

The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Minister,

Re Climate Change is a Health Issue

First of all, we thank you for your hard work and commitment in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Children's Healthcare Australasia (CHA) is a national not for profit organisation of more than 90 children's hospitals and paediatric units across Australia. Together our members care for two thirds of children requiring hospital admission each year. CHA's mission is to accelerate sharing of innovations and best practices among paediatric services with a view to enhancing the safety, quality & equity of access to care for all children and young people.

We are seeing rising concern across the children's healthcare sector about the health harms already being caused by climate change. The latest IPCC report predicting a 4°C rise in global temperature this century has heightened concern about the negative impacts of climate change on the health and wellbeing of today's children & young people in their lifetimes.

Human health and equity must be central to all climate change policy decisions. State and territory governments have recognised this. We would encourage our national government to do so as well.

The health sector itself contributes an estimated 7% of Australia's annual carbon emissions. That's why our member hospitals are taking concrete steps to reduce their own emissions significantly by 2030. However, there is an urgent need for national leadership across the economy and society to make a meaningful difference.

In the lead up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November, we urge the federal government to commit Australia to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 if not sooner. All sectors of government, economy, and society, the health sector included, can then work together to achieve this important goal for the benefit of our children.

We hope to hear from you about how you propose to protect a healthy future for the children & young people of Australia.

Yours sincerely,

John Stanway
President
Children's Healthcare Australasia

Dr Barb Vernon
Chief Executive Officer

28 September 2021