Impact Report: **July 2022**

In July, as the World Health Organization urged governments to ramp up pandemic responses, Croakey investigated what more governments in Australia could do to promote vaccine-plus strategies to prevent transmission and reduce COVID case numbers.

We also reported back to our readers and funders on our election coverage, publishing 94 election-related articles from 65 contributors. These put a sustained focus on key health equity issues, and we also covered the implications for health of the rise of Independent candidates.

Our contributors also put the focus on global food security, the power of Indigenous knowledges, research methods and leadership in dealing with complex health challenges. We joined so many others in paying our respects to much loved songman Uncle Archie Roach, and giving thanks for his songs, storytelling, truthtelling and support for so many people.

We encouraged the health sector to contribute to a review of The Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation & Misinformation, as well as lodging a submission ourselves.

In July, Croakey editors Dr Amy Coopes and Jennifer Doggett participated in media interviews, while Croakey Conference News Service brought news from the 16th National Rural Health Conference and the Safer Care Victoria Giant Steps conference.

**Social Media Impressions**

We record our social media analytics using Buffer. The figures below are for total impressions across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. See our latest readership figures [here](https://www.croakey.org/impact/).

This month: **565,973** impressions  
This year: **6,669,968** impressions
**Week ending 7 July: Get up! Stand up! Show up!** This year’s NAIDOC theme is a powerful message relevant to many areas of health and social justice advocacy.

Our bulletin this week features highlights from the 2022 National NAIDOC Awards; a special congratulations to Professor Bronwyn Fredericks, who is also a director of Croakey Health Media.

We also explore the implications of a new COVID wave, rare cases of diphtheria and, as NSW reels from yet more disastrous flooding, we consider how health and emergency workforces must prepare for future floods.

Settle in for a Long Read with Australian of the Year Dylan Alcott and others who shared diverse stories of courage, purpose, vulnerability and authenticity at the recent Giant Steps conference.

We also report on the AMA’s Private Health Summit, and Charles Maskell-Knight has some advice for health ministers wanting to reduce pressure on public hospital emergency departments.

Don’t miss the ICYMI column, which includes the latest on climate and health, rural generalism, and problematic health and justice policies.

We also bring an analysis of our reporting of the recent Federal election, including an independent estimate of the dollar-value created by the #AusVotesHealth2022 hashtag on Twitter.

Also make sure to read about how the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) is demonstrating excellence in Indigenous governance.
Croakey Conference News Service

We continued publishing reports from the Safer Care Victoria Giant Steps conference, and our e-publication compiling coverage from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Congress continued being shared.
In the six months leading up to the 2022 Federal election, Croakey published **94 election-related articles** from 65 contributors.

These put a sustained focus on key health equity issues, including the climate crisis, the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, health reform, social determinants of health, media-related issues, COVID, the health and aged care workforce, housing, aged care, integrity in government, the Uluru Statement from the Heart, primary healthcare, justice-related concerns, mental health and the health of LGBTIQ communities. We also covered the implications for health of the rise of Independent candidates.

We hosted several special projects to provide accountability reporting of the LNP Government's health outcomes, and health-related election policies advanced by the major parties, the Greens and various Independents. These included:

- **The Election Wrap** – seven columns, by Associate Professor Lesley Russell and Jennifer Doggett, with contributions by Dr Melissa Sweet, Alison Barrett and Dr Anny Huang
- The **#AusVotesHealth2022 election report card** – compiled by Associate Professor Lesley Russell; designed by Mitchell Ward.
- **The Accountability report** – compiled by Associate Professor Lesley Russell, with contributions by Dr Anny Huang; designed by Mitchell Ward.

On Twitter, we curated a high-impact Twitter stream at **#AusVotesHealth2022**, with 1,529 accounts participating at the hashtag, sending a total of 5,087 tweets and with 47 million potential impacts.

We convened five webinars, to provide a platform for our communities to connect and exchange news and views, and to inform our journalism.

We thank and acknowledge all who contributed to our election coverage and to the #AusVotesHealth2022 discussion.

Please read and share these related reports:

- [An overview of Croakey Health Media’s election coverage](#)
- [An infographic of CHM election coverage](#)
- [A Tweetbinder analysis of the #AusVotesHealth2022 hashtag](#)
Other activities

Croakey editor Dr Amy Coopes appeared on The Drum on ABC TV on 7 July, discussing climate action, the stress on health systems and the urgent need to invest in better care and support for young people interacting with the legal system, to prevent detention and incarceration.

Croakey Professional Services

The Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) is well positioned to contribute to improved health, employment and education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at a pivotal time, according to senior leaders of the profession. They are quoted in an article published by Croakey Professional Services as sponsored content as part of a series celebrating CATSINAM’s 25-year history of collective and individual activism. See the campaign portal.
Week ending 14 July: As the World Health Organization urges governments to ramp up their pandemic responses, many of our stories this week focus on vaccine-plus strategies and calls for change to a range of policy settings.

Our warm thanks to the 15 health experts who contributed wide-ranging suggestions for how to promote mask-wearing at a time when we see very little role modelling from our leaders.

Indeed, this survey is something the Prime Minister might like to read; no masks were in sight when his booster vaccination was administered this week, and shared in a video on Twitter that has had hundreds of thousands of views.

One recommendation from our Croakey survey was for free high-quality masks to be provided to vulnerable, at risk, and economically disadvantaged groups. Many respondents stressed the importance of positive messaging, as well as a role for regulation.

Many of the suggestions to change norms around mask-wearing drew upon lessons from other areas, such as HIV prevention and other community-led campaigns.

It's a reminder of the importance of knowing history when tackling contemporary health challenges, as shown in our lead story on reproductive justice. In the aftermath of the overturning of Roe vs Wade, these authors stress the importance of community leadership in healing from past reproductive injustices.

Don't miss Dr Ruth Armstrong’s heroic return to the Croakey fold, and Associate Professor Lesley Russell is also in visionary form with a wide-ranging edition of The Health Wrap. The #ICYMI column is packed.

We also cover safety and quality in aged care, an important discussion about freedom of speech, and share expert tips to help health professionals feel more confident in raising climate change at work, whether in discussions with patients, colleagues or managers.
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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https://www.croakey.org/impact/
Week ending 21 July: Health services around the world are struggling to deal with COVID overload at a time when many countries are also facing extreme heat, fires and other climate impacts. The “rapid and relentless” spread of monkeypox is also causing concern.

Meanwhile, a new report has shown how the pandemic, climate crisis, Ukraine war, economic pressures and growing inequalities are undermining global food security. The authors call for policies that support human and planetary health rather than agrifood systems that undermine health and the environment.

It’s a timely reminder, in the week that Australia’s long-awaited State of the Environment report is finally released, that our health is under threat on so many fronts and is the responsibility of multiple portfolios and actors.

As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres tweeted this week: “Our way of life – based on producing, consuming, discarding & polluting – has led to the planetary emergency we face. Now is the time to transform our relationship with nature. But we must avoid empty promises. We need to match commitments with credible and verifiable actions.”

This is a pertinent message for the new Labor Government, whose climate ambitions clearly are not ambitious enough for the sake of planetary and human health.

Meanwhile, articles this week underscore the power of Indigenous knowledges, research methods and leadership in dealing with complex health challenges.

Human rights are also in the frame, regarding mental health and aged care, as well as the safety and wellbeing of people in detention. Alarm bells are ringing about the transfer of Aboriginal children to a maximum security adult prison in Western Australia.

Our bulletin also highlights a new self-collection approach that is hoped will prove a “revolutionary step towards eliminating cervical cancer” by removing some of the barriers to screening.

We thank those public health experts who shared suggestions on what more governments can do to boost COVID-19 vaccination rates. There is a lot of room for improvement.
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Other activities

On 14 July, the Croakey Health Media board met. We are grateful to our directors for providing over-arching governance in a voluntary capacity. Pictured from bottom L to R: CHM Chair Professor Megan Williams, Claire O’Rourke and Professor Bronwyn Fredericks. Pictured from top L to R: Laurell Grubb (interim company secretary), Dr Melissa Sweet, Adjunct Professor Alison Verhoeven. With apologies from James Blackwell.
We encouraged the health sector to contribute to a review of The Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation & Misinformation. And we made a submission ourselves.

On 21 July, Croakey editor Jennifer Doggett spoke on ABC Radio National on how to improve health systems and care.
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**Week ending 28 July:** This week brought many iconic images from the first gathering of the 47th Parliament, from the Welcome to Country to tweeted selfies and expressions of pride from new MPs, representing diverse communities.

But one image in particular is alarming for what it says about the challenges ahead as political leaders face growing calls to act on the evidence about what is needed to improve COVID control.

As journalist Amy Remeikis tweeted: “Quite a stark difference between the two sides of the chamber – Labor, the Greens, crossbench and clerks all wearing masks, but with just a couple of exceptions, the Coalition is mask free. There is no mandate, but it was strongly recommended people in parliament house mask up.”

As well as reviewing the evidence on mask wearing as part of a vaccine plus strategy, our bulletin this week explores the importance of effective health communications in stories about COVID as well as monkeypox.

The commercial determinants of health are brought into the spotlight by researchers who investigated the insidious influence of TikTok in promoting unhealthy food to children, and we also bring some timely tips from the “public health playbook” for health advocates.

Don’t miss the latest edition of The Health Wrap by Associate Professor Lesley Russell as she shares lessons for Australia on a national wellbeing budget as well as some stunning scenes from Colorado and California.

We also report on calls for a youth-specific national suicide and self-harm prevention plan, ahead of a webinar today hosted by Orygen. One of the panellists, Dr Summer May Finlay, also reports on the launch of Heal Our Way, a NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention campaign.

Meanwhile, Croakey editor Jennifer Doggett has been hitting the airwaves; listen to her recent ABC radio interviews on health reform matters here and here.

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**Melissa Sweet @MelissaSweetDr, 2h**
ICYMI: @MelissaSweetDr joins this @ABCAustralia discussion: GPs say they’re at breaking point as another COVID wave arrives abc.net.au/radionational/... cc @CroakeyNews

**Wanda de Kanter @Wdekanter, 2h**
What can the “public health playbook” offer those advocating for a healthy, safe climate?
8 key suggestions:
To protect and promote public health, it is necessary to take on powerful corporations:
croakey.org/what-can-the-p...

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**Evidence political leaders worthy of the name will heed: Growing calls for political leaders to act on the evidence, to improve COVID control via @CroakeyNews**

croakey.org
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Croakey Professional Services

On 12 July, Croakey’s Dr Melissa Sweet facilitated a webinar for Orygen on youth suicide prevention. Croakey contributing editor Dr Summer May Finlay was on the panel.
Week ending 4 August: Today, 4 August, is National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day, and Catherine Liddle, CEO of SNAICC, has invited Croakey readers to join in celebrating “our children, their achievements, our cultures and a shared future of hope”.

Many of our stories this week put a strong focus on envisioning brighter futures, whether through transformative action for a safer climate, planetary health equity, implementation of the Uluru Statement, or long-overdue health reform.

But we can’t create a better future without understanding how “actions of the past still echo into our future, as our much loved songman Uncle Archie Roach expressed so beautifully”, writes Liddle.

Many readers have been reflecting on the impact of the late Archie Roach on their lives, through his songs, storytelling, truth-telling and support for so many people. Don’t miss the tribute by Bhiamie Williamson, a Euahlayi man from north-west NSW and south-west Qld with family ties to north-west Qld, and a research associate and PhD candidate at ANU.

Between the past and the future, we find ourselves in a winter storm, where the COVID surge is having serious consequences for aged care and, as Jesuit Social Services reports, the wellbeing of organisations and workplaces. The #ICYMI column has more on the political divide on masking, despite Independent MP Dr Monique Ryan’s standout intervention.

Meanwhile, we are keen for feedback on our story about COVID transmission at health and medical conferences; has this been your experience?

Dr Amy Coopes is reporting for the Croakey Conference News Service on discussions at the 16th National Rural Health Conference. On Twitter, make sure to follow #16nrhc and #ruralhealthconf.
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