



AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC.
ABN 91 028 693 268

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Professor Paddy Phillips
Chief Medical Officer
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Email to: Paddy.Phillips@sa.gov.au
PublicHealthAct@sa.gov.au

Dear Prof Phillips

**Re: Consultation on the review of the State Public Health Plan – South Australia:
A Better Place to Live**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment towards the development of a new state public health plan. We welcome the opportunity to be involved.

Your letter notes that the review provides an opportunity to reflect on achievements to date. We understand some reporting will have been done against the current plan but are unsure of the outcomes, so request to receive or be directed to reports against the current Public Health Plan. We also request the evaluated responses and outcomes from three other plans/strategies mentioned:

- *South Australian Tobacco Control Strategy 2011 – 2016*
- *South Australian Alcohol & Other Drugs Strategy 2011 – 2016*
- *Aboriginal Health Care Plan 2010 – 2016*

We are also interested to know about current state-level emergency management/disaster response plans and their health components – can this also be provided?

To provide feedback on the current plan, we offer the following main points:

- SA Health must have appropriate, increased, dedicated funding and staffing for public health initiatives and health promotion. We remain concerned at the loss/defunding of a wide range of public health and health promotion programs.
- We are concerned that the 2013 plan strongly tends towards a devolution of responsibility for public health planning and activity to local councils. We support the concept that local councils should be active and engaged in public health, but retain the view that SA Health should provide primary leadership – not just partnership – in this important area.

This should include consultations with each council on what is required in each area, and how state needs and council-area needs can be met. We are also interested in how council plans and their outcomes are evaluated. The questions (page 87) posed to councils as the framework to inform their public health planning processes under

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Section 51 of the Public Health Act are of interest: Do Councils report or share the answers to these questions? If so we would like to be directed to them.

- We advocate for state-funded public health data to be readily available for research purposes and to inform practice. On this note, a call for a clinical data analytics unit is one of the key elements of our policy platform for the March 2018 state election.
- We are supportive of the development of state-run health literacy programs to help increase health literacy, particularly among individuals and communities most at need (migrants, Indigenous people and people from lower-socioeconomic groups).
- We advocate that the new Public Health Plan have engagement with and input from a range of medical practitioners not only from the field of public health but also other areas – general practice, paediatrics and more.
- We note the call to *“Support the development of governance processes across the State Government sector that specifically incorporate public health factors in planning assessment and policy development through the adoption of Health in all policies and related approaches”* (page 80) and suggest the development of programs to increase skills in this area.
- We note the reference to an Aboriginal Health Care Plan 2010-2016 but advocate for greater reference to Aboriginal health and “closing the gap” in the new Public Health Plan. Indigenous health is a significant issue – especially in regional areas – and improving integration between Commonwealth and State services would be a significant step forward.
- We would like to see increased reference to rural services in the new plan. Rural communities face major challenges and health gaps, and need investment (including jobs) to support healthier communities. While many rural areas have consistent experience in providing high-level services with limited resources and support, recruitment and retention are significant issues for rural areas and need addressing with help from SA/Country Health.

As an example, in Port Augusta, members tell us the biggest direct health issue is only having 10 GPs to service over 14,000 people, including an Aboriginal community that is strong but with unmet needs. In addition, there is little or no planning or development for a hospital workforce.

In closing, the AMA nationally has a range of position statements on a wide range of public health topics which we are glad to direct you to for reference for the new plan. They are provided as links in the appendix to this document. The AMA(SA) would also welcome ongoing involvement in the development of the new plan. Please do not hesitate to contact us about further engagement opportunities, or any queries about the AMA(SA)'s views and priorities.

Yours sincerely



Mr Joe Hooper
LLB(Hons), BSc(Nursing), DipAppSc, GAICD
Chief Executive

AMA NATIONAL POSITION STATEMENTS – PUBLIC HEALTH (links)

- [Mental Health - 2018](#)
- [Nutrition - 2018](#)
- [Road Safety - 2018](#)
- [Harmful substance use, dependence and behavioural addiction \(Addiction\) - 2017](#)
- [Infant Feeding and Parental Health - 2017](#)
- [Marriage Equality - 2017](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation - 2017](#)
- [Blood Borne Viruses \(BBVs\) - 2017](#)
- [Australian National Centre for Disease Control \(CDC\) - 2017](#)
- [Firearms - 2017](#)
- [Autism Spectrum Disorder - 2016](#)
- [Obesity - 2016](#)
- [Family and Domestic Violence - 2016](#)
- [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder \(FASD\) - 2016](#)
- [Concussion in Sport - 2016](#)
- [Health Care of Asylum Seekers and Refugees - 2011. Revised 2015.](#)
- [Tobacco Smoking and E-cigarettes - 2015](#)
- [Combat Sport - 2015](#)
- [Methamphetamine - 2015](#)
- [Climate Change and Human Health - 2004. Revised 2008. Revised 2015](#)
- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health - revised 2015](#)
- [Health in the Context of Education - 2014](#)
- [Sexual and Reproductive Health - 2014](#)
- [Physical Activity - 2014](#)
- [Cannabis Use and Health - 2014](#)
- [Wind Farms and Health - 2014](#)
- [Women's Health - 2014](#)
- [Health of Young People - 1998. Revised 2013.](#)
- [Health Effects of Problem Gambling - 2013](#)
- [Health and the Criminal Justice System - 2012](#)
- [Alcohol Consumption and Alcohol-related Harms - 2012](#)
- [The role of financial incentives in Preventive Health - 2011](#)
- [Mental Health - 2011](#)
- [Doctors and Preventative Care - 2010](#)
- [Developmental Health and Wellbeing of Australia's Children and Young People - revised 2010](#)
- [Body Image and Health - 2002. Revised 2009](#)
- [Ethical Considerations for Medical Practitioners in Disaster Response in Australia - 2008. Revised 2014](#)
- [The Role of the Medical Practitioner in Determining Fitness to Drive Motor Vehicles - 2008](#)
- [Social Determinants of Health and the Prevention of Health Inequities - 2007](#)
- [Public Health - 2006](#)
- [Child Abuse and Neglect - 1996. Revised 2005](#)
- [Men's Health - 2005](#)