

New network to protect the health of Australians impacted by climate change

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Territory-based research institute, Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) was today announced as a partner in the new national research network 'Healthy Environments And Lives' (HEAL), which aims to protect the health of Australians impacted by climate change.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and knowledge will be at the heart of the HEAL network, which includes a focus on how climate change is disproportionately affecting people living in rural and remote communities and regions.

Northern Territory (NT) Hub Leader of the HEAL Network, Menzies Director Professor Alan Cass says the network will bring together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, scientists, clinical researchers and health practitioners across all Australian states and territories in a combined effort to find solutions to the burden presented by climate change.

"As a school of health research, Menzies has worked in Australia's tropical north and desert centre for decades. Across our areas of work, from chronic conditions including kidney failure to tropical infections such as melioidosis; we see the effects of climate and environmental change on health and wellbeing," Prof Cass said.

Based in Alice Springs Menzies Professor of Remote and Rural Health Services Research, Professor John Wakerman says his focus will be on highlighting health service challenges and the impact of climate change on vulnerable populations in the remote and rural environment in the national narrative.

"As co-lead of the rural and remote stream of research, we will examine the health effects and impact on health services where we live and work, and what we can do about them. This is critical research that will be of national and international interest," Prof Wakerman said.

Menzies Senior Research Fellow Dr Supriya Mathew says the national HEAL Network will have real and long-lasting impact in the NT.

"We are currently exploring practical local adaptive solutions including citizen science initiatives to mitigate the risks due to climate change. The HEAL network will support these innovative projects, and provide the perfect opportunity for many rural and remote researchers and stakeholders to collaborate within a national network and develop evidence-based solutions for the Australian population.

HEAL is led by The Australian National University (ANU) and the initiative made possible with \$10 million in Federal Government funding through the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

HEAL currently comprises 100 researchers and is looking to attract young people interested in the field of environmental health research.

For more information visit the [ANU](#) and [NHMRC](#) announcements.

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Menzies School of Health Research

Menzies is one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and a leader in global and tropical research into life-threatening illnesses, Menzies continues to translate research into effective partnerships and programs in communities across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.