

Climate Change & Health

Developing a Regional Framework

Background

Climate change poses significant risk to our society, environment, and public health. However, taking action on climate change also presents an opportunity to improve health and reduce inequality.

The LMPHU and stakeholders recognises the urgent need to address the impact of climate change and take proactive steps to mitigate and adapt to its effects. Climate change and Health is a LMPHU priority focus for 2023-25.

A regional Climate Change and Health framework will raise awareness of the impact of climate change on health, align effort and demonstrates our commitment to safeguarding the health and well-being of our community, while contributing to a sustainable future.

Objectives

Our objective was to develop a Loddon Mallee Climate Change and Health Framework (The Framework) in collaboration with local cross-sector stakeholders. The Framework will guide the implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation action across the region.

Our approach

1. Engage local stakeholders

An expression of interest was sent to CEOs of local organisations including multicultural and Aboriginal services to participate on The Framework Steering Committee.

2. Convene Steering Committee

The selection of the Steering Committee was based on geographical spread, expertise and cross-sector and priority group representation

3. Promote The Framework

The Framework has been promoted in local newspapers, newsletters and social media. It was also presented to health services and various networks.

Steering Committee Members

ADAPT Loddon Mallee (DEECA)
Sustainability Victoria
Jesuit Social Services (Climate Justice)
Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services
City of Greater Bendigo
Echuca Regional Health
Macedon Ranges Shire Council
Mount Alexander Shire Council
Dhelkaya Health
Northern District Community Health
Womens Health Loddon Mallee
Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group
Heathcote Health

Reviewed by Dja Dja Wurrung Clans
Aboriginal Corporation

At a glance

Challenges

- Organisations have the will but limited resources to commit their time
- Diversity of audience
- Stakeholders overwhelmed with the size of the climate change work

Benefits

- Raised awareness of the relationship of climate change and health
- Local ownership of the framework
- Identified gaps in governance, infrastructure, resources and risk assessment and mitigation tools





Outcomes

There have been a number of intended and unintended outcomes from the development of The Framework:

- the approval process for The Framework through Bendigo Health has re-invigorated internal discussions of Bendigo Health’s environmental sustainability structures and strategies
- the LMPHU has presented The Framework to health services, Latrobe University conference, Loddon Mallee Health Network, local networks, sub-advisory committees and emergency management committees
- Three health services have invited the LMPHU to sit on their internal environmental sustainability groups
- The Framework has supported the development of the Climate Change and Health Implementation Plans with local cross-sector stakeholders
- The Framework has demonstrated our commitment to this work and as a result we have agreement from state-wide and regional experts to form the Climate and Health Leaders, Loddon Mallee Network to explore opportunities to collaborate.
- LMPHU is represented on the VCOSS Health and Energy Nexus project critical friends working group and health and energy systems mapping working group.

The Loddon Mallee Climate Change and health Framework is available on the [Bendigo Health website](#).

Putting the framework into action

In addition to the work with health services, there are a number of grass roots climate change projects that are in the planning phase. These include developing Cool Space Models, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self determination, development of a climate resilient housing resource and a Healthy Sustainable Food System Strategy in the Mallee and Murray sub-regions.

Projects funded include the Cool It Street project, establishment (or enhancement) of community gardens, urban farming and food sharing events. LMPHU have an agreement with LaTrobe University to co-design a research project focusing on climate change and health.

Project learnings

- The input of the The Framework Steering Committee was incredibly valuable, resulting in a more comprehensive, practical and relevant framework.
- Stakeholders were keen to address climate change and were appreciative that the Framework would provide a regional platform for this work.
- The Framework is a useful tool for engaging stakeholders and starting the conversation about climate change action.
- This process identified that more work is needed in developing relevant indicators and associated data sources.

Reach

Newspaper articles x 2
 Newsletters x 3
 Social media post x 1 (4 shares)
 Radio interview x 1
 Presentations x 11
 Website views x 3,087
 Promotion and engagement is on-going