Impact Report: July 2023

July 2023 was hotter than any other month in the global temperature record, and Croakey put a sustained focus on the health implications of the extreme weather events experienced around the world. Of 56 articles published during July, 14 investigated climate and health matters.

We also made a submission to a Department of Health and Aged Care consultation for a National Health and Climate Strategy, stressing the importance of developing a news and information ecosystem that is reliable, relevant and safe for communities engaging with climate mitigation and adaptation. We also published a series of articles covering other submissions to the consultation. The Guardian Australia followed up on a story we broke about the role of KPMG in the national Health and Climate Strategy consultation.

Other prominent topics during July were the First Nations Voice to Parliament, ongoing concerns about COVID complacency, the Robodebt debacle, and the Australian Government’s development of a wellbeing framework. The Croakey Conference News Service continued coverage of the 3rd International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference, and we wrapped up our coverage of the World Congress on Public Health. We celebrated NAIDOC Week, and the launch of the Women in Public Health Network.

During July, our articles were cited or cross-published by the National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners (NAATSIHWP), The Sydney Morning Herald, Oxford University Press, Pearls and Irritations, the Australian Healthcare & Hospitals Association (AHHA), the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA), and other organisations. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare also cited a Croakey article in its publication, How long can Australians live?

In July, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts invited Croakey to host a consultation for public health professionals on the Government’s plans for legislation to tackle misinformation and disinformation. Many thanks to all who participated and contributed.

We were pleased to see that 220 MPs (or their staffers) from federal, state and territory parliaments opened the Croakey News bulletin during July - including the Queensland Premier’s office and a number of health ministers. We are also being read by the NZ Ministry of Health.

Warm thanks also to the National Health Leadership Forum, a peak body representing the views of 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations working in health and wellbeing, for supporting publication of this sponsored content article, Celebrating the contributions and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals.
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.


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.

This month: 762,343 impressions | This year: 3,777,979 impressions
Happy NAIDOC Week

**Week ending 6 July:** This week, our bulletin celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander excellence in health, research and community action.

Marie McInerney speaks with Professor Kelvin Kong about receiving the 2023 National NAIDOC Person of the Year Award.

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) honours Elders as cultural knowledge holders and the driving force behind many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health groups and organisations.

Other stories highlight that more needs to be done to improve health equity – whether through mandatory regulations on junk food advertising targeting children, ensuring the NDIS is sustainable, or building capacities of rural and remote communities to deliver vital services.

Gender inequities are also highlighted in the latest edition of The Health Wrap, as well as by new research about the male-dominated world of exercise research.

On related matters, read about a new network – Women in Public Health – that aims to advance gender equity in public health leadership.

The ICYMI column reports on multiple ongoing crises – climate, COVID, conflicts – and the media's ongoing performance of Don’t Look Up.

We learn about ambitions for the Australian Centre for Evaluation to improve policy-making – a timely issue given growing concerns about the role of consultancies in health policy.

Don't miss the final story in our #WorldInTurmoil series, emphasising the need for “concerted, ongoing and collective responses” to tackle key global health concerns.

_“So by adding this layer to our Parliament, it’s actually going to make your Parliament stronger, it’s going to make the country stronger, it’s going to help us get the right direction.”_  

Professor Kelvin Kong, NAIDOC 2023 Person of the Year, on The Voice to Parliament

*Source*
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.
Croakey Professional Services

We published the latest article in a series of sponsored content from the National Health Leadership Forum. This article was also shared by the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association.

Other activities

Political analyst Bruce Wolpe dedicated his new book, *Trump's Australia*, to his wife Adjunct Associate Professor Lesley Russell, who contributed a chapter, ‘Healthcare and the Coronavirus Pandemic’. Wolpe, who has also written for Croakey on his own health issues, and Russell are pictured below for a discussion in nipaluna/Hobart with their friends, public health researcher Dr Larissa Bartlett and David Bartlett, former Premier of Tasmania.

Changes at Twitter

As many other organisations are also finding, the changes at Twitter are affecting our work in adverse ways.

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Shining some lights

**Week ending 13 July:** Our bulletin this week has strong calls for leaders to end “business as usual”, whether it be in response to the climate emergency or the ongoing COVID pandemic.

We also share some reflections for the health sector on the Robodebt debacle, asking what more could have been done to stop the scheme earlier.

Remy Shergill from the Climate and Health Alliance brings bright ideas for the first National Health and Climate Strategy, which is now in development. The deadline for submissions is fast approaching – **24 July**.

Meanwhile, researchers urge the health sector to engage and empower young people in climate advocacy and activism.

We also hear from Professor Sandra Eades, who reflects on the long road to this year’s referendum that could enshrine an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, alongside State and region-based Treaties, Truth-Telling and State-based Voices to Parliament.

Read about the policy agenda of a new coalition of health and community organisations, [Alcohol Change Australia](https://www.croakey.org/impact-and-readership/).

Peter Breadon identifies some lessons for Australian policy makers from a new initiative in the United States, Making Care Primary, while Charles Maskell-Knight fact-checks claims about how best to expand access to dental services.

The #ICYMI column examines the importance of urban planning, green spaces and quality housing for health and wellbeing. It also includes reports from #MEDINFO23, as well as updates on key global health concerns and some more snaps from NAIDOC Week.

In the ever-changing world of social media, you can find us on: [Twitter](https://twitter.com), [LinkedIn](https://linkedin.com), [Mastodon](https://mastodon.com), [Facebook](https://facebook.com), [Instagram](https://instagram.com), [AppleNews](https://applenews.com) and [Threads](https://threads.com).

Stay tuned for news of an online Croakey event discussing the “ideal” digital platform that centres the public interest. It will take place from 5pm AEST on Monday, 14 August.
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**Grace Amot Retweeted**

Institute for Health Transformation @BT_Deakin - 1h

IHIT researchers are urging the health sector to engage & empower young people in climate advocacy & activism. Read more from @GraceAmot @HannaLpitt @SimoneNicolleM & @Doc_Samantha via @CroakeyNews

croakey.org

Health sector urged to engage and empower young people in climate ..."The public health and health promotion communities must strengthen their commitment to engaging and empowering young people in ..."

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**Amy Carrad @AmyCarrad - Jul 13**

All brilliant ideas, but particularly love these two recommendations:
- Include the human right to health and intergenerational justice as principles.
- Conduct genuine engagement with First Nations Elders and communities

remyshegriff @healthy_climate

Croakey News @CroakeyNews - Jul 11

Sharing some bright ideas for the National Health and Climate Strategy croakey.org/sharing-some-b... #publichealth

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**Mitchell Ward @rockillydesign - Jul 17**

‘Press Briefing: The Ever-Shifting Landscape Of Climate Misinformation’

New video via @CoveringClimate up at croakey.org

@CroakeyNews @MelissaSweetDr

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**Leanne Wells (She/Her) - 1st**

Consultant | Director at 89 Degrees East | Non-Executive Director (Chair) 
21h - Edited: 12h

This is an excellent reflective piece on Robodebt by Melissa Sweet at Croakey Health Media. It is well worth a read.

She says that if ever there was an argument for structures to promote and embed health in all policies, Robodebt must be it.

She observes that, for all its problems, the health sector and health policy developers are generally way ahead some other areas of policy in engaging stakeholders and the voices of lived experience in policy.

Co-design and consumer, carer and community engagement are to be highly valued and guarded, and leadership and support for best practice in this area nurtured and funded.

#livedexperience #healthinallpolicies #betterpolicy

Nieves Murray Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) Carolyn Nikoloski

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**Kelly Dargan @Kelly_Dargan - 21h**

“The Federal Government has been urged to ignore advice from PHA suggesting that PHA funds have an important role in increasing access to dental services. Rather, it is the underfunded and overworked public dental services that have expertise in delivering services to vulnerable.”

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**Prof Sharon Bessell @BessellSharon - Jul 11**

An excellent piece from David Tennant

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**Leonie M. Short @LeonieMShort1 - Jul 13**

There is no rational basis for assisting the vulnerable by delivering programs through an inefficient insurance sector whose expertise is expenditure management achieved by inadequate fee schedules and arbitrary benefit limits.

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**Peter Breadon @PeterBreadon - Jul 12**

Despite a different context, a new US policy has some pointers for MyMedicare:

1. Recognise that practices are different
2. Have flexible budgets big enough to make a difference
3. Focus on equity

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**AsiaPacAPA @AsiaPacAPA - 18h**

National alliance in #Australia urges five key steps to reduce harms from alcohol via @CroakeyNews croakey.org/national-allia...

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https://www.croakey.org/impact-and-readership/
This article was also republished by the PHAA.

@WePublicHealth

Just a reminder that we welcome applications from readers interested in contributing to this collective platform.

Penny Smith and her tag-team of #PhDvoices tweeters put in a stack of preparation that paid off during a week of high-energy, high-impact tweeting.

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Other activities

Croakey contributing editor Dr Summer May Finlay spoke at an event on the referendum for a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament.

Croakey editor Jennifer Doggett was interviewed for an ABC story.

Croakey editors attended a webinar on the politics of COVID.

See our list of recommended Twitter lists.
This video was featured on our homepage.
As the planet burns

20 July: The toll of extreme heat and other climate-related events now affecting large swaths of humanity will be measured in loss of lives, damage to ecosystems and infrastructure, as well as by the impact upon our collective hopes and fears for the future.

It is more important than ever to consider the wellbeing of young people and children at times like this, as a number of articles point out this week.

We also bring some solutions; check out the discussions from the recent Doctors for the Environment Australia conference. They will mobilise hope and action.

If you haven’t already made a submission, don’t miss the 24 July deadline for the National Health and Climate Strategy consultation.

Also make sure to catch our in-depth series investigating current COVID concerns, presenting a range of perspectives and calls to action – including some pointed messages for Health and Aged Care Minister Mark Butler.

Many of our stories, with a focus on Health in All Policies, education and equity, set the scene for the impending release of Australia’s first national wellbeing framework.

We also report some clear recommendations for preventing avoidable blindness among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The latest ICYMI column brings news on the Voice to Parliament referendum, and strategies for preventing ageism. The Health Wrap investigates dental care, and plans for the new MyMedicare scheme are also under scrutiny.

Please join us for a #CroakeyLIVE discussing a better option to Twitter, Threads, Insta et al. The online discussion will take place from 5pm AEST on Monday, 14 August. You can register here.
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Lesley Russell Wolpe @LRussellWolpe · Jul 20
Repeating to @LRussellWolpe

CroakeyNews asked the Department of Health and Aged Care and several independent members of parliament to respond to concerns raised by the series on where we currently are with COVID-19 and long COVID (I would argue - not where we should be!)

croakey.org
Where's the public health messaging, Health Minister?
Alison Barrett writes: Views differ about the best way to manage Australia's current COVID situation, with some focused on vaccination

Prof Deborah Lupton MPH PhD @DALupton

Hmmm - weasel words from the Department of Health and Aged Care about COVID prevention and education. There's too much waiting around - it's time to do something that will make a difference to COVID spread, deaths in aged care and healthcare settings etc.

croakey.org
Where's the public health messaging, Health Minister?
Alison Barrett writes: Views differ about the best way to manage Australia's current COVID situation, with some focused on vaccination

Prof Brendan Crabb AC @CrabbBrendan · Jul 20

"Clean indoor air is very important for our community and this is a matter that both State and Federal Government's can act upon." - Dr Mike Freelander MP

Strong progress in this space is especially important. Much would flow from it.

croakey.org
Where's the public health messaging, Health Minister?
Alison Barrett writes: Views differ about the best way to manage Australia's current COVID situation, with some focused on vaccination

Anne-Marie Newton @amnewtonPhD · Jul 20

“If we don’t do a better job containing COVID, hospitals will necessarily consume a bigger percentage of the health dollar every year.”

“We can be doing a much better job in minimising spread by implementing sensible public health measures.”

@k_eagar qtd by @AlisonSBarnett

Croakey News @CroakeyNews · Jul 19

On COVID complacency, what are the costs? croakey.org/on-covid-compl... #publichealth

Prof Kathy Eager @k_eagar

We have no evidence that @AlboMP government is committed to minimising infection or protecting vulnerable people. History will judge it very badly for these failings @Mark_Butler_MP

Doctors for the Environment Australia @DocsEnvAus · Jul 19

#IDEA23: It's a wrap!
Thank you to all our speakers, delegates, conference organisers, sponsors and everyone who made our annual event a success!
And thank you @CroakeyNews @MelissaSweetDr for publishing the highlights as a Twitter thread.

croakey.org
Cultivating hope, and putting climate solutions in the frame
With consultations on the National Health and Climate Strategy closing soon (24 July), the recent Doctors for the Environment Australia
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Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed, CEO of the Lowitja Institute, presented a Croakey story from 2014 at the Indigenous Peoples Conference – HIV and Hepatitis Health Equity, held in Meanjin/Brisbane. Photo courtesy of Professor Ginny Barbour.
Giant steps and fast action

27 July: Our bulletin this week documents many efforts being made to address critical health concerns – while also highlighting that we need giant leaps, rather than small steps forward.

We detail some forthright feedback on plans for the long-awaited National Health and Climate Strategy – that it must be much more ambitious.

The Productivity Commission, in reviewing progress on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, also gives governments a serve. Greater accountability is needed, and the Voice to Parliament might help with this.

Meanwhile, health groups have given a thumbs up to Australia’s First Wellbeing Framework – but they also want to see much more effort in translating the words into action.

Disability services are another area where major changes are urgently needed. A new report, commissioned by the Disability Royal Commission, has called for an end to restrictive practices, such as seclusion and restraint, which cause trauma and have lasting impacts.

We also report on calls to axe co-payments for prescription medicines, as well as recommendations for the Medical Research Future Fund to prioritise research to improve our health system, addressing questions such as how best to increase access to dental care.

Don’t miss the wide-ranging discussions from a collaborative bunch of first-year PhD candidates covering cultural safety in the health workforce, the history of sexual pleasure, homelessness among women in the perinatal period, and systems thinking in public health.

As usual, the #ICYMI column brings details of upcoming events that are sure to be of interest for many Croakey readers.
We established **a new category** to archive articles about the National Health and Climate Strategy – see below.
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Making news

Croakey Health Media member Dr Summer May Finlay is speaking up for the constitutionally enshrined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament.

Croakey Health Media director James Blackwell featured in an article about the referendum in *The Canberra Times*. 