

# CROAKEY HEALTH MEDIA

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**For immediate release**

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## **New Board announced for innovative media organisation**

Croakey Health Media, a non-profit public interest journalism organisation, has announced changes to its board of directors at a critical time for public interest journalism.

Dr Janine Mohamed, a Narrunga Kurna woman and CEO of the Aboriginal community controlled organisation, the Lowitja Institute, has stepped down from the board after three years of service, as the founding Chair and then Co-Chair.

Professor Megan Williams, who is Wiradjuri through paternal family and is Head of Girra Maa, the Indigenous Health Discipline in the School of Public Health at UTS, now takes on the role of Chair, after previously serving as Co-Chair.

Croakey Health Media directors and members acknowledged Dr Mohamed's leadership during a critical time for the evolution of the organisation and for public interest journalism.

"We are grateful to Dr Mohamed for her sharing her expertise to establish Croakey's governance and her strategic advice in helping to establish our objectives and important relationships," said Professor Williams. "Croakey Health Media was established with Aboriginal leadership and continues to operate that way."

Editor in Chief and CHM director Dr Melissa Sweet acknowledged Dr Mohamed's longstanding engagement with public interest journalism as an important determinant of health. "We have benefitted from Dr Mohamed's expertise and knowledge at a time of great challenge for public interest journalism," she said.

"Croakey Health Media members are delighted that Professor Williams will contribute to the next stage of our development as one of the leading innovators in non-profit journalism in Australia."

Sweet said Croakey Health Media was unique in Australia for its journalistic focus on improving health equity through bringing a health-in-all policies approach to our journalism. "We add value to public debate because in addition to covering healthcare and health policy, we investigate the impacts of wider policies upon the community's health."

*We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the Country where we live,  
work and travel upon, and to the Elders, past, present and future.*

Professor Williams also welcomed four new directors who joined the board earlier this year, saying their wide-ranging expertise across academic, policy, healthcare, media and communications reinforces and develops the Croakey enterprise:

**Professor Bronwyn Fredericks** is Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement) at the University of Queensland and has over 30 years of experience working in and with the tertiary sector, State and Federal Governments, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-based organisations.

**James Blackwell** is a Research Fellow (Indigenous Policy) at the Centre for Social Impact UNSW. A proud Wiradjuri man, James has been involved in the Indigenisation of higher education research and curricula for a number of years, as well as the strong embedding of anti-racism work within the sector.

**Alison Verhoeven** was previously Chief Executive of the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association, the independent peak membership body and advocate for the Australian healthcare system and a national voice for universally accessible, high quality healthcare in Australia.

**Peter Lewis** is one of Australia's leading public campaigners with more than two decades' experience in media, politics and communications. As a principal of [Essential Media](#), he has been behind some of Australia's most successful and innovative campaigns including Every Australian Counts for the NDIS and Never Alone of the Luke Batty Foundation.

Like many media organisations, Croakey has struggled financially during the pandemic while striving to meet increasing demand for its public interest journalism.

Professor Williams encouraged more universities to engage with supporting Croakey, noting its innovative new funding consortia and advertising packages. "At this critical time for planetary health, it is vital that public interest journalism, public debate and policy prioritises efforts to address health inequities," she said.

Alison Verhoeven urged health, aged care and disability organisations to engage more actively in supporting Croakey's work. "These sectors benefit from having independent platforms to enable the exchange of knowledge across sectors and disciplines," she said.

Croakey members and directors also expressed their warm gratitude to founding directors Lyn Brodie, CEO of Optometry Australia (resigned May 2021), and consultant Paula O'Connell (resigned July 2020) for their important work in establishing Croakey.

Read more: <https://www.croakey.org/about-croakey-health-media/>

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