

NCEPH High-Level Strategic Goals 2021—2026

Vision

The National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH) is privileged to be located on the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples, whose custodianship of Country we honour and respect. We acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples and their ancestors past, present and emerging.

Our Vision:

Outstanding and equitable population health, providing the foundation for community wellbeing, strong economies and social transformation. Through trusted partnerships and leadership in research, education and implementation, our work contributes fundamentally to improved population health.

Our Values:

Passion for equity, integrity, respect, service, excellence and making a difference drives us. Our relationships are collaborative, collegial and kind.

Our Purpose:

To improve and protect population health and health equity for all through partnerships, research, education and implementation. Established in 1988, NCEPH is curiosity-based, agenda-setting and responsive to population health needs in Australia, our region and internationally. We are proud to continue our legacy of excellence in everything we do and our commitment to inclusive knowledge.

Our Approach:

We view health in its totality: Mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. We focus on whole populations to address inequities within and between them. Our discoveries, teaching, learning and actions span wellbeing, prevention, health risks, and health care system access and delivery. NCEPH is the meeting place of disciplines, ways of knowing, evidence, lived experience, policy and practice. Our quality and impact is built through strong partnerships.



Australian
National
University

Current and future strengths

Our strength is our people and our deep commitment to improving health for all. We are known for our collegiality and ways of working with communities, consumers, practitioners, and policy-makers. Our willingness to value differences is a guiding principle and source of pride, and a constant source of learning. We welcome and incorporate Indigenous knowledge and practices as part of our broader leadership, governance and ways of doing business.

We are renowned for research, methodologies and teaching that spans a wide range of topics and fields. These include population approaches to: improving mental health and preventing suicide; preventing cardiovascular disease; improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health; understanding and modelling the occurrence of infectious diseases and prevention strategies to minimise ill-health; health services research and health economics; improving health in the Asia-Pacific region; preserving health in humanitarian crises, and maintaining wellbeing and preventing ill-health in the face of environmental exposures and a changing climate.

The Population Health Exchange (PHXchange) and the Methods and Mapping Exchange are key to our quality and impact, and service to the nation. They power our excellence through advancing novel and diverse disciplinary methods and a distinctive capability for communication, collaboration and engagement with our stakeholders.

We will continue to nurture and support these strengths. Our future depends on giving back, excelling in our science and democratising it to be accessible to everyone so all can benefit. We will continue to invest and lead in how we communicate and engage in our teaching, our research and in our partnerships. We will strengthen the capability of our scholars and the next generation of leaders to communicate in ways that reach all, developing world first science communication and implementation capabilities with the PHXchange impact and engagement team. Our future depends on interdisciplinary excellence, to give our ideas, discoveries and teaching the creative edge needed to address the world's big health challenges, including entrenched and emerging threats.

This tree appeared in a practical guide to managing mental health after the impact of fire, and was the result of a collaboration with the Research School of Psychology.



NCEPH capabilities

Research strengths



NCEPH capabilities

Methods strengths



Our future

The purpose of this 2021-2026 strategic plan is to support and position Population Health at the ANU to achieve this vision. It details high level goals for the quality, relevance and reach of our ideas, how we listen, communicate and respond, how we teach and nurture the next generation of population health leaders, and how we enable people to transform their own and the population's health. The high order objectives and goals for NCEPH intend to mesh with CHM TRANSFORM and the ANU strategic priorities.

Ways we can work with you:

- Joint research projects
- Workforce exchange
- Training and capacity building
- Knowledge exchange
- Using Indigenous ways of knowing and doing



High level strategies

Supporting these strategies to implement our goals, will be a detailed, yearly, operational plan of actions specifying steps, indicators and resources and the development of a business case for support from CHM. This will be developed by NCEPH working groups, in collaboration with TRANSFORM and CHM personnel. As this implementation plan is developed these strategies may be refined. The implementation plan will also determine the metrics by which our KPIs are measured.

Objective one — research capacity and excellence

a) Support and future proof our current, excellent research strengths

- Develop and implement a pipeline strategy and funding mechanisms
- Develop a quality framework which includes publications, grant writing, HDR supervision, impact documentation and data curation, career development and supports.
- Investment in new methodologies through establishing a School method hub and a method focussed Horizon
- Overhead return to support academic clusters

b) Strengthen our interdisciplinary focus

- Build stronger connections between disciplines within the School, across the University and within our partner organisations via the Horizons.
- Make a systems approach core to our research framing (this would include identifying areas that are already doing this well, upskilling academic staff, promoting system ideas and methods as essential to all elements of our research and education).
- Develop and deploy principles, methodologies and processes that will support the School's approach to creativity, co-design, and communication.
- Develop a School-wide philanthropy strategy to support large scale projects and activities that are unlikely to be funded through more traditional channel.

c) Build a high impact, high visibility, research, learning and communication culture

- Invest in research communication and impact support through the PHXchange team.
- Invest in excellent communication (oral, written, visual, digital, media) training, forums and supports.
- Develop a media strategy to support impact and engagement.

d) Develop and make visible capabilities to anticipate important population health challenges

- Consult with stakeholders on needed capabilities and research foci
- Enhance and augment public sector capacity through establishing capacity in applied academic expertise, with an initial focus on modelling and predictive modelling

- Resource and communicate capabilities
- Develop cross cutting research initiatives that centre on emerging population health challenges.
- Leverage and value add our unique research capabilities, methods and strengths to ensure a whole of health approach to future health challenges.
- Bring novel insights from diverse disciplines to deepen the quality of analysis, solution and capacity for transformational change.
- Ensure a systems and population lens is applied so that sustainable solutions are supported.
- Build population-based intervention capacity and expertise to address emerging health challenges.
- Ensure social and health equity is acknowledged and enabled in our approach and response to population health challenges.

Objective two — distinctive educational experiences

a) Nurture future population health leaders capable of tackling complex and emerging population health challenges

- Invest in the MAE and MPH programs, with a particular focus on attracting more Indigenous and Asia Pacific Scholars.
- Translate the MAE model to develop a sister program in chronic diseases and/or population mental health.
- Promote strong, engaged and diverse student cohorts across all our education and higher degree research programs.
- Build leadership training into our post graduate offerings.

b) Develop and deliver distinctive, challenging and policy relevant programs and courses

- Expand internship placements for MPH and PhD students to apply their learnings to policy and practice settings.
- Integrate teaching and educational offerings into our engagement with policy makers.

- Leverage the MAE model by emphasising internship placements within the MPH with an additional program “MPH professional” (coursework + 6-month placement), to complement the current MPH (coursework only) and MPH Advanced (coursework + 6-month research thesis) programs.
- Develop new courses and/or leverage teaching across the College and University to enable MPH students to specialise (e.g., in Asia Pacific, chronic disease epidemiology, population health policy, mental health, health economics)

c) Ensure our programs are based on novel and innovative methods for education and pedagogy fit for the 21st century visual, digital and global platform

- Promote strong engagement between students and staff.
- Adopt high-quality, flexible delivery of education that enables broad student participation in learning.
- Develop the supports and skills for highly engaging communication and data visualisation methodologies and mediums, including visual, cultural and non-language based.

Objective three — local, regional, national and global influence

a) Provide leadership for a public policy agenda to improve the health of all

- Promote and invest in the areas where the School's research and education can influence and shape public policy and population health practice.
- Strengthen relationships and engagement with public policy stakeholders and partners through personnel exchange, secondments and residencies, and by enabling connections into wider ANU expertise.

b) Develop and leverage the PHXchange to build visibility and demonstrate the impact of our research and education programs

- Develop our stakeholder engagement plan to identify key stakeholders and their interests and strategies for coordinated engagement, communication and dissemination, including through PHXchange.
- Develop tailored communication strategies that engage with and empower 'hard-to-reach', and overlooked health and wellbeing stakeholders, populations and communities.

Rama and the worm is an entertainment-based health promotion intervention which uses traditional Javanese shadow puppetry.



- Ensure efficient processes across the school for the identification and collection of impact ‘stories’ and methods.
- Build a vanguard culture of high impact which democratises our science and ensure every staff member and graduand is enabled and empowered to generate end user benefits.

c) Innovate and lead in methods for communicating health evidence

- Develop the supports and skills for highly engaging methodologies and mediums, including visual, cultural and non-language based.
- Develop NCEPH collaborations with, coproduction and embedding of ANU artists, designers, data visualisation scientists and science communicators into NCEPH projects.
- Undertake experimental and evaluative research on our data visualisation and communication methodologies, generating evidence of our ability to deepen impact and engagement.
- Develop a generation of ‘hybrid scholars’, whose population health research and education excellence is distinguished by its visual expression and public reach.

d) Work proactively with stakeholders in the co-design of research and education programs and co-production of knowledge

- Ensure that NCEPH’s research and education is responsive to public policy and practice needs, issues and questions.
- Support and build new partnerships and personnel exchanges via internships, residencies, secondments and placements.
- Ensure that co-design is embedded and reinforced in the School’s research, impact, communication and education activities.
- Incorporate arts and communication based disciplines, methods and mediums to support engagement and dissemination that is accessible, catalytic and culturally connected.



Objective four — collegiate collaborating community

a) Ensure our research and education programs reflect diverse disciplines, knowledges and ways of knowing and doing

- Identify, encourage and reinforce the processes, behaviours and activities that define a strength-based culture.
- Develop awareness, training in, and engagement with Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing and how this can be applied to our research, education and governance.
- Develop awareness and engagement with diverse differences in ways of knowing and doing that include sexuality, gender, race and religion.
- Invest in supports for attracting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Mayi Kuwayu National Study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing seeks to understand the link between culture and wellbeing.

Artwork by Krystal Hurst, 2017

b) Ensure the leadership and governance of the School reflects diverse disciplines, knowledge and ways of knowing and doing

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the executive.
- Formation of a School Senior Career researcher group which consults with Executive quarterly.
- Develop a School consultation and communication strategy.
- Develop a School equity and diversity strategy.
- Establish a School advisory board which includes policy, practice and community stakeholders

c) Value our professional and academic staff, students and alumni

- Develop strategies to reduce job insecurity and monitor progress annually.
- Develop strategies to improve work/life balance and reduce overwork, and monitor annually.
- Ensure internal and external communications honour and acknowledge all members of the NCEPH community
- Ensure professional and academic staff, and students, have access to professional development and mentoring
- Develop an alumni outreach and engagement strategy

d) Enhance the School's profile and performance as a preferred employer

- Increase employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander academic and professional staff across all areas/Centres/ Departments of the School, and monitor progress annually.
- Develop and resource a staff capability development plan that identifies future capability requirements and strategies for developing staff.
- Build capability across the school to enhance the quality, impact, co-production and interdisciplinary depth of all of our research and education programs.
- Invest in leadership skill building for all staff.

