

# Public Health Discipline Group

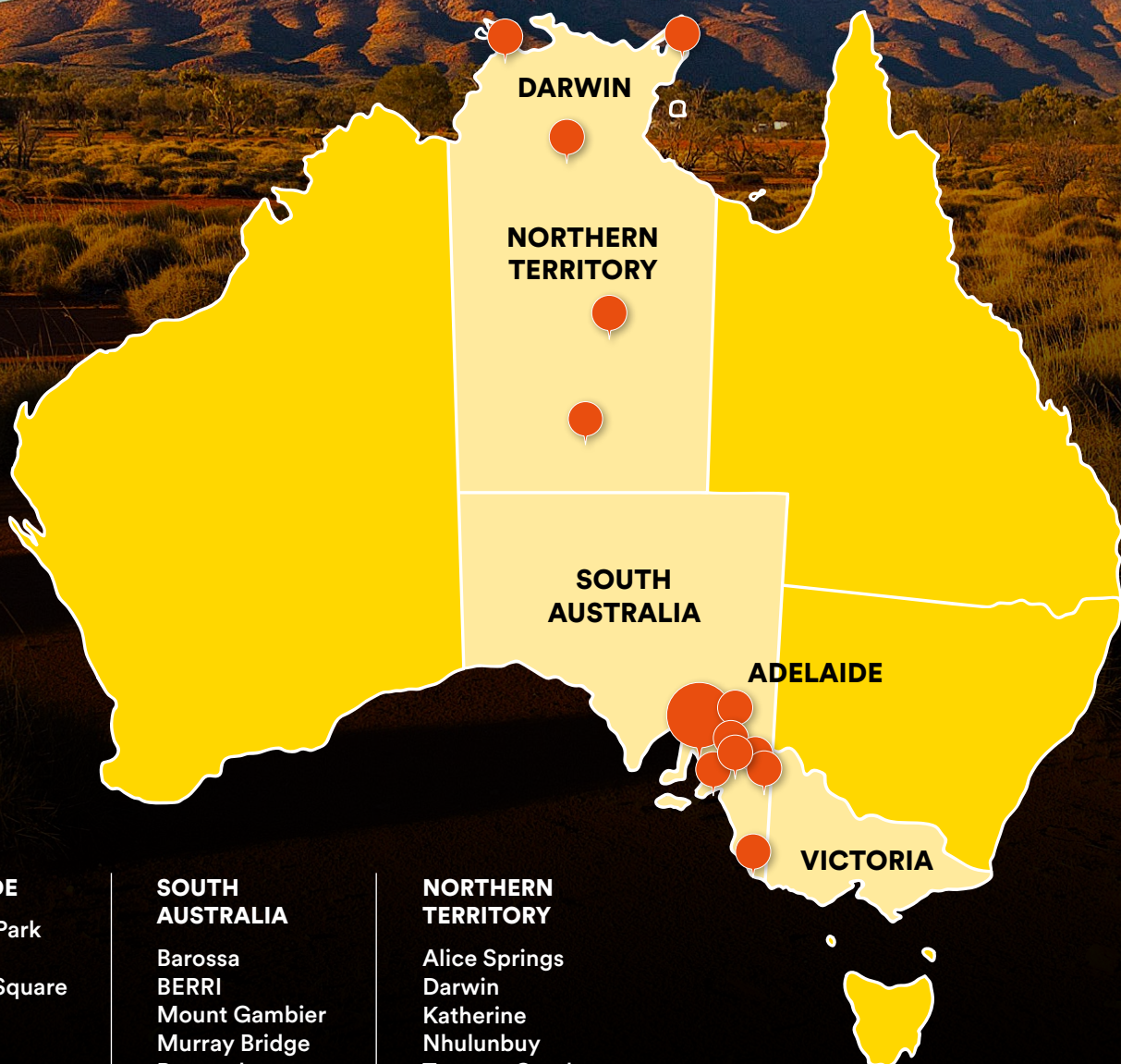
## 2030 Strategy



# Acknowledgement of Country

Flinders University acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which its campuses are located. These transverse songlines across the Traditional Lands of Arrernte, Dagoman, First Nations of the South East, First People's of the River Murray and Mallee region, Jawoyn, Kurna, Larrakia, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Warumungu, Wardaman, and Yolngu people. The Public Health Discipline Group is housed predominantly on the Bedford Park campus and we acknowledge that we are on unceded Kurna yerta. We honour Elders past, present and emerging of all the countries on which Flinders campuses are located. Since time immemorial this was and always will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land.

Connection to Country, community and culture underpin strength, health, and wellbeing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The invasion and ongoing colonisation of Australia and its First Peoples continues to have devastating health and social consequences. Public health plays a leading role in addressing health inequities from marginalisation. Acknowledgement of ongoing impacts of colonisation, the benefits of strengths-based models and approaches, and the integration of Indigenous knowledges and methodologies underpins this Strategic Plan. We are committed to the university's Reconciliation Action Plan, we will build Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce capacity and capability in the Public Health Discipline Group, we will collaborate with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers within the College of Medicine and Public Health and across the university, and we will grow capacity in communities by creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Work to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be essential to everything that we do.



**ADELAIDE**  
Bedford Park  
Tonsley  
Victoria Square

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**  
Barossa  
BERRI  
Mount Gambier  
Murray Bridge  
Renmark  
Victor Harbor

**NORTHERN TERRITORY**  
Alice Springs  
Darwin  
Katherine  
Nhulunbuy  
Tennant Creek

# Healthy people, healthy communities, healthy environments



**I am delighted and proud to present the first comprehensive strategic plan for the Public Health Discipline Group at Flinders University. This 2030 Strategy was developed following an inclusive, collaborative process of reflection and consultation involving all Public Health staff with input from our College of Medicine and Public Health colleagues and external partners.**

These have been challenging times, we have faced a global pandemic, economic uncertainties, and environmental disasters. Despite these, or perhaps because of them, the people in Flinders Public Health rallied around finding solutions and a sense of a better future for our communities. I am very grateful for the enthusiasm and time they have devoted to this task, and to their commitment to working together to achieve our vision.

The Public Health 2030 Strategy sets out our vision for the future and a path towards it. The plan clearly articulates our values and priorities: Excellence in everything we do, and a deep commitment to equity and social justice. This strategy sets out how we work together as an academic group to realise our potential, and how we work in partnership on a local, national and global scale to deliver education and research that improves health and wellbeing.

This 2030 Strategy takes a long-term view of our aspirations. It was designed to sit alongside the Commonwealth Government's National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030 and is consistent with both the Public Health Association of Australia's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan and the Council of Academic Public Health Institutions Australasia 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

There is so much to do. I look forward to working alongside my colleagues in Flinders Public Health, the College of Medicine and Public Health and our partners and communities to promote healthy people, healthy communities, and healthy environments.

**Professor Billie Bonevski**  
Discipline Group Lead, Public Health

**Image:** Flinders Public Health staff at the 2022 Strategic Planning Day, Victoria Square, Adelaide (24 June 2022).

# Background

**Public Health at Flinders University sits within the College of Medicine and Public Health (CMPH) and consists of eight disciplines: Population Health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Biostatistics, Health Economics, Behavioural Health, Injury Studies, Point of Care Testing, and National Centre for Education and Training in Addiction (NCETA), with the latter three containing Commonwealth funded national research centres.**

This structure reflects the diversity of public health. Our research is primarily embedded in the Healthy Communities theme of the Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute (FHMRI). In addition, we have close ties to the Discipline of Rural and Remote Health within the CMPH and Poche SA+NT and we provide public health education into the Flinders University Doctor of Medicine (MD). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and rural and remote health are key public health priorities in ensuring equity in building the health of communities.

The Public Health discipline group is responsible for delivering high quality undergraduate and postgraduate public health education, and world class research. We do this through our community-based industry links and partnerships. Local and national health services, policymakers and non-government health organisations are involved

and engaged in our education and research. Our communities are part of the process of setting our goals and actions. We work with our communities for a better, healthier future.

Currently, there are over 80 exceptional staff members in the Public Health Discipline Group, and it is growing. We have a range of professional and academic staff including Balanced Teaching and Research Academics, Teaching Specialists, and Research-only Academics. As we continue to experience shifting workplaces and work practices, Flinders University obligation is to support our staff to be their best.

Our values and ethos are embedded in the Flinders University and CMPH values. At Flinders University the values of Integrity, Courage, Innovation and Excellence, along with the underlying ethos of being Student Centred, and the CMPH values of People, Culture, Excellence and Social Vision will together underpin our decision-making. We will work in harmony with the University Reconciliation Action Plan and the CMPH Gender, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (GIDE) committee. Globally, we also have a commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, with a continued focus on the upstream determinants of health (eg, poverty, food security, climate, safe cities, inequality).



# Strategic Priority 1. Education

## Why it is important

Educating future generations of the public health workforce is an important responsibility and part of core business for any university. Public health professionals need to understand community needs and be responsive within a context of new technologies, persisting health inequities, and complex patterns of disease, injury and health. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the essential need for a public health workforce that is skilled, nimble, and socially responsible. We are committed to providing excellent learning environments that stimulate, challenge, and develop the potential of students to become the public health leaders of tomorrow. At Flinders University we have a unique opportunity to build capacity in public health across our central corridor footprint.

## What we will do:

- 1.1. Enhance the student experience with tailored and flexible programs that create a thriving, engaged and supported student community.
- 1.2. Attract, nurture, and retain leading public health academics.
- 1.3. Provide support to academics who teach by leveraging the CMPH Learning and Teaching Academy activities and events.
- 1.4. Encourage pedagogical scholarship to strengthen the evidence base for our education, particularly in the context of new delivery modes.
- 1.5. Continuous curriculum improvement that is aligned with national public health strategic directions focusing on a public health evidence base.
- 1.6. Set targets for enrolments and graduands who are a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and b) international students.
- 1.7. Develop innovative courses and pathways for integrating public health and medical education in CMPH through the MD.

- 1.8. Increase and improve the quality of public health education in the Flinders Medical Programs.
- 1.9. Incorporate more training for our students that covers culturally and psychologically safe practices for all priority groups\* in the community.
- 1.10. Incorporate Indigenous knowledges and decolonisation methodologies in our curriculum.
- 1.11. Innovate with non-traditional pathways from undergraduate education and opportunities in postgraduate education.
- 1.12. Together with our industry partners, develop student placements to ensure our graduates are well-rounded and prepared to work in diverse settings in industry and with community to address contemporary health issues, and 'future-proof' workforce needs.
- 1.13. Facilitate integration of research and practice into our teaching through the Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute (FHMRI) and our public health national research centres (Point of Care Testing, Injury Studies, NCETA), health services, alumni and academic status holders.
- 1.14. Capitalise upon our unique campus footprint to integrate rural and remote health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics, curriculum, and communities into our education.

## How we measure success

- Students enrolments, withdrawals, and successful completions of topics, courses and degrees
- Teaching awards and prizes
- Student evaluation using a combination of student teaching and content evaluation and feedback mechanisms
- Student engagement in programs, evaluations, community
- Number and diversity of academics involved in teaching
- Number and range of partner involvement in developing and delivering our education
- Range of Industry partnership agreements, placement offerings, and feedback from partners
- Frequency of curriculum review and updates
- Decolonisation of our curriculum, extent of Indigenous content and methods and engagement in curricula
- Number of new, retained and graduated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and rural or remote origin students.

\*priority groups are community groups at increased risk of poor health due to social, behavioural, cultural or physical factors, e.g. lower socioeconomic status, cultural or linguistic diversity or comorbidity.



**Jamil Locker**  
Bachelor of Public  
Health Student

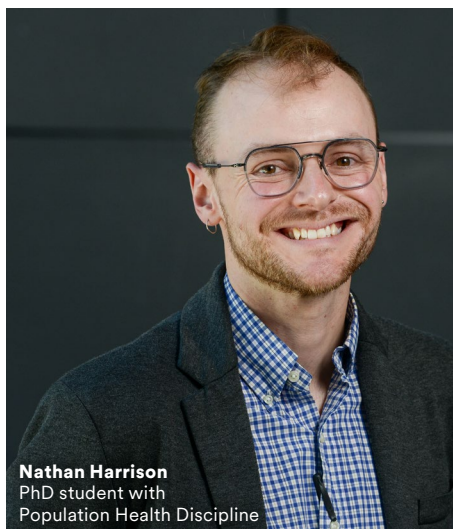
# Strategic Priority 2. Research

## Why it is important

Knowledge and the science behind its implementation and translation is central to improving the health of individuals, systems, communities, and the whole population. Public Health plays a leading role in narrowing evidence-practice gaps, reducing inequities and ensuring our health systems are delivering optimal, community-focussed care. High quality research, disseminated effectively can transform society with accurate information, building trust. We have a unique opportunity at Flinders University Public Health to leverage our SA-NT footprint to drive a research agenda that makes a meaningful difference to the health of underserved communities locally that is translated globally.

## What we will do:

- 2.1. Attract, train and nurture world class public health researchers.
- 2.2. Undertake research that is informed by our partners and community to ensure it reflects their needs and priorities.
- 2.3. Apply a health and social equity lens over our research.
- 2.4. Increase the amount of intervention research that aims to inform the implementation of policies and programs that improve health and wellbeing, particularly of priority populations who are at highest risk of ill-health.
- 2.5. Employ respectful practices and a strengths-based approach in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research by following local and national protocols.
- 2.6. Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in research.
- 2.7. Embrace Indigenous data sovereignty, Indigenous knowledges and decolonisation methodologies.
- 2.8. Establish and strengthen supportive systems and processes to build a vibrant public health research culture by leveraging FHMRI support, including
  - 2.8.1. expanding our Public Health Talks research seminars to Healthy Communities theme,
  - 2.8.2. linking into early and mid-career researcher mentoring and career development programs,
  - 2.8.3. participating in FHMRI Higher Degree in Research (HDR) student events and processes.
- 2.9. Focus our research outputs on quality rather than quantity, as a better use of research funds, to have greater impact and because our communities deserve excellence in public health research.
- 2.10. Diversify and increase sources of research funding including government, philanthropic and commercial sources.
- 2.11. Support funding applications for Centres of Research Excellence in our areas of strength (eg, Point of Care Testing, NCETA, Injury Studies), together with our internal colleagues in Rural and Remote Health and Poche SA+NT and external partners such as Wellbeing SA, South Adelaide Local Health Network, Flinders Medical Centre, and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.
- 2.12. Proactively support the development of new areas of research strength.
- 2.13. Encourage and support the development of externally funded research fellowship applications.
- 2.14. Build a strong cohort of public health HDR students and support a vibrant HDR community.
- 2.15. Grow our biostatistics and epidemiology expertise and link in with the FHMRI Data Science and Clinical Trials platforms to create a hub of statistical and methodological strength.



## How we measure success

- Global university rankings
- National research excellence rankings (eg, ERA)
- Research income across categories and funding schemes (Cat 1-4)
- Publication and citation metrics
- Number and type of research collaborations and partnerships (as indicated on joint publications and presentations and grants)
- Number of externally funded centres of research excellence
- Number of HDR enrolments and completions. To do this, create a pathway from undergraduate to PhD, incorporate MPH/PhD scholarships in research grant applications, specialised and targeted pathways for priority groups and build a network of on-campus public health PhD students.
- Research awards and prizes.
- Research activities led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics.



# Strategic Priority 3. Engagement, Knowledge Translation and Impact

## Why it is important

The outcomes of our education and research should shape our society. Authentic engagement and impact speak to reciprocity. Engaging communities and partners to co-design our education and research, prioritising their needs, will facilitate knowledge translation and our impact will be greater. Public Health at Flinders University has a history of deep engagement with local health services, communities, social and health organisations, government departments, and policymakers. Flinders University Public Health graduates are located around the world, extending our reach. Internationally, we house a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre and locally we have strong public health partnership agreements with health services. Through connection and collaboration we will work with communities to improve and protect health in Australia and globally.

## What we will do:

- 3.1. Work with Flinders Engagement and Partnerships to develop strategies for engagement and impact.
- 3.2. Host community and consumer forums to identify needs-based research and education projects.
- 3.3. Partner with Health Translation SA to host an annual Healthy Communities symposium inviting external community members and partners to showcase our work and identify research collaboration opportunities.
- 3.4. Identify partnership champions within Public Health and the CMPH who will provide engagement education and training to early/mid-career researchers and HDR students. Involve HDRs in partnership discussions.
- 3.5. Partner with industry, government and partners at all stages of our work, and regularly share findings of our work.
- 3.6. Create co-located and/or co-funded appointments with our community partners.
- 3.7. Invite community partners to be involved in public health education curriculum design and delivery.
- 3.8. Proactively communicate research findings externally with the support of the Office of Communication and Media Engagement.

- 3.9. Develop a network of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff who can advise on best practice to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and services.
- 3.10. Collaborate with First Nations academics globally to identify optimal engagement strategies from around the world.
- 3.11. Together with Rural and Remote Health and Poche SA+NT, map out engagement opportunities with campuses and staff across the Australian central corridor footprint.
- 3.12. Harness the networks of our global alumni in research and education.
- 3.13. Be a voice in public debate, advocacy, and public health reforms.
- 3.14. Continue our global partnerships and engagements in the form of institutional collaborations such as World Health Organisation Collaborating Centres.

## How we measure success

- Case studies of our impact
- ERA – Engagement and Impact outcomes
- Research translation and evidence of change (i.e. policy, programs, clinical guidelines)
- Number and diversity of collaborators and partners (as indicated on joint publications and presentations and grants)
- Number and diversity of partnership grants
- Engaged alumni and academic status holders
- Lay and social media engagement.
- In-person opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement.
- Number of community and consumer forums.
- Co-design of our education and research programs.



# Strategic Priority 4. Building People and Positive Culture

## Why it is important

While people are our greatest strength, culture is the glue that brings us together as a Discipline Group. Underpinned by our values and ambitions, culture is determined by the intentions and actions of people. To achieve success in education, research, and engagement and impact, our people, teams and culture need to be robust, supportive and effective. To foster excellence and the Flinders University Fearless approach, it is imperative to build a culture that is trusting, open to new ideas and change, and values the contributions of all. We are proud to work at Flinders University and we are passionate about public health and the contribution we make as individuals and collectively to improve our community's health. We recognise and value the diversity of people, expertise and efforts across the breadth of the Public Health Discipline Group.

## What we will do:

- 4.1. Facilitate a culture of shared success by celebrating achievements across communication channels - newsletters, celebration gatherings – and together with partners and students.
- 4.2. Attract, nurture and promote world class academics into public health education and research.
- 4.3. Continue our commitment to equity and diversity through involvement with the CMPH Gender Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (GIDE) committee.
- 4.4. Increase leadership capacity across all levels. Leverage pathways for opportunities and succession within each discipline.
- 4.5. Leveraging support from CMPH People & Culture and the Discipline Group Lead, each Discipline Lead, Course Coordinator, Teaching Program Director will develop a succession plan and mentor and nurture the next generation of leaders in the Public Health Discipline Group.
- 4.6. Continue to expand our internal communication processes across all disciplines in Public Health including leadership meetings, education meetings, research seminars (Public Health Talks), Public Health Matters newsletters, celebration and social gatherings.

- 4.7. Establish and strengthen supportive systems and processes to build a vibrant public health research culture by leveraging FHMRI support, including (but not restricted to):
  - 4.7.1. expanding our Public Health Talks research seminars to Healthy Communities theme,
  - 4.7.2. linking into existing early and mid-career researcher mentoring and career development programs,
  - 4.7.3. hosting an annual Healthy Communities symposium with external partners,
  - 4.7.4. participating in FHMRI HDR student events and processes.
- 4.8. Create a culturally and psychologically safe space where staff feel they can contribute ideas and debate without disadvantage.
- 4.9. Leverage existing University, CMPH and FHMRI mentorship and career development opportunities to support all our staff to succeed.
- 4.10. Continue to prioritise recruitment and support of staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other priority groups.
- 4.11. Continue to define and develop our contribution to the Flinders University Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

## How we measure success

- Number of new recruits, staff retention, length of appointments, promotions, and leadership positions
  - Your Voice survey participation, ratings and feedback
  - Engagement with communication strategies
  - Staff awards and prizes
  - RAP measurements. The RAP will be a rolling item on the monthly Public Health leadership meetings agenda.
  - Frequency of social informal gatherings.
- 4.12. Nominate our staff for external, University and CMPH awards and prizes to recognise their excellence.
  - 4.13. Place genuine value on service and community outreach activities, internally within the University and more broadly across our professional and community organisations.
  - 4.14. Create opportunities for informal social gatherings.





# Implementation – From Plan to Action

A Strategic Plan provides a collective vision and strategies for operationalising the vision, however an implementation plan is crucial to ensure the plan is translated into action.

We will action our strategic plan by:

1. Implementation of the Public Health 2030 Strategic Plan will be the responsibility of the Public Health leadership team and a rolling agenda item in monthly meetings.
2. An Action Plan will be developed with short-term (2023-2024), mid-term (2025-2027), and long-term (2028-2030) actions
3. Communication with Public Health Discipline Group to include:
  - a. Items in the Public Health Matters newsletter
  - b. End of year annual reports
  - c. All of Discipline Group Strategic Plan Progress Reviews in a full-day meeting during the time points of short-term (2024), mid-term (2027) and long term (2030).
4. Feedback from staff as well as internal and external stakeholders will be continuously incorporated into action plans, which will be living documents.



## Contact us

Our friendly staff are available to answer your questions:

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