



RACP
Specialists. Together
EDUCATE ADVOCATE INNOVATE

POLICY & ADVOCACY REPORT

Report for quarter Q3 July to September 2023

This report is valid until end of September 2023

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians

The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of over 20,000 physicians and almost 10,000 trainee physicians, across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The RACP represents a broad range of medical specialties including general medicine, paediatrics and child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, neurology, oncology, public health medicine, infectious diseases medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric medicine, and addiction medicine. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients and the community.

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We acknowledge and pay respect to the Traditional Custodians and Elders – past, present and emerging – of the lands and waters on which RACP members and staff live, learn and work. The RACP acknowledges Māori as tangata whenua and Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners in Aotearoa New Zealand.





Highlights

- **AoNZ election campaign** - National coverage of the AoNZ Election statement featured in the NZ Herald including responses from AoNZ Health Minister and Opposition Health Spokesperson with the full position statement published online [NZ Herald](#)
- **Climate and health** - The RACP led a [joint statement](#) by a coalition of 13 medical colleges calling for the National Health and Climate Strategy to be fully funded, have National Cabinet sign-off, be guided by First Nations knowledge and leadership, and build healthy and climate resilient communities. The joint statement received significant media and social media coverage, including the RACP President Dr Jacqueline Small appearing on [ABC TV in a live interview](#). The [Australian Associated Press](#) also picked up the statement as did several radio stations, including [ABC AM Radio](#).
- **Disability** – After a lengthy and comprehensive review in partnership with the Disability Policy and Advocacy Advisory Group and National Disability Services, a new [RACP NDIS Guide for Physicians](#) has been published on the RACP website. The Guide includes more Indigenous and culturally safe content and will continue to be the RACP foremost tool for upskilling and educating RACP members on the NDIS, as well as how best to support and advocate for their patients with disability.
- **First Nations Voice to Parliament** - RACP signed an [open letter](#) in support of recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution and a Voice to Parliament. 125 medical colleges and leading health organisations also signed the letter. The RACP also ran a campaign of members explaining why we need to listen to Indigenous peoples to improve healthcare.
- **Healthcare Reform** – The RACP made submissions to significant healthcare reform matters over this period including the Australian Government's National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA) Mid-Term Review, the MBS Review Advisory Committee on the MBS Telehealth Principles Review, and Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport inquiry on diabetes.

Advocacy campaign updates

- The [Healthy Climate Future campaign petition](#) has been updated based on the RACP's joint statement with 12 other medical colleges and P&A is working with these colleges to promote and grow the campaign. We reached out to specialty societies about endorsing the Healthy Climate Future campaign earlier this year and 10 specialty societies have now endorsed the campaign.
- The [Switch off the Junk campaign petition](#), which is part of the broader Kids Catch Up campaign, continues to be promoted widely, including through Facebook and Instagram marketing, to grow the Kids Catch Up campaign supporter base. We continue to remain engaged with Member of Parliament Dr Sophie Scamps and her team regarding cross-promotion opportunities that align with our Switch off the Junk campaign and the draft Healthy Kids Advertising Bill that Dr Scamps introduced to Parliament.
- The [Kids Catch Up campaign](#) is undergoing a revitalisation, removing COVID from the campaign line, and modifying the key policy asks to move beyond the COVID pandemic and look to the future. The Paediatrics and Child Health Division (PCHD) are working with Policy and Advocacy around a refreshed set of asks, which will be launched in coming months.

2022-2026 College Policy and Advocacy (CPAC) Plan Focus Areas

1 - First Nations Health and Equity

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee (ATSIHC)

- ATSIHC members attended a meeting on 22 September 2023.
- The joint ATSIHC, Māori Health and Board meeting is scheduled for 23 November 2023.

Indigenous Strategic Framework (ISF) Steering Committee

- Quarterly ISF reporting has been introduced and will be briefed to the Senior Leadership Team each quarter.
- ISF quarterly reports aim to recognise the good work being done across the RACP to improve First Nations cultural safety and health outcomes and highlight key achievements against the ISF priorities.
- Teams and departments across the RACP provided their quarterly reports for Q1 and Q2 2023 using a standard reporting template.
- Quarterly reports will be used to develop annual ISF reports to the Board at the end of Q4.
- An Annual ISF Snapshot Report is currently being developed for the Board, showcasing ISF highlights for 2022.

Reconciliation Australia reporting

- Annual Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) report submitted 20th September.
- Innovate RAP Draft submitted and awaiting response and feedback.

The Voice to Parliament Social media campaign

- The Board approved a [public statement](#) supporting the constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, which was published on 4 August. It also approved a communications plan to supplement the RACP's statement. The Health in Social Policy team have undertaken a range of activities to support the RACP's position, including:
 - Posting information about the Voice and its health benefits on social media platforms (LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, the ROC and Twitter).
 - Creating a 'landing page' on the RACP website with information about the Voice.
 - Signing an [open letter](#) supporting the Voice, along with 125 other medical colleges and leading health organisations.
 - Posting self-recorded video messages from RACP members responding to the question 'why is listening to First Nations voices important in healthcare?'
- The Health in Social Policy team are also developing a 'post-referendum' communications plan to support the RACP's work following the vote on 14 October 2023.

Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA)

- AIDA conference (16 to 18 November) planning continues. The conference features a presentation by Lee Bradfield, Indigenous Strategy Manager, on the RACP's Our Deadly Doctors network.

2 - Healthcare Reform

- P&A supported the August 2023 meeting of the Australian Health Care Reform Working Group to identify priorities, objectives and actions for its 2023-25 workplan, and plan an internal consultation process that establishes linkages with related projects including the Physicians of the Future report, the Customer Advisory Group, the Physician Health and Well Being program and the Evolve program.
- P&A also supported the co-chairs of the CPAC's Australian Health Care Reform Working Group to develop a workshop on integrated care at the 3rd Asia Pacific Conference on Integrated Care (APIC3) in November 2023.
- The RACP responded to the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA) Framework for Pricing Public Hospital Services [RACP Submission IHACPA Pricing Framework 24-25](#). Our submission addressed the cost impacts of patient vulnerability and complexity, the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, classifications used to describe and price public hospital services, adjustments to the National Efficient Price and the National Efficient Cost.
- Similarly, the RACP submitted to the Australian Government's National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA) Mid-Term Review. Our submission called attention to the need for improved governance and accountability, and clarity on how prevention and innovative funding and care models will be prioritised moving forward [RACP Submission to the Australian Government's National Health Reform Agreement \(NHRA\) Addendum 2020-2025 Mid-term Review](#).
- The RACP provided advice to the MBS Review Advisory Committee on the MBS Telehealth Principles Review, along with a research summary on phone consultations versus video to support our ongoing advocacy for the reinstatement of phone consultations on a permanent basis. Pleasingly the recently revised draft Principles now being consulted adopt the RACP's call to not automatically prioritise video over the phone and to reinstate a subsequent consultation telephone item for specialists (MBS item 116).
- The RACP briefed ACT Health Minister on the RACP [Model of Chronic Care Management](#) and examples of integrated models of care in action. Federal, state and territory support for the model and similar approaches is central to their effective implementation and better integration of our healthcare system.
- The RACP advocated for Federal funding and reforms to reduce the environmental drivers of poor diet and sugary drink consumption via a submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport inquiry on diabetes. The submission has been featured in national print and broadcast news media outlets for the last few weeks following the publication of a related College media release.

- The RACP was invited to give evidence at an inquiry hearing and was represented by Professor Louise Baur AM FRACP. The Healthcare Reform team prepared comprehensive briefings supporting Prof Baur's evidence.
- Through August to mid-September, a social media campaign was run to raise FASD awareness and roles of health professionals in its prevention, diagnosis and management.
- P&A coordinated a RACP endorsement for the ACSQHC's updated *Hip Fracture Clinical Care Standards and related clinical care indicators*.
- P&A supported the development of the RACP/RANZCP Gambling Addiction scoping paper which was submitted to CPAC in September 2023 and have progressed the development of a new cross-college Illicit Drugs Position Statement.
- P&A supported the Office of the Dean in preparing an overview of physician workforce and data collection systems for workforce planning and collaborative work with the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care.

Evolve

- The Evolve Strategy 2022-26, Implementation Plan and Consultation Summary documents were approved by CPAC in July 2023. The [Evolve Strategy](#) and [Implementation Consultation Summary](#) documents are available in the members P&A RACP library. The Strategy and Implementation Plan are underpinned by the leadership and involvement of RACP members, the CAG, Evolve PAIG, Divisions, Chapters, Faculties and Specialty Societies.
- The team developed and promoted an Australian and New Zealand Blood Transfusion Evolve Top-5 recommendations infographic, via social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) and the ROC.



Australian and New Zealand Blood Transfusion Evolve Top-5 recommendations infographic

- We also progressed work on CSANZ, ASCEPT, NZ Paediatric and Gastroenterology Network's Evolve lists and working with ANZBTS on Evolve case studies.
- Promotion of the ANZSN Evolve recommendations was held at the ANZSN ASM 2023 from 4 – 6 September.
- We are working in close consultation with AChSHM and reviewing current evidence to update AChSHM Evolve recommendation 4 and the associated rationale.

3 - Climate and Health

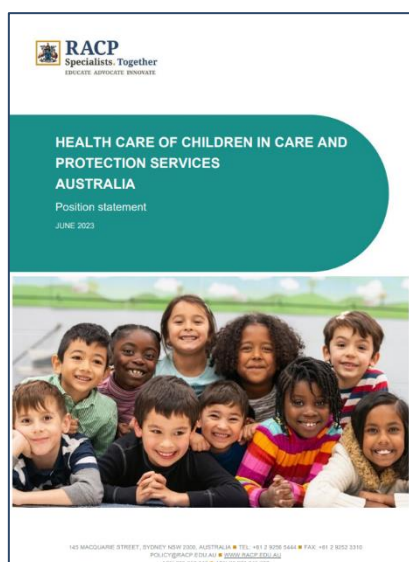
- The RACP made a [submission](#) to the National Health and Climate Strategy consultation, advocating for a comprehensive approach that prioritises building healthy and climate resilient communities alongside a health systems focus. We consulted with RACP bodies and specialty societies and received significant member input and engagement, as well as input from teams across RACP.
- During the consultation period, the RACP engaged with health stakeholders concerned about climate change and health and met with officials from the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care.
- The Climate Change and Health Multi-College Advisory Committee met with Madeleine Skellern, Director of the National Health, Sustainability and Climate Unit. Associate Professor Linda Selvey, Chair of the Climate Change and Health Working Group attended a workshop on the Strategy.
- Following our submission on the National Strategy, the RACP led a [joint statement](#) by a coalition of 13 medical colleges calling for the National Strategy to be fully funded, have National Cabinet sign-off, be guided by First Nations knowledge and leadership, and build healthy and climate resilient communities.
- The joint statement received significant media and social media coverage, including the RACP President Dr Jacqueline Small appearing on [ABC TV in a live interview](#). The [Australian Associated Press](#) also picked up the statement as did several radio stations, including [ABC AM Radio](#).
- The [Healthy Climate Future campaign petition](#) has been updated based on the joint statement and P&A is working with 12 other medical colleges to promote and grow the campaign.
- P&A continues to meet with Stephen Bouwhuis, Assistant Secretary, Environmental Health & Climate Change Branch, Australian Department of Health and Aged Care to discuss progress on the National Strategy and advocate for our key asks.
- The RACP supported Asthma Australia's calls for consultation on the National Strategy via social media, including a Twitter thread and a post on LinkedIn, as part of continued stakeholder engagement and advocacy on the National Strategy.
- Associate Professor Linda Selvey attended the National Resilience Taskforce health sector roundtable on national crisis response and recovery, run by the Department of Home Affairs. A/Prof Selvey raised our key asks around climate resilience, prevention, and the role of the Australia Centre for Disease Control. We are continuing to engage in this matter through development of a submission that summarises the RACP's relevant work in relation to crisis response and recovery.
- Professor Lynne Madden represented the RACP at the annual Australian Medical Association (AMA) and Doctors for the Environment Australia (DEA) annual webinar on climate change and health. Prof Madden shared the RACP's climate change and health policy, advocacy, and continuing professional development work. She also shared the RACP's progress with becoming a more environmentally sustainable College. The RACP also endorsed a follow-up [communique](#)

led by [DEA](#) and the [AMA](#) calling for increased investment in sustainable healthcare and urgent action on climate change.

- The RACP [wrote to the Australian Prime Minister](#) highlighting the health harms of fossil fuels. Related to these letters, Dr Monique Ryan MP invited PRACP to attend a Climate and Health Day of Action in Canberra on 8 August. Dr Small was scheduled to speak at a lunch briefing but was not able to attend. Several RACP members attended in an individual capacity.
- The Climate Change and Health Working Group met in August to discuss the National Strategy, recent P&A work, and next steps for the RACP's climate change and health work.

4 - Populations in Focus

Paediatrics and Child Health



- The [Health Care of Children in Care and Protection Services position statement](#) is available on the RACP website and a plan is in development to support advocacy on its recommendations.
 - The RACP supported Child Protection Week (3-9 September) on social media and promoted the recommendations in the position statement.
 - The PCHD President Professor Nitin Kapur met with the Federal Minister for Communications' Chief of Staff to discuss the need for regulation of junk food advertising targeting children and the RACP Switch off the Junk Campaign.
 - The PCHD Policy and Advocacy Committee (PPAC) are working on a 'refreshed' set of asks for the Kids Catch Up campaign to have a reduced COVID focus and incorporate a First Nations specific ask.
-
- Following the RACP submission to the Senate Inquiry into assessment and support services for people with ADHD, the RACP was invited to provide evidence at a public hearing alongside a representative from the RACGP. Paediatrician and ADHD expert Associate Professor Daryl Efron provided the RACP's evidence. This focused on models of care to support assessment and services and the role of the NDIS in supporting people diagnosed with ADHD.
 - The PCHD led the RACP endorsement of the UK Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health 2023 edition of *The Physical Signs of Child Sexual Abuse (The Purple Book)*. The Purple Book aims to support good practice in relation to the paediatric forensic examination where there are concerns about child sexual abuse.

Adolescents & Young Adults

- The Youth Appropriate Health Care Working Group is progressing development of a new position statement on Youth Appropriate Health Care and will shortly be establishing a new Youth Advisory Group to support consultation and development of this statement.

Disability

- The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability report and recommendations were released at the end of September. Outcomes from the NDIS Review are due in October. Recommendations from these inquiries will help guide future policy and advocacy work for people living with disability.
- We have a new [Disability webpage](#) that will be used to house all disability-related materials, including the new NDIS Guide for Physicians.

Rehabilitation

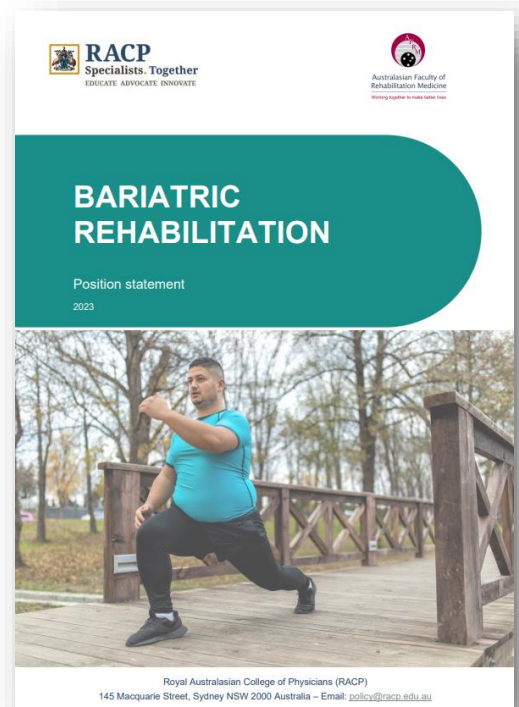
- The [Bariatric Rehabilitation position statement](#) has been distributed widely to stakeholders with a recording of the launch event and a survey to inform implementation of its recommendations into practice.
- The AFRM has been working on a media statement advocating for the Australian Government to consider actions that would support best service delivery and management of patients with long COVID.

Palliative medicine

- A small group of interested physicians have met during August and September for initial discussions of the Decision Making in End of Life in Infants, Children and Adolescents position statement which is due for review. Work continues to identify the best approach for this document to address gaps and needs.

Addiction medicine

- P&A supported the Joint AFPHM / AChAM Drug Policy Working Group to finalise the consultation draft revised Position Statement on Drug Policy. The revised Position Statement will replace the 2003 Position Statement and set out a new health-focused approach to illicit drug policy, including preventative and harm reduction measures, evidence-based treatment services and regulatory options to support reduced harm from substance use. The revised Position



Statement will be subject to consultation with internal and external stakeholders over the coming months.

COVID-19

- Following the RACP [submission](#) to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Long COVID and Repeated COVID Infections and the release of the [Inquiry report](#), the RACP was invited by the Victorian Department of Health to appoint a representative to attend the Long COVID Conference. The invite-only conference brought together leading researchers, clinicians and policy makers and showcased presentations on clinician and consumer experiences, knowledge and emerging evidence on managing long COVID care. Professor Steven Faux FAFRM, clinical lead for NSW Health's Rehabilitation Community of Practice in COVID-19, and who helped establish one of the first long COVID clinics in NSW, represented the RACP.

Health care of workers

- AFOEM advocacy for the establishment of a National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry was rewarded with the development of supporting legislation, critical to addressing accelerated silicosis in Australia. In August, AFOEM led a joint [submission](#) with TSANZ to the Community Affairs Legislation Committee Inquiry on the legislation.
- A draft background paper and identification of key issues has been developed to support the project work of the Improving the Health of Health Care Workers Working Group.
- A background paper for the AFOEM Value of OEM Physicians in Healthcare Working Group is in draft. An Aotearoa New Zealand representative on this group has recently been secured.

Aged Care

- A recent cross-College consultation allowed the RACP to provide a [substantial submission](#) to the Department of Health and Aged Care regarding the proposed foundations of the new Aged Care Act.

Youth Justice and Raise the Age Advocacy

- RACP members and Derbarl Yerrigan Aboriginal Health Service doctors met with the Western Australian Minister for Corrective Services to discuss the health needs of young people incarcerated at Casuarina Prison and Banksia Hill Youth Detention Centre.
- P&A are developing a scoping paper to support the development of a 'Raise the Age' position statement. This will be used to provide a stronger health focus for the campaign and clarify our role –to 'contribute a health and medical perspective' as to why there should be a national and consistent minimum age of criminal responsibility of at least 14 years, without exception.
- P&A is updating the current Raise the Age Advocacy Plan to supplement the position statement.
- The National Raise the Age Steering Committee have decided against any major advocacy activities in the lead up to the next Standing Council of Attorneys General meeting. The Attorneys

General Working Group on Raising the Age is yet to release its report on alternatives to criminalisation.

Aotearoa New Zealand (AoNZ)

Aotearoa NZ Election campaign

- The RACP 2023 Aotearoa New Zealand Election statement was published following extensive consultation including a member survey, engagement with Government Relations firm Capital, and engagement with the Aotearoa New Zealand Policy and Advocacy Committee and the Māori Health Committee.
- The election campaign calls on the government to #HealHealthcare, and commit to ensuring our health workforce is planned, trained, and retained. The Election Statement set out four priority policy areas for action to support our health workforce and heal our health system:
 - Data-driven and evidence-informed health workforce planning
 - Grow the medical workforce to reflect the diversity of the population
 - Address barriers to accessing Telehealth
 - Prevent burnout to retain workforce and improve patient outcomes.
- The [NZ Herald](#) published a story highlighting the AoNZ Election media release, following an interview with Aotearoa New Zealand President Dr Stephen Inns. Health Minister Dr Ayesha Verrall and National's Health Spokesperson Dr Shane Reti were also interviewed and have commented in detail on the RACP's election asks. Dr Verrall has expressed support for expanding telehealth, and is focused on reducing the 'postcode lottery' and workforce retention, and Dr Reti has expressed broad agreement with the RACP's asks.

AoNZ Endorsements

- RACP has endorsed Child Poverty Action Group's three key election asks - free preschool education for every child; a warm, safe dry house for every child and good food for every child.in Aotearoa NZ (24 July 2023).

State and Territory Advocacy

Northern Territory

- P&A working on communications to the NT Health Chief Executive to secure an ongoing relationship with the NT Committee.
- P&A is following up on other meetings held by the President during site visits with advocacy partners in the NT in July.
- P&A is supporting the NT Committee's engagement and participation in the NT Government's consultation on the proposed introduction of Voluntary Assisted Dying.

South Australia

- Continued engagement with the Health Minister and the SA Health led by the SA Trainees' Committee about physician wellbeing, workload, and protected time for teaching and learning at the SA Women's and Children's Hospital.
- Coordination with the SA Office and the Office of the Dean regarding concerns raised about doctors with research-only appointments being assigned clinical responsibilities.

Western Australia

- Meeting with the Minister of Corrective Services regarding Casuarina Prison and raising the age of criminal responsibility (more detail above).
- The Chair attended a [WA Health Workforce Summit](#) on 7 August 2023 hosted by the WA Minister for Health.

NSW/ACT

- The NSW/ACT Committee has sought a meeting with the NSW Health Minister to discuss accreditation, wellbeing, training, and other NSW Committee priorities. P&A is engaging with the Minister's office to bring this meeting about.
- The NSW/ACT Committee is engaging with the clinical leads for Voluntary Assisted Dying, due to come into effect in NSW in November 2023.

Tasmania

- P&A is supporting the Tasmanian Committee to engage with the Tasmanian Government on workforce, training sustainability, and related areas identified in its [submission](#) to the Tasmanian Long Term Health Plan.
- P&A is also engaging with the Tasmanian Committee to support RACP attendance at the AIDA Conference on Nipaluna Country (Hobart) in November 2023

Queensland

- P&A and the Committee's executive officer met with the QLD Health Minister's senior policy advisor to secure a ministerial meeting for the QLD Chair to raise concerns about workforce and wellbeing.
- Advocacy is underway to follow up on implementation of the recommendations following identified failures in clinical care at Bamaga Hospital, coordinated with the QLD Committee, ATSIHC Chair, PCHD President, and RACP President.

Submissions and endorsements

Late June

- [Provision of and access to dental services in Australia \(Senate inquiry\)](#)

July

- [Pricing Framework for Public Hospital Services 2024-25 \(Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority\)](#)
- [Draft National Care and Support Economy Strategy \(Prime Minister and Cabinet\)](#)
- Letter from the President, Dr Jacqueline Small, to the Australian Prime Minister on [health harms of fossil fuels](#)
- Endorsement of [Child Poverty Action Group's three key election asks](#) - free preschool education for every child; a warm, safe dry house for every child and good food for every child in Aotearoa NZ

Aug

- [National Health and Climate Strategy \(Commonwealth Health Department\)](#)
- [Joint Submission \(RACP-AFOEM & TSANZ\) to the Inquiry into the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry Bill 2023 and the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry \(Consequential Amendments\) Bill 2023](#)
- Feedback on the draft Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) Clinical Guideline for Abortion Care
- [RACP submission to Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport - Inquiry into Diabetes](#)

September

- Endorsement of UK Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health's 2023 edition of the *Physical Signs of Child Sexual Abuse ('The Purple Book')* (due to be launched late October)
- [Submission to the Department of Health and Aged Care foundations of the new Aged Care Act](#)

Media and advocacy

July

Media releases:

- [New research shows how to slash hospital re-admission by half through nurse follow ups | 21 July 2023](#)
- RACP endorsement of the [Change the Record media release](#) into raising the age of criminal responsibility, including comment from PRACP (Australia) | 18 July 2023

- RACP endorsement of [Child Poverty Action Group media release](#) on Aotearoa NZ election asks | 6 July 2023
- ['Innovations in health must work to reduce health inequities' says RACP](#) | 3 July 2023

August

Media releases:

- [Physicians call on all states & territories to provide universal early learning for three-year-old children](#) | 29 August 2023
- [Intergenerational report highlights the critical need for prevention, and for specialists to be included in multidisciplinary care](#) | 24 August 2023
- [The RACP supports an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, in pursuit of health equity for all First Nations people](#) | 4 August 2023
- [Australia's healthcare system must get ready for the next climate disaster](#) | 2 August 2023


Media coverage:

- [Major concerns healthcare system unprepared for extreme weather events](#) | ABC TV, 2 August 2023
- [Infectious diseases, coughs and stress: Why doctors want 'urgent action' on this threat](#) | SBS online | 2 August 2023
- [Medical colleges urge action to shore up health system against climate change](#) | The Guardian liveblog | 2 August 2023
- The [Australian Associated Press](#) also picked up the statement as did several radio stations, including [ABC AM Radio](#) | 2 August 2023
- [Medical colleges urge action to shore up health system against climate change](#) | The Guardian liveblog | 2 August 2023
- [Medical groups raise climate alarm](#) | ABC AM | 2 August 2023
- [Major concerns healthcare system unprepared for extreme weather events](#) | ABC | 2 August 2023
- [Health system 'unprepared' for next climate disaster](#) | The Canberra Times | 2 August 2023
- [Critical climate call: Over 100,000 doctors demand urgent action](#) | Healthy Industry Hub | 3 August 2023



2 Aug 2023 07:01 AEST

Medical colleges urge action to shore up health system against climate change

 Emily Wind

Twelve of Australia's medical colleges, representing more than 100,000 doctors, have penned a joint statement to the government arguing that without urgent action Australia's healthcare system will remain unprepared to tackle the health risks posed by climate change.

In its statement, the colleges write:

“We, as medical experts, are very concerned that Australian healthcare systems remain unprepared to handle extreme weather events that may be just around the corner.**”**

The statement calls on the federal government to ensure its upcoming national health and climate strategy is fully-funded on an ongoing basis, has national cabinet sign-off, is guided by First Nation knowledge and leadership and builds resilient communities by mobilising sectors outside of health.

Dr Jacqueline Small, the president of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, said a strategy for reducing emissions is positive but local communities need to know they'll be able to access healthcare in a timely and effective way if a climate event occurs.

- [RACP says it supports a Voice as step towards 'genuine recognition'](#) | Sydney Morning Herald liveblog | 4 August 2023
- [RACP says it supports a Voice as step towards 'genuine recognition'](#) | Brisbane Times | 4 August 2023

September

Media releases:

- [Increase access to bariatric surgeries and medicines needed to tackle diabetes and obesity epidemic](#) | 8 September 2023
- [Australia isn't ready for extreme weather - Climate and Health Strategy urgently needed](#) | 20 September 2023
- [Workforce data shows physician shortages across Aotearoa New Zealand](#) | 29 September 2023

Media coverage:

- [6PR Perth Radio Mornings](#) | Featuring Professor Louise Baur | 7 September 2023
- [GPs can't avoid weight chat, but stigma an issue](#) | Medical Republic | 8 September 2023
- [ABC Radio Melbourne Drive program](#) | Featuring Professor Louise Baur | 8 September 2023
- [Obesity Overhaul](#) | National Nine News | 8 September 2023
- [WIN News network](#) (part of 9 News network) | Featuring Professor Louise Baur | 8 September 2023



- [Diabetes 'needs dedicated MBS item numbers'](#) | Medical Republic | 11 September 2023
- [Engineered stone: Federal government under pressure to release Safe Work's ban report](#) | Featuring Dr Graeme Edwards, RACP Accelerated Silicosis spokesperson | 11 September 2023
- [Australians are being urged to develop heatwave plans. Here's what you need to know](#) | The Guardian | 21 September 2023
- [Ahead of a grim summer, pressure mounts on Federal Government for effective climate action](#) | Croakey | 21 September 2023
- [The places in New Zealand where patients are 100km from a doctor](#) | The New Zealand Herald | 29 September 2023

Stakeholder and Government engagement activity summary

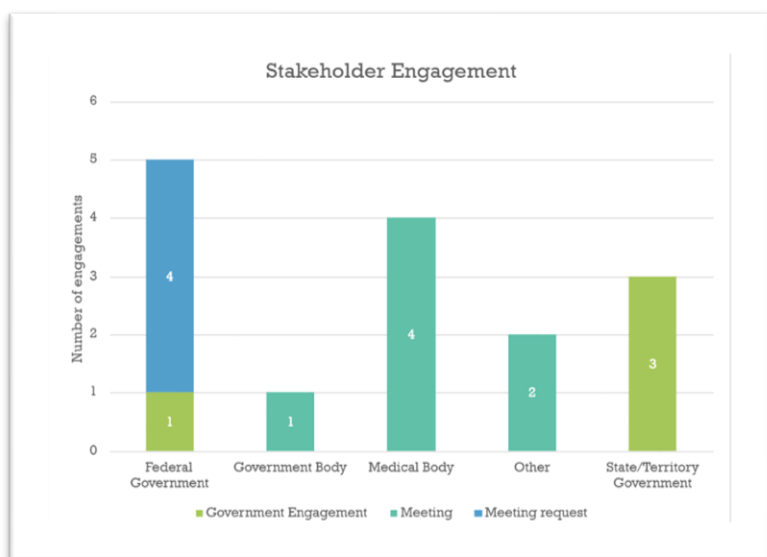


Figure 1. Total number & activity type of stakeholder and government engagement July to September 2023

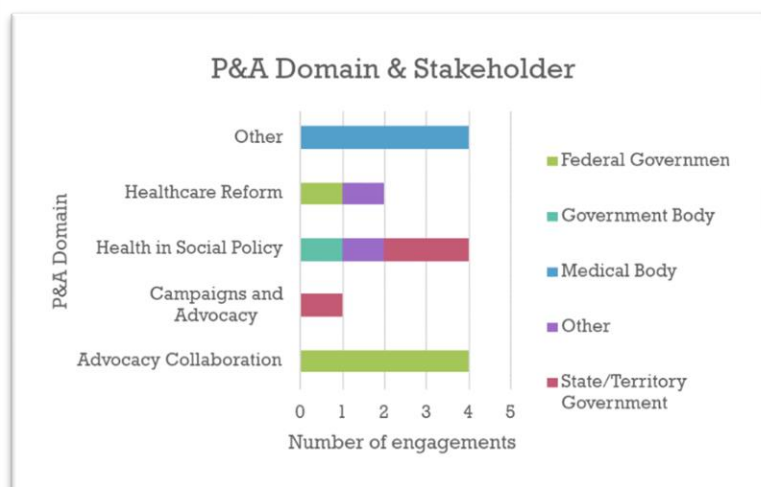


Figure 2. Total number & advocacy domain of stakeholder and government engagement July to September 2023

Quick Overview July to September 2023

Total activities: 15

Activity Type	Engagement Type	Stakeholder
Meeting	7	Federal Government 4 Federal Government 5
Government Engagement	4	State/Territory Government 3 State/Territory Government 3
Meeting request	4	All other engagements 8 Government Body 1 Medical Body 4 Other 2

Stakeholder meetings

July

- 17 July: meeting with Blair O'Connor, Director, Environmental Health & Climate Change Branch, Australian Department of Health and Aged Care to discuss climate matters and dust diseases/silicosis.
- 31 July: the P&A Paeds Team and Manager met with the Australian Medical Association Policy Advisor to discuss shared interests.

August

- 10 August: PCHD President, Professor Nitin Kapur, and P&A team met with representatives from the Australia and New Zealand Society for Paediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes (ANZSPED) to discuss care for children with differences/disorders of sex development.
- 29 August 2023: regular meeting with Stephen Bouwhuis, Assistant Secretary, Environmental Health & Climate Change Branch, Australian Department of Health and Aged Care, to discuss climate matters and dust diseases/accelerated silicosis.
- 29 August: Timothy Bowen, GM, Policy and Advocacy met with Chesney O'Donnell, RACS Manager Policy & Advocacy to discuss shared interests and ongoing engagement.

September

- 8 September: P&A GM met with Melissa Doyle, RANZCR P&A GM to discuss shared interests and ongoing engagement.
- 8 September: P&A GM met with ACRRM policy team to discuss shared interests and ongoing engagement.
- 13 September: Dr Selina Namchee Lo Executive Director at the Australian Global Health Alliance and Consulting Editor for The Lancet met with Nicola Lewis EGM Policy & Advocacy to discuss Dr Namchee Lo's work at The Lancet and the Australian Global Health Alliance.
- 13 September: P&A EGM, P&A GM and P&A Health Reform Manager met with Kylie Woolcock, CEO & Adj. Associate Professor Rebecca Haddock, ED Knowledge Exchange from the Australian Healthcare & Hospitals Association to discuss voluntary patient enrolment (My Medicare).
- 18 September: AChPM President, AChPM President-elect and P&A team met with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) to discuss their new Palliative Care Pharmacist Foundation Training program project and how the RACP can add value.
- 19 September: P&A GM and P&A Managers met with James Grey ACEM GM, Health Equity in Emergency Care Andrew Macdonald ACEM GM, Policy & Public Affairs & Lee Moskwa, ACEM Policy and Advocacy Manager to discuss shared interests and ongoing engagement.

Government relations

July

- 12 July: meeting with Deputy Chief of Staff Maggie Lloyd from the office of the Federal Minister for Communications.

August

- 10 August: meeting with the Office of the Queensland Minister for Health.

- 11 August: RACP President Dr Jacqueline Small and P&A GM met with Dr Michelle Ananda-Rajah MP (FRACP) to discuss health workforce, integrated care, National Climate & Health Strategy, and Health Care of Children in Care and Protection Services .

September

- 5 September: RACP President Dr Jacqueline Small, Dr Catherine Choong (FRACP), Dr Helen Van Gessel, WA Committee Deputy Chair, Dr Nitin Kapur, Chair, Paediatric and Child Health Division and P&A EGM together with Dr Richelle Douglas, Medical Director & Dr Kim Issacs, Clinical Lead Maternal Child Health Program from Derbarl Yerrigan met with the WA Minister for Police & Corrective Services to discuss how the RACP can support the WA Government to improve the health and wellbeing of young people in the youth justice system, including those in custody.

Your feedback

We understand the importance of feedback. If you have the time, please complete a 2-question survey to help us understand if this is a helpful report and any improvements.

[Complete survey here](#)

P&A Team

For more information, contact the Policy and Advocacy Team

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