

Media Release



CLIMATE AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

Billions in health benefits from targeted climate action

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Actions that cut carbon pollution can improve Australians' health and could save billions of dollars and thousands of lives each year, a new report finds.

Our Uncashed Dividend: The Health Benefits of Climate Action is jointly produced by the Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA)—a national coalition of health groups—and The Climate Institute. The report is supported by the Australian Medical Association (AMA) and Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA).

The report draws together a large and growing body of evidence from health and medical research showing substantial health benefits linked to measures to cut emissions.

“Evidence from around the world suggests we’re missing out if we don’t cash in on the big health dividend that cutting emissions can deliver,” report author and CAHA Convenor Fiona Armstrong said.

“Cleaner energy, cycling and walking, protecting bushland, energy efficient buildings and low-carbon food choices all contribute to less chronic illnesses, including heart and lung disease, certain cancers, obesity, diabetes, and depression.”

“One recent global study, for instance, found that for every tonne of carbon dioxide they avoid countries could save an average of \$46 in health costs—around twice Australia’s starting price for carbon.”

Armstrong said that few Australians realise just how much the country’s pollution-dependent economy is costing them each year, for example:

- Coal-fired power burdens the community with lung, heart, and nervous system diseases costing an estimated \$2.6 billion; and
- Pollution from cars, trucks and other modes of fossil-fuelled transport racks up a health bill estimated at around \$3.3 billion. In Australia, air pollution is thought to kill more people every year than the road toll.

The Climate Institute CEO John Connor said: “Climate action can be challenging, but it can be a solutions multiplier, delivering better health, substantial economic savings and improved quality of life.”

“Climate action can mean that people’s health and life expectancy improves, with fewer sick days, fewer visits to the doctor, fewer hospital admissions, reduced use of medication, and increased productivity.”

Our Uncashed Dividend and related materials, including videos, is available at www.caha.org.au and www.climateinstitute.org.au

For further information (including AMA and AHHA statements)

Fiona Armstrong • Convenor, Climate and Health Alliance • convenor@caha.org.au or 0438 900 005
John Connor • CEO, The Climate Institute • 0413 968 475