CROAKEY HEALTH MEDIA

Informed, engaged communities for health

March 2023

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Impact Report: **March 2023**

This month we covered the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and calls by public health leader Professor Fran Baum for Croakey readers to get active in whatever ways you can, “whether it is lobbying your political representatives, joining protest movements, civil disobedience or whatever action you can think of”.

We also profiled the important role of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as powerful drivers of positive change, while Yorta Yorta woman Dr Summer May Finlay provided a detailed history of the path leading to the referendum to constitutionally enshrine a Voice to Parliament.

We previewed key health issues facing NSW voters ahead of the state election, and Croakey editor Jennifer Doggett moderated a NSW election debate on mental health. The ongoing toll of COVID, the rural health workforce crisis, and health inequities experienced by women were also featured. On global health matters, we continued publishing articles in the [#WorldInTurmoil series](https://www.croakey.org/impact-and-readership/) — a collaboration between Croakey Health Media and the World Federation of Public Health Associations.

During March, 796 MPs across federal, state and territory jurisdictions received a Croakey News bulletin, with 271 of recipients opening at least one edition.

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Our warm thanks to everyone who contributed to Croakey this month.

**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-and-readership/).

**This month:** 459,812 impressions  |  **This year:** 1,047,040 impressions
Week ending 9 March: Following International Women’s Day, our bulletin spotlights many areas where women experience inequities – from climate impacts to healthcare, research and the wider determinants of health, including housing.

Meanwhile, the official national report card on gender equality does not mention women in prison or how incarceration intersects with many other forms of structural violence affecting women.

This week, Yorta Yorta woman Dr Summer May Finlay provides a detailed history of the path leading to the referendum to constitutionally enshrine a Voice to Parliament.

We also have a strong focus on media matters, highlighting concerns about front-page war mongering in contrast to mainstream media silence about the tortuous detention of Julian Assange. Don’t miss Marie McInerney’s comprehensive report on the growing push for his release.

Our contributors also investigate the rural health workforce crisis, what health reform decision makers can learn from listening to communities, and the political influence of the gambling industry.

The ongoing challenges posed by COVID are highlighted in two of our columns: The Health Wrap, and ICYMI, which also range widely across many other health topics.

Charles Maskell-Knight investigates the Federal Government’s new reporting regime on aged care information, concluding that greater transparency is needed.

Meanwhile, ahead of the NSW state election, health organisations are calling for the next government to ban unhealthy food and drink advertising on state government owned or controlled assets.

We also showcase Croakey Professional Services – check them out. You might be surprised by what’s on the menu.
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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Quotable

Gambling interests have political access that is not available to groups attempting to reduce the harms caused by gambling or to people with lived experience of the devastation that gambling can cause.

Carol Bennett, Alliance for Gambling Reform

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Making news

Croakey Health Media director Claire O’Rourke was acknowledged for her work on climate advocacy on International Women’s Day.

Latest THW:
- Action needed on AMR crisis, made worse by #ClimateChange
- Facing new COVID-19 reality
- Fit legs —> fit brains *great skiing advice
- What dolphins might teach us about ageing
- War, health, healthcare in Ukraine
- Housing is public health

The Health Wrap: fit brains, ageing dolphins, COVID challenges and ...
In her latest column, Adjunct Associate Professor Lesley Russell reports on a stack of new research and publications, covering recent...

Making news

Croakey Health Media director Claire O’Rourke was acknowledged for her work on climate advocacy on International Women’s Day.

IMPACT REPORT

https://www.croakey.org/impact-and-readership/
Week ending 16 March: When Treasurer Jim Chalmers said in an interview this week “Australia can’t afford not to do this”, he was not referring to action on ongoing climate emergencies, poverty, tackling industries that harm, the cost-of-living crisis and giving our kids the best possible start to life.

He was referring to the AUKUS submarine deal, which many caution will come at a huge social and health cost to Australians, as we feature in our latest ICYMI column.

It’s a big warning also from Dr Sue Wareham from the Medical Association for Prevention of War in her reflection on the costs and lessons of the Iraq War, ahead of events to mark the 20th anniversary of the invasion. “It is only by ignoring the costs of war – human, economic, environmental and other – that preparations for the next one can be announced with such triumphalism and pride,” she writes.

Our bulletin has a focus on many policies that are bad for public health, justice and equity – Robodebt, AUKUS, the UK’s new ‘stop the boats’ asylum-seeker policy, Queensland’s harsh youth justice laws, and plans in New South Wales for an inequitable ‘future fund’ for children.

The latter comes ahead of the NSW state election, as public health leaders are urging the next government to take serious action on climate and gambling reform policies.

Meanwhile, leading child health experts share their thoughts on the Australian Government’s Early Years discussion paper, and contributors Pan Karanikolas and Tessa-May Zirnsak call for improved data and reporting on LGBTIQ+ experiences of coercion in mental health settings.

Don’t miss Alison Barrett’s wrap from Adelaide Writers’ Week, shining a spotlight on media matters.
On 16 March, Croakey editor Jennifer Doggett moderated a NSW election debate on mental health. Below is her Twitter thread reflecting on the discussions.

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Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett  ·  Mar 17
Last night, on behalf of Croakey Professional Services, I had the privilege of MC’ing a webinar and political panel discussion hosted by the NSW Branch of the Aust and NZ College of Psychiatrists.

Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett  ·  Mar 17
This event followed the release of the report "The NSW mental health system on the brink: evidence from the front line" developed by the @RANZCP & endorsed by mental health stakeholders @RACGP @AustPsych @AMA_NSW, @ACMHN @BENGMHC @MHCARENSW @MHCC_NSW raanzcp.org/files/resource...

Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett  ·  Mar 17
It is based on over 1300 frontline mental health workers in NSW who together paint a picture of a system which is complex, inaccessible, sometimes ineffective, and with increasing inequality.

Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett  ·  Mar 17
The report documents the experience of consumers in NSW living with a mental illness who are often denied access to timely and affordable mental health care because of the failures of successive governments over the last decades to plan, invest, and reform.

Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett  ·  Mar 17
Overall the report reflects a system which is underfunded, fragmented, and unfit for purpose. It documents the impact of ongoing under-funding of NSW’s mental health sector, leaving NSW falling behind other states in this area.

Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett  ·  Mar 17
The consequences of poor mental health care are dire, and expensive, including chronic illness, intergenerational trauma, death, preventable incarceration and homelessness, all of which have significant economic and health impacts on the community.

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Tessa Zirnsak @TZirnsak  ·  Mar 10
LGBTIQ+ people are more likely to be diagnosed with a mental illness, but there isn’t data on the use of restrictive practices against this group - this is a serious problem.

My dear friend Panos and I wrote this op-ed for @CroakeyNews - check it out!

croakey.org
Data and reporting needed on LGBTIQ+ experiences of coercion in A...
Introduction by Croakey: in the wake of the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System, the State Government has launched

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Impact Report
https://www.croakey.org/impact-and-readership/

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Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett · Mar 17

Alison Waters – an Upper House Animal Justice Party candidate – outlined her party’s position on the need for increased funding for mental health services, including the important role played by pets and companion animals for people experiencing mental illness.

Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett · Mar 17

Independent Helen Dalton discussed the inadequate access to mental health service in rural and regional areas of the state, giving examples of long waiting times for crucial services and the urgent need to improve access, in particular for young people.

Jennifer Doggett @JenniferDoggett · Mar 17

MPs @bronnieltaylor & @RyanPerk_Klein responded to @s from participants on the mental health impacts of climate change, the need to improve access to services for young people in particular early intervention for psychosocial and workforce burnout and stress.

Prof Marie Bismark @mbismark · Mar 18

Replying to @JenniferDoggett

Great summary. Thank you.

Overall, it was a timely opportunity to focus on the need for ongoing collaboration between health professionals, governments and consumers, to develop a road map for a sustainable, accessible and equitable mental health system for NSW.
Week ending 23 March: As we go about our lives, it’s so easy to lose focus on what really matters. Without urgent, effective and equitable climate action, the safety of current and future generations is in peril.

And yet the response of so many governments, so many sectors and so many people is nowhere near commensurate with the challenges outlined in the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Public health leader Professor Fran Baum urges Croakey readers to get active in whatever ways you can, “whether it is lobbying your political representatives, joining protest movements, civil disobedience or whatever action you can think of”.

“Time is running out and change has always come from activism forcing the hand of governments,” she says.

This week, Marie McInerney reports from the launch of the 14th Close the Gap Campaign report, showcasing strong support for the Indigenous Voice to Parliament and the valuable role of young people as “powerful drivers of positive change”.

Ahead of the NSW state election, in addition to being urged to step up climate action, major parties are being asked to rethink rural healthcare.

Actuaries summarise their latest analysis of Australia’s excess deaths, putting a spotlight on the toll of COVID-19.

Meanwhile, the state of primary healthcare in the United States is investigated as part of the #WorldInTurmoil series – a collaboration between Croakey Health Media and the World Federation of Public Health Associations.

Adjunct Associate Professor Lesley Russell also provides a detailed analysis of US health policy developments in The Health Wrap, while the ICYMI column has positive news on reducing alcohol-related deaths and human rights developments.

We also report on the ‘sober curious’ social movement, systems thinking in public health, the Robodebt scheme, and calls for the upcoming Federal Budget to tackle poverty.

Be sure to check out our Twitter lists – helpful for making sense of an increasingly erratic platform.
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17th World Congress on Public Health - March 24
Safe, effective, people-centered, timely, equitable, integrated, & efficient: that’s how #healthcare should be. Dr Julie Damell @LoyolaParkinson explains the problems in the healthcare system & what has to be done to include everyone bit.ly/3JvTveo
#WorldInTummoil

croakey.org

APNA @APNAnurses - March 22
A timely reminder why it is crucial to ensure that our PHC system remains strong by reforming Medicare to encourage all health professionals, including PHC nurses, to contribute more to team-based MDT health care croakey.org/strengthening...
#primaryhealthcare #nurses #valued #visible

croakey.org

VHA @vichealthassoc - March 25
Via @CroakeyNews - Public health academic Penelope Smith takes readers on a journey about incorporating systems thinking into public health curriculum content and to inform learning design ow.ly/1Hj50NoODeo #PublicHealthMoves

croakey.org

Incorporating systems thinking into public health curriculum: a journey...
When public health academic Penelope Smith took charge of Croakey’s @WepublicHealth Twitter account recently, she chose the...
**Week ending 30 March:** We have good evidence about how to tackle the commercial determinants of health and foster human and planetary wellbeing, according to researchers writing in *The Lancet*’s special series on this topic.

“Our view, the most basic public health question is not whether the world has the resources or will to take such actions, but whether humanity can survive if society fails to make this effort,” they say.

Many of our stories this week highlight the importance of acting on the evidence, whether in addressing the climate crisis, the social determinants of health, incarceration or unsafe healthcare in prisons.

With a new government in New South Wales, we also provide an expert health briefing for the Premier and colleagues.

Aged care and mental health reform are also canvassed.

In an historic week, we share celebrations over the legislation of an Indigenous Voice to Parliament in South Australia, while also reporting on progress towards a constitutionally enshrined Voice at a Federal level.

Don’t miss Croakey’s inaugural Public Health Playlist, now on Spotify here, with songs for peace, equality, justice, climate action and decolonisation.
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VHA @vichealthassoc - Apr 1
Via @CroakeyNews - it has been two years since the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's final report was released. Read article:
croakey.org
What will it take to achieve meaningful aged care reform?
Introduction by Croakey: The Albanese Government introduced a new bill last week to improve "transparency and accountability across th...