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Adj. Professor Tarun Weeramanthri  
Climate Health WA Inquiry  
Public and Aboriginal Health Division  
Department of Health  
Via website: [health.wa.gov.au/climatehealth.wa](http://health.wa.gov.au/climatehealth.wa)

Dear Professor Weeramanthri

## **CLIMATE HEALTH WA INQUIRY**

Thank you for your invitation to submit a written submission to the Climate Health WA Inquiry.

The intrinsic links between planetary health and the health of individuals is broadly acknowledged. A safe environment and climate is fundamental to health<sup>i</sup> and climate change continues to compromise the population's health and wellbeing.<sup>ii</sup> There is also a growing body of evidence suggesting that an increasing reliance on finite natural resources is unsustainable resulting in increasing inequities in health across and within countries now and for future generations<sup>iii</sup> particularly among disadvantaged people and communities.<sup>iv</sup>

Whilst climate change represents an emerging and increasingly complex problem that requires multi-disciplinary engagement and action, some of these responses may include more traditional public health actions.<sup>v</sup> The Sustainable Health Review Final Report to Government (Final Report)<sup>vi</sup> acknowledges this within its recommendations, emphasising the need to reduce the health system's environmental footprint and highlighting the requirement for public health adaptation strategies such as principles of smart cities.

As such, addressing issues relating to climate change is a significant public health issue,<sup>vii</sup> and facilitating good planetary health is a key challenge for health promoters globally. Aligned to the Final Report recommendations increasing investment in prevention will assist in providing additional opportunities to address issues relating to climate change and the health system from a public health perspective.

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As the Chair of the Western Australian Health Promotion Foundation Board and the only State Government body dedicated solely to health promotion, Healthway retains a strong commitment to achieving a healthier Western Australia. Through its grants programs and aligned to evidence based socio-ecological models of health promotion, Healthway continues to advance public health initiatives that relate to the health of individuals and communities, and the environments in which they live.

Some examples of Healthway's support includes investment in research for evaluating current active travel programs across Western Australia to inform the development of new and more appropriate active travel strategies. Healthway has also provided funding for the 'Healthy Active by Design' web-based planning tool to provide guidance for planners, developers and Local Government to ensure that communities and neighbourhoods are designed to support and encourage physical activity.

Whilst Healthway has supported a number of public health initiatives related to the Inquiry, I am sure that more can be achieved in the future. I look forward to reviewing the outcomes of the Inquiry for consideration and application within Healthway's grants programs.

Yours sincerely



Professor Peter Klinken AC FAHMS FTSE CitWA  
Chair, Healthway Board

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<sup>i</sup> Public Health Association of Australia; Policy-at-a-glance – Safe Climate Policy, available at <https://www.phaa.net.au/documents/item/255>, accessed 17 July 2019.

<sup>ii</sup> Climate and Health Alliance, Climate Change is a Health Issue Briefing Paper No 1, available at [https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/caha/pages/33/attachments/original/1539054808/CAHA\\_Briefing\\_Paper\\_1\\_Climate\\_change\\_is\\_a\\_health\\_issue\\_2018.pdf?1539054808](https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/caha/pages/33/attachments/original/1539054808/CAHA_Briefing_Paper_1_Climate_change_is_a_health_issue_2018.pdf?1539054808), accessed 17 July 2019.

<sup>iii</sup> International Union Health Promotion and Education Conference Plenary Speaker Trevor Hancock, available at: <https://secure.tcc.co.nz/ei/images/IUHPE19/PDF/IUHPE%202019%20-%20Trevor%20Hancock.pdf>, accessed 23 July 2019.

<sup>iv</sup> Global Change and Public Health: Addressing the Ecological Determinants of Health, available at <https://www.cpha.ca/sites/default/files/assets/policy/edh-brief.pdf>, accessed 19 July 2019.

<sup>v</sup> Public Health Association Australia, Immediate Policy Priorities 2019, available at <https://www.phaa.net.au/documents/item/3373>, accessed 17 July 2019.

<sup>vi</sup> Sustainable Health Review Final Report to the Western Australian Government, available at [https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/~/\\_media/Files/Corporate/general%20documents/Sustainable%20Health%20Review/Final%20report/sustainable-health-review-final-report.pdf](https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/~/_media/Files/Corporate/general%20documents/Sustainable%20Health%20Review/Final%20report/sustainable-health-review-final-report.pdf), accessed 19 July 2019

<sup>vii</sup> <https://www.phaa.net.au/documents/item/3373>, accessed 17 July 2019.