated him to run for office.
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Croakey in the news

- Croakey is mentioned in this article in The Guardian, ‘One year on from Australia’s showdown with Facebook over the news media code’, there’s still a lot we don’t know (18 February, 2022), by Peter Lewis, who reports that the News Media Bargaining Code has not resulted in funding for Croakey from either Facebook or Google. Lewis is also a director of Croakey Health Media. Read more in our submission to the Parliamentary inquiry Regional Journalism.

- Croakey editor Dr Amy Coopes appeared on ABC TV’s The Drum, on 16 February, 2022, and also did this Twitter thread summarising the latest Croakey News.
The North West Melbourne Primary Health Network republished our article, ‘Victoria unveils plan for health and human services to adapt to climate change’.

Victoria unveils plans for health and human services to adapt to climate change

In a piece for Croakey, Dr Melissa Sweet has taken a close look at a new Victorian Government plan for health and human services to cope with heatwaves and other impacts of climate change.

NVMPHN is a member of the Croakey funding consortium. We encourage you to support and subscribe to Croakey.

Read more

Other activities

Racism and health

Croakey’s Dr Melissa Sweet did two detailed Twitter threads of note:

- Overview of a series of journal articles on structural racism and health with a United States focus, from the latest edition of Health Affairs.
- On the threat of powerful vested interests to democracy and public health, linking a series of related articles.
Media policy: a public health concern
Melissa Sweet and Mitchell Ward attended a webinar hosted by the Community Independents Project on 14 February.

Global leadership for public health
Melissa Sweet participated in a webinar hosted by the World Federation of Public Health Associations asking: What is leadership in a global pandemic? Watch it here.
24 February, 2022: “The idea that some lives matter less is the root of all evil in the world” is a quote that was cited frequently this week amongst many moving tributes to global health leader Dr Paul Farmer, who died unexpectedly at age 62.

It’s a fitting theme for our bulletin this week, which highlights many of the ways in which our health and aged care systems and other institutions devalue some lives and prioritise others.

We report on revelations that Northern Territory police are continuing to use spit hoods on children, despite promises from the Northern Territory Government that they would be banned.

In another comprehensive COVID wrap, Alison Barrett, highlights the disproportionate impact of COVID-related fines upon low socioeconomic suburbs and towns, many of which have high numbers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents.

The unequal impact of COVID on people with disabilities is highlighted in a statement from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

From London, Professor Martin McKee raises concerns about public discourse devaluing the lives of older and sicker people who have died from COVID, and reminds us to ‘look beyond the numbers’ and remember that behind every death is a real person.

Meanwhile, Jennifer Doggett investigates some potential solutions for addressing Clive Palmer’s cashed-up political power and the challenges it poses to public health and democracy.

As we anxiously watch unfolding events in Ukraine, don’t miss the overview of some of the global health issues at stake.
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Dr Peter Rice is a Scottish psychiatrist and President, European Alcohol Policy Alliance

Other activities

Croakey has made submissions to two Federal inquiries so far this year:

- Submission to House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts Inquiry into Australia’s regional newspapers – Download
- Submission to the Select Committee on Social Media and Online Safety – Download