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IPCC report reinforces need for urgent and immediate action on climate change

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th report reinforces the need for urgent action to mitigate the extreme and compounding health impacts of climate change.

AMA President Professor Robson said human health ultimately depends on the health of the planet and its ecosystem and the impact of climate change was already devastating entire communities.

“We are seeing increasingly devastating weather events like the extreme rainfall that caused the floods in Lismore, which not only affected the health of residents but also had a terrible impact on many health providers and their businesses,” Professor Robson said.

“In other parts of Australia and around the world we are seeing weather extremes that have a clear connection to increased mortality. More generally, climate change is predicted to cause increases in food and water borne disease, airborne allergens, respiratory illnesses and mental ill-health.”

Professor Robson said the AMA is urging the government to take immediate, rapid, and large-scale action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the extreme and compounding health impacts of climate change.

“The AMA supports the government’s establishment of a National Health Sustainability and Climate Unit and a commitment to develop a National Health and Climate Strategy. But these need to be implemented with a sense of urgency to achieve net zero emissions in the health care system.

“As a doctor, it’s my role and the role of my colleagues to advocate for action on climate change, which is so important for the health of Australians.

“It is our patients and communities that are affected by a changing climate. And it is our workplaces – our health facilities – that are impacted when things go wrong – which is why we need them to be equipped appropriately and designed for the future.”

The AMA declared climate change a health emergency in 2019 and has committed to a net zero healthcare sector by 2040, with an interim goal of an 80% cut to emissions by 2030.

[Read the IPCC’s 6th report](#)

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