

September 2021

# EHA NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

## Winter Edition

Spring has sprung and we are quickly approaching the end of 2021!

Unfortunately, COVID 19 continues to disrupt our plans and challenge EHOs around the country, and around the globe. And although the Delta variant of COVID 19 has once again thrown states and countries into lock downs, EH Professionals are doing an amazing job in keeping their communities safe.

Our thoughts are with all EHOs, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria; and with all those still being affected by COVID 19 lock downs. We hope you are staying safe and healthy during these difficult times. Please let us know if there is anything EHA can do to support you as an EHO.



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# Message from the President

By Philip Swain

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As I have said before, somewhere around February last year the world changed, and we are currently in the midst of the worst global pandemic in over 100 years. We still have a great deal of uncertainty surrounding border closures hindering our ability to even move around our own country. Something we took for granted only 18 months ago.

As the cycle of lockdowns and border restrictions continue, there is a socio-political debate going on in Australia at the moment and fundamentally it is about neoliberalism versus interventionism. As science professionals we should care first and foremost, and concentrate on, the science. And we should be encouraging decision making about our country, its people and our future living with COVID19, on that basis. That's not to say that the socio-political wont dictate policy, it has to, as we are a democratically governed federation, but it seems that most Australians are more comfortable with suppression rather than broader containment. If that is the policy, Australians need to get used to continuing state interventions when outbreaks occur. As science professionals it is important that we all keep up to date and contribute to conversations, when appropriate, to help decision makers make those calls based on the best evidence and to dispel myths and misinformation.

I have also said before, we are a long way off normal but hopefully with the vaccine rollout finally gathering some momentum we can all vision a time when Australia gets someway closer to a "new normal". So where are we at? As science professionals we know that it is likely that we will be living with COVID19 as an endemic virus into the future.

The National plan for Australia proposes opening up all internal borders when 70% vaccination is reached, (I note we are only currently around 30%). When it was set, this proposal wasn't predicated on a situation where community transmission was running out of control in one or more states. This is also based on the eligible population and not the total. This will make decision making increasingly difficult in the coming months, as a country that has been so successful at previously suppressing community transmission. For example, it is becoming increasingly obvious through outbreaks in countries with highly vaccinated populations that childhood vaccination is likely critical in terms of preventing outbreaks, yet this has not been a major consideration with current vaccination within Australia. Latest modelling suggests that the vaccination rate will need to be in the vicinity of at least 80% to reduce the effective reproduction number (Reff) of the virus to below one and thereby limit case numbers and deaths to something akin to a bad flu season. These are very tough decisions!

I have previously talked about international comparisons and the situation evolving in the United Kingdom is worth reflecting on. A per population comparison would have meant that about 50,000 Australians would have died of COVID19 to date, instead we are just approaching 1000. The UK has opened up with no suggestion of future controls and limitations.

However, even in the UK rules are varied in different jurisdictions. In England for example, face masks don't have to be worn but are recommended in enclosed areas, but in Scotland and Northern Ireland they are still mandatory on public transport and in other circumstances. Sound familiar?

There are existing and emerging issues associated with our own environmental health workforce, and not just due to the pandemic, which your National Board is well aware of. There are current shortages in many parts of Australia associated with the environmental health workforce and there is work going on in the various states to address this. I recently participated in a meeting with enHealth on the subject of environmental health workforce and we are currently lobbying the Department of Home Affairs with respect to skilled migration, which has been down to a trickle for nearly two years now. That said, our University courses are for the most part reasonably stable at the moment despite the unprecedented funding pressure that the Universities are under.

The EHA University Accreditation Programme is back online after a 12 month hiatus – Western Sydney University was accredited in March and the Queensland University of Technology accreditation was conducted in May 2021. A new course at the University of Tasmania will be subject to site visit in September, and the Graduate Diploma and Masters courses at Flinders university in South Australia will be subject reaccreditation in November. Our current schedule also includes the reaccreditation of the Graduate Diploma at Curtin University in Western Australia in February or March next year. I encourage all Managers in environmental health to consider particularly our post graduate courses for cadet and traineeship opportunities within your organisations. The substantial shift to online materials in the University sector and the ability to bring science graduates into our profession and facilitate their training over a one to two year period is something that could make a real contribution to officer shortages, particularly while skilled migration is so hampered by border closures.

As an organisation, we are still lobbying for the 2024 International Environmental Health Congress to be held in Perth, Western Australia as we wait, and hope, that the World Congress in Malaysia goes ahead in August 2022. Unfortunately the proposed October National Conference in the Blue Mountains has been postponed due to the NSW lockdown. The conference may run in February/March 2022, so stay tuned!

I am also pleased to advise that our Association and National websites have all been rejuvenated in the last financial year with the project being recently completed. The changes mean that the websites are substantially compatible with hand held devices and we have a new look and increased functionality for all the sites. I would like to thank all our National staff and State Executive Officers for their substantial contribution to the project.

Yours in Environmental Health

Philip Swain LFEHA  
National President



# EHA National Board



## President

## Philip Swain

I first joined the Board of the Australian Institute of Environmental Health (WA Division) in 1990, later in 1992 becoming a National Councillor and Director of the then company. I have been involved with AIEH and then EHA since that time on and off. I set up my own consultancy business in 2007 and I have worked in this way ever since. My premier interest in EH is in the application of science to public policy and I think EHOs too often sell themselves short in this regard. EHOs better understand science in the public policy context than most professions and especially at local government level, where I have worked the most.

There are many serious and pressing issues for environmental health at the moment and EHA is pushing for a serious investigation into workforce across Australia, especially as we move forward with significant pressure on Universities and no effective migration as a result of the pandemic.



## Vice President / TAS President

## Melissa Burn

I am an EHO at City of Launceston and work part time as a Lecturer of Environmental Health at the University of Tasmania. I have been a member of EHA since 2008 and on the EHA National Board since 2016. EHOs are the front-line workforce for health protection and environmental management to ensure we can safely live in our community. They manage risks to ensure the environment and public health is maintained, so the community can safely and sustainably live in that environment.

Is there something I know now that I wish I knew at the beginning of your career? No! I have enjoyed continually learning and developing my skills and knowledge over my career as all the lessons learnt has made me the EHO that I am today.



## Treasurer

## Joseph Zappavigna

I have held President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer positions in WA, Victoria and National since 1997. I currently work at the City of Belmont and started as a trainee EHO in 1992 before becoming a full time EHO in 1994. EH work interests me because the variety of tasks changes in a day of work and it is different from day to day. The people you meet are from diverse backgrounds and the role itself is diverse.



## National Executive Officer

## Divya Dwarakanath

The heightened scope of environmental health issues around the world brought me to Australia to pursue my master's degree in environmental health and Safety from QUT. I joined EHA in June 2018 as the National Executive Officer and I am also the Executive Officer for Victoria. I have had such a wonderful and rewarding experience working with EHA. I would like to thank the entire board and executive officer Donna Thompson for her immense support towards my roles.



## National Communications Officer

## Samantha Smith

I graduated in 2016 with a dual bachelor of marine science and journalism/communications and took on the role of NCO with EHA a few years after graduating. Before working with EHA, I had never heard of environmental health or EHOs. In my time with EHA I have had the absolute privilege of meeting and working with some of the kindest and genuine people I have ever met. I have learnt that EHOs are amazingly humble and go completely unnoticed if their job is done well. I thoroughly enjoy my work in advocating for the EH profession!

Our Environment, Our Health, Our Future



## QLD President

## Wendy Gambley

I work for local government - Western Downs Regional Council in Qld. I started with IEH in 1993/4 before I took a few years off due to maternity leave (not sure when I joined back), and then I was with EHA WA for a while. I've been on the EHA National Board about 2.5 years. Every aspect of our lives and our environment affects our health. Pollution in our environment can make us sick or kills the wildlife that supports our ecosystem, food can cause illness and death, even not being able to find a parking spot can cause stress. Environmental Health works at trying to prevent and educate people to maintain public health and the health of the environment. It combines health, science and regulation to achieve this. EH pulls together the specialisations to look at health holistically. I would say "Environmental Health is the protection of the health, safety and amenity of the community and the environment in which we live. It can be as diverse or as specialised as the role you choose to undertake" Is there anything I know now that I wish I knew at the beginning of my career? Nothing - the journey has been worth it. There have been ups and downs but it's about the journey not the destination. I look forward to my continued journey and learning new and exciting things.



## NSW President

## Erin Hogan

I work at my Local Government (City of Canterbury Bankstown) and I've been a member of the EHA NSW Board for 6 years, and half a year on the National Board. Environmental health is important as it directly and indirectly impacts the health and wellbeing of our communities. Having access to clean air, water, land, and safe food supplies etc are essential for human health. If I was to describe EH to someone who doesn't know what it is, I would say "Environmental Health is the interrelation between the environment (both built and natural) and our health, and the measures taken to maintain the quality of both. Our role (as an EHP) is to protect the health and wellbeing of our community and the environment both proactively (eg through community education) and reactively (responding to pollution and public health incidents)."

As a trainee, the scope of what EH can encompass may seem overwhelming. Just remember you are not alone, there's a whole network of wise EHOs out there to help you if you don't know something.



## VIC President

## Mark Dwyer

These days my involvement with EHA is as the Victorian state president. My journey to that position started as a student member then full member before I stepped up to the Tas board and then to Tas State President for 10 years. I started as a cadet health inspector in 1978 at the Hobart City Council and ended my career as Manager Environmental Health at the Hobart City Council in 2017 - 39 years later. I retired from work in March 2017. I was initially astounded at the broad scope that was public and environmental health when I entered the profession. The variety of the work always made the job interesting and challenging and I remember always enjoying going to work.



## SA President

## Helen Psarras

I work at the State Control Centre SA Health and have been involved with EHA for 15 years and on the EHA National for 7 years. Environmental health touches our lives - every day in thousands of ways - working behind the scenes to ensure that individuals avoid illness and injury, and can be part of healthy, liveable and connected communities. You might not need a hospital or medical care every day, but you need environmental health every day. If I had to describe EH to someone who doesn't know what it is, I would say "Essential health protection action, such as wastewater management, food premises inspections, waste disposal and recycling, immunisation programs, hair, beauty, tattooing and body piercing inspections, and emergency management that continue to keep our communities safe and well."

Something to know at the beginning of your career - Interpersonal skills and conflict management skills are essential!



## WA President

## Vic Andrich

I've been the President of EHA (WA) for 8 years now & I've been an active member of EHA over a number of years holding positions as director on both the National & WA Boards. Currently I work at the WA Department of Health within the Environmental Health Directorate. I'm also Secretary of the WA EHO Professional Review Board which accredits qualifications to practice as an EHO in WA. I've been an EHO for many years & worked in a range of local governments



## QLD Board Representative

## Chris Vakas

I joined AIEH in 1998, then continued with transition to EHA, served on QLD and SA state boards for many years and the National Board since early 2021. I am a Self Employed Consultant – Health & Environmental Solutions Network. EH underpins our quality of life, our natural environment provides, when we look after it, clean air clean water and sunshine, and our build environments, when constructed properly, are liveable spaces that enhance social and personal wellbeing, when constructed with consideration to material selection, managing and limiting exposure to toxins in the construction phase and for the completed built environments. I would describe EH “the actions and initiatives we do on a daily basis to ensure we sustainably protect our natural environmental values, and the actions we take to manage risks that threaten our built environment liveability, so that we remain safe from hazards and continue to enjoy life long health and wellbeing.”

I often think, I wish I knew when I was younger, what I know now about health and wellbeing, so that I many have more positively impacted more lives along the way. The journey has been great, and it is never too late to have a positive impact on others and the rising generation.



## TAS Board Representative

## Glenys Nicholls

I work at Latrobe Council in Tasmania and have been with EHA National for approximately 3 years and EHA (TAS) Inc for around 10 years. Every facet of our life involves Environmental Health, while this sounds cliché it is so true – the water we swim in, the ability to flush the toilet, the air we breathe, the food we eat, going to events, playing sport... I would describe EH as “Diverse!! Covering safe food, a safe environment to live in, protection from disease...”

The only thing I wish I knew at the beginning of my career that I know now is how much I would enjoy my job and career!



## SA Board Representative

## Kirstin Ross

I qualified to practice as an EHO in 2008, but I work for the university teaching environmental health. The lack of recognition environmental health receives relative to the vast contribution the profession makes to saving lives is what interests me most about EH.

“We all know how great environmental health is, and how significant our impact on morbidity and mortality is – please, whenever you have the opportunity, tell someone else! Spread the word.”



## NSW Board Representative

## Sarah Ainsworth

I began my involvement with EHA as a student member when I was undertaking my degree. I work at Goulburn Mulwaree Council and began my career in environmental health 15 years ago as a trainee EHO in Local Government. I was first drawn to environmental health as a career due to the diversity of the work and it is what has kept me interested and passionate about the field to this day. I love that as a profession we have a role in education, regulation and monitoring across so many action areas that have real benefit to the communities we live and work in (even if a lot of the general public don't know about the work we are doing!)

# State Updates

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## QLD

Queensland were fortunate to be able to facilitate the 79 th EHA (QLD) INC Annual Symposium from the 1st to the 3rd of September 2021. The Symposium which was themed “Environmental Health – Standing Up and Standing Out” was held at the Alexandra Hills Hotel and Conference Centre in Southeast Queensland. The event was well attended over the three days and concluded with a technical tour to Sirromet Winery.

Further details on the Symposium will be reported on in the Queensland Newsletter the QEH which is due to be released later this month.



## NSW

Hello from NSW, we hope you are all staying safe and well in what has been a challenging year. The Greater Sydney area is currently in its eighth week of lockdown, with no set end date in sight.

Due to concerns around the COVID-19 situation in NSW, we have had to postpone the 45th National Conference until early next year. Once we have confirmed the new dates with the venue, we will let you know. Watch this space.

In mid-July we were able to run the popular Noise Management course in Tweed Heads, which received very positive feedback! We are currently looking into online alternatives for workshops that had been planned for the remainder of 2021.

During this time we have also been advocating on behalf of Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) to NSW Health to encourage increased levels of collaboration between Public Health Units and Local Government EHOs; and a letter of acknowledgement to Local Government General Managers acknowledging the roles of EHOs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wherever you are in Australia, we wish you safety and good health.  
Take care,



- *Erin Hogan*  
NSW EHA President

## WA

EHA(WA) AGM is scheduled for 15 September 2021 – members can attend in person or online via zoom (Members need to register beforehand for zoom).

The call for papers for the next WA Conference is out now (WA Conference Sponsorship packages are available) – see website for details

Welcome to new EHA(WA) Board member – Varinder Sapehiyia (City of Kalgoorlie). This brings the EHA(WA) Board to include 4 regional members from four separate parts of the state Northwest, Goldfields, Central west and South west.

EHA(WA) thanks members for completing its ‘Membership Survey’. It has provided feedback on what’s working and what aspects of EHA(WA) need more attention.

- *Vic Andrich*  
WA EHA President



# National Updates

## World Environmental Health Day LiveChat and Competitions

Following on from the success of last year's first LiveChat event for WEHD, EHA is hosting another LiveChat event to celebrate WEHD this year!

The 2021 WEHD LiveChat will take place on September 24th 2021 from 1pm (+10 GST) and will be broadcasted live from the EHA Facebook page. A recording of the LiveChat will also be made available after the event on the EHA YouTube channel following the event. If you would like to view the recording of last year's WEHD LiveChat please click [here](#).

All presentations will be centred around the IFEH theme of '**Prioritizing Environmental Health for healthier communities in global recovery**' whilst also drawing a connection to the 'One Health' concept and how this influences healthy communities and global recovery.

I am pleased to announce our confirmed speakers for the event:

Maddie Gustafson from NEHA, America

Tanya Morrison from NZIEH, New Zealand

Dr Andrew Mathieson from the Australian National University, Australia

Jessica Spencer from Health Protection NSW, Australia

Dr Jamal Hisham from MAEH, Malaysia

Julie Barrat from CIEH, United Kingdom

Keep an eye on the EHA social media channels for more information in the coming weeks.



EHA is also holding a competition for EHA accredited university students and all Australian high school students to celebrate WEHD and increase awareness of the EH profession. For more information, please visit the [EHA website](#).



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# Events

## Upcoming

### Queensland

**2022 : Environmental Health Disaster  
Management Course**

More details to come on the EHA website

### New South Wales

*The Skin Penetration & Infection Control  
Masterclass has been postponed. More details  
will be available soon.*

*The 45th EHA National Conference has  
been postponed to 2022. More details will be  
available soon.*

### Victoria

No events planned at this time

### Tasmania

**2nd - 4th Nov 2021 : TAS Annual State  
Conference**

Shearwater Country Club, Shearwater  
Call for abstracts and registrations are open.  
See the website for details.

### South Australia

**7th Sep 2021 : Food and Public Health SIG  
Meetings**

City of Charles Sturt & Zoom Teleconference  
\$0

To join the meeting via teleconference,  
please click on the Zoom link and enter the  
Password

**16th Sep 2021 : SA Annual State Conference**

The Bend Motorsport Park, Tailem Bend  
\$550 (members)

Registrations close 15th Sep 21 11:59 PM

### Western Australia

**16th Sep 2021 : WA Events Moving Forward**  
Granite Room, RAC Arena, Perth  
\$57.96 (members)

Registration closes 16th Sep 22 8:30 AM

**23rd Feb 2022 : WA Annual State Conference  
(including Masterclass)**

Pan Pacific Perth

\$995 (non-members)

Registration not open yet

# Research project

## Building Climate Change Adaptive Capacity into the Environmental Health Profession in Australia.

- Tony Walter

### Background

Human activities have dramatically increased greenhouse gas emissions which has intensified the greenhouse effect; leading to a warming of ambient temperatures at the Earth's surface [1]. Most of the historical greenhouse gas emissions will persist in the atmosphere to continue driving global warming in the future [2]. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) identified signs of the negative impacts of global temperature increase, such as more frequent extreme weather events, weather-related disasters and rising sea levels [3].

The subsequent changes to climate pose a range of pressures on human health, and indeed survival, in multiple and interacting complex pathways [2, 4]. Firstly, the direct impacts are incidents that directly relate to weather or climate [2, 4].

These impacts are obvious such as frequency and intensity of extreme weather events (storm, flood, drought or heat wave) [5]. Second, indirect effects are more complex ecosystem-mediated via consequences to the environmental shifts resulting from climatic change [2, 4]. For example, these can happen through changes in the prevalence, location and severity of infectious diseases, air quality, food and waterborne diseases [5]. Lastly, social human institution-mediated

impacts are following from instances such as climate-driven conflict, economic dislocation or environmental degradation [2, 4].

### Gaps identified

As a fellow EHO, I always had a curiosity foresight on the known unknowns surrounding the health impacts and climate change. So, I decided to stop procrastinating and turn this curiosity into a research project by enrolling in a PhD with Central Queensland University. For any research project, a literature review needs to be undertaken to understand what has been written and what are the gaps to justify the research. There were plenty of knowledge gaps identified particularly evident in the climate and health field in focusing on adaptation at the community level and work to build future climatic resilience [6] [7] [8] [9].

The resilience concept has been argued as important conceptual framework to assist the understanding on how communities can manage the future climate change risks [10]. Further challenges are evident as it is unclear who is responsible for taking leadership of the health adaptation [11] and there is no lead agency responsible for public health adaptation [12]. There has been also little work undertaken on how to increase adaptive capacity and resilience in

the public health system [7]. The mere bolstering of public health system to address current gaps or programmes performance will be inadequate to prepare a health system to tackle climate change [7] [13].

### Environmental Health

The overarching purpose for the Environmental Health Profession is to prevent disease through monitoring and controlling environmental factors that may influence an individual's health and wellbeing [1]. In our daily work, we are assessing environmental health risks, provide advice to the public, plan and implement a range of programmes and creating partnerships [1].

Our profession has a vast experience in training, skills and expertise, as well as regulatory powers for effective interventions in reducing many health risks [14]. We not only have the ability but also has the responsibility to communicate the threats including the opportunities to the public and policy makers [15]. However, the environmental health scope does not explicitly reference climate change and health-related adaptation strategies as a core responsibility, yet the components of our work are increasingly affected by climate change [16]. Does the Environmental Health Profession have a crucial role

to play in building adaptive capacity to future climate change in Australia? If so, how can the profession build this community adaptive capacity in the future?

### Research design

I am using explanatory sequential mixed methods over two phases to collect data for answering the research question. Phase one will be mainly a quantitative based survey on national members of Environmental Health Australia (EHA) meeting the inclusion criteria. This survey will be cross-sectional with a goal to capture the opinions and knowledge within the EHA organisation and generalise these findings back to the environmental health profession within Australia. The survey will be descriptive in obtaining a snapshot of what attitudes the target population has regarding climate change adaptation.

Phase two data collection will build on the survey findings with semi-structured interviews of key informants who have knowledge or experience in building resilience. These key informants would have an inclusion criterion of a demonstrated knowledge in either disaster risk management, social-ecological human systems and/or adaptive management principles. The combining quantitative and qualitative methods to complement each other provides a more robust, in-depth analysis and provides a more complete understanding of the research problem under investigation [17].

### Proposed outcomes

The findings of this research are important for not only the Environmental Health Profession but also their local community to assist in developing resilience to potential future climate change health impacts in Australia. This research project aims to contribute to the body of knowledge in building adaptive capacity to increase community resilience to climate change impacts, particularly the role of the Environmental Health Profession. The project will also increase a boarder awareness of how the Environmental Health Profession can have an essential role in future climate change adaptation. Furthermore, the research findings may also apply and be beneficial to other Environmental Health Professions globally. The conclusions from the research methodology will provide an in-depth and broader understanding to what approaches can be used to build adaptive capacity to increase community resilience to climate change.

### How can you be involved?

We are calling on all full national EHA members meeting the inclusion criteria to show your support in completing the phase one anonymous survey. The more responses received, will increase the statistical power of study to make the findings more meaningful. We know EHOs are always busy and now has extra COVID responsibilities to deal with. Therefore, as a thank you gift for your precious time, there will be an optional prize draw to entry for a chance to win one of six \$50 gift card for completing the survey.

So, keep an eye out in the coming weeks for an EHA email inviting you to participate in this project by clicking on the anonymous survey link. Share your opinions of climate change adaptation and potentially contributing to the future understanding and preparedness of the Environmental Health Profession.

This project has obtained Central Queensland University Human Ethics Approval to conduct this research.

*Tony Walter MEHA (CQU PhD candidature)*

*Dr Lisa Bricknell MEHA MIFEH (CQU principal supervisor)*

*Dr Robyn Preston (CQU associate supervisor)*

*Dr Elise Crawford (CQU associate supervisor)*

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# EH Student Research

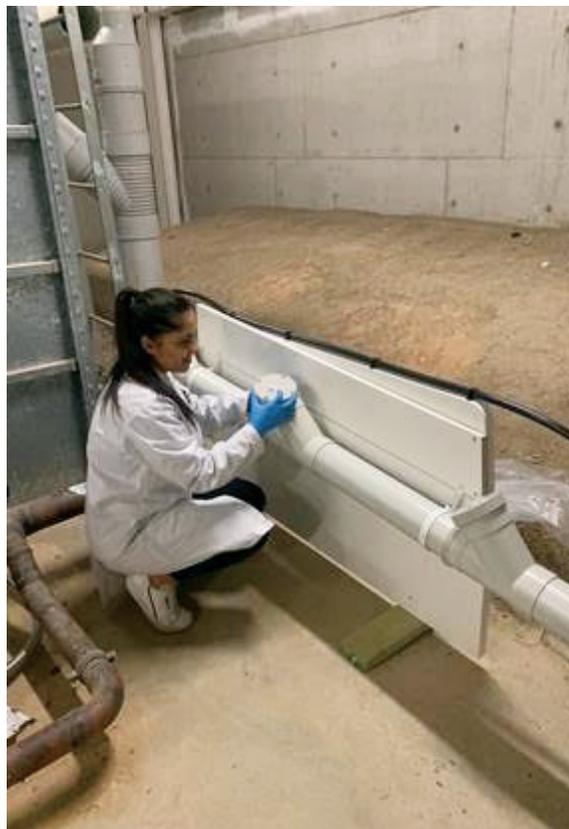
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**Andreana Shakallis Honours (Environmental Health) candidate**

*Started 2021*

Wastewater-based epidemiology is a technique that can be used to monitor pathogens in the community. Currently, the traditional sampling techniques include grab sampling and composite sampling; these techniques, while used most often, reduce sampling sensitivity due to high temporal fluctuations in pathogen concentration. Passive sampling is a technique that utilises a collecting medium such as sorbents, binding and diffusive gels and membranes. These sampling systems can be chosen for specific targets, increasing sensitivity, have a low cost and a greater spatial coverage in comparison to other sampling techniques. My project will be investigating the efficacy of a previously designed 3D-printed passive sampler for detection of viral fragments and optimise its use for wastewater-based epidemiology of SARS-CoV-2.

Using *Escherichia coli* bacteriophage MS2 as a model organism, the uptake capacity of the passive sampling device and its components will be analysed. We have designed a wastewater rig to mimic various flow conditions, and this will be followed with a field validation. The goal will be to optimise the use of the passive sampling device, not just for SARS-CoV-2 surveillance, but also other biologicals that can be monitored using wastewater-based epidemiology.



# Associations between green/blue spaces and mental health across 18 countries

- *Mathew P. White*<sup>1,2\*</sup>, *Lewis R. Elliott*<sup>2</sup>, *James Grellier*<sup>2,3</sup>, *Theo Economou*<sup>4</sup>, *Simon Bell*<sup>5</sup>, *Gregory N. Bratman*<sup>6</sup>, *Marta Cirach*<sup>7,8,9</sup>, *Mireia Gascon*<sup>7,8,9</sup>, *Maria L. Lima*<sup>10</sup>, *Mare Löhmus*<sup>11</sup>, *Mark Nieuwenhuijsen*<sup>7,8,9</sup>, *Ann Ojala*<sup>12</sup>, *Anne Roiko*<sup>13</sup>, *P. Wesley Schultz*<sup>14</sup>, *Matilda van den Bosch*<sup>7,15,16</sup> & *Lora E. Fleming*<sup>2</sup>

Living near, recreating in, and feeling psychologically connected to, the natural world are all associated with better mental health, but many exposure-related questions remain. Using data from an 18-country survey (n= 16,307) we explored associations between multiple measures of mental health (positive well-being, mental distress, depression/anxiety medication use) and: (a) exposures (residential/recreational visits) to different natural settings (green/inland-blue/coastal blue spaces); and (b) nature connectedness, across season and country.

People who lived in greener/coastal neighbourhoods reported higher positive well-being, but this association largely disappeared when recreational visits were controlled for.

Frequency of recreational visits to green, inland-blue, and coastal-blue spaces in the last 4 weeks were all

positively associated with positive well-being and negatively associated with mental distress. Associations with green space visits were relatively consistent across seasons and countries but associations with blue space visits showed greater heterogeneity.

Nature connectedness was also positively associated with positive well-being and negatively associated with mental distress and was, along with green space visits, associated with a lower likelihood of using

medication for depression.

By contrast inland-blue space visits were associated with a greater likelihood of using anxiety medication. Results highlight the benefits of multi-exposure, multi-response, multi-country studies in exploring complexity in nature-health associations.

## [FULL REPORT](#)



# EHA Socials

Keep up to date with all the latest news through the EHA social media platforms. In case you missed them, below are some of the top posts for the past 2 months.



## June

5 new species of Listeria - Cornell University food scientists in the US have discovered 5 novel relatives of the listeria bacteria whilst performing soil samples. Researchers say this discovery will help food facilities identify potential growth niches that until now, may have been overlooked – thus improving food safety. <https://www.miragenews.com/scientists-discover-five-new-species-of-562203/>

## July

Congratulations Mandurah Health Services team! - This is the second time the team have been named 'Environmental Health Local Government Team of the Year' for their outstanding service in Environmental Health, previously winning the award in 2019. <https://www.mandurahmail.com.au/story/7327239/mandurah-named-best-in-state-for-environmental-health/>

## August

Mosquito Day LiveChat



## June

World Food Safety Day LiveChat Presentations

## July

Congratulations Katharina! - Every Year, EHA (QLD) INC presents the Margaret Hind Memorial Medal to the student with the highest GPA in our Griffith University accredited course. EHA would like to extend our congratulations Katharina Gutjahr-Holland for being the 2020 recipient of this award. <https://youtu.be/GFLxutq0M0Y>

## August

Who are EHOs - Today we're speaking with an EHA National Board member - Glenys Nicholls, who is an EHO working in Tasmania. Be sure to subscribe to the EHA YouTube channel to stay up to date with all the latest video releases.



## June

Food Safety Week LiveChat - Don't forget to join @EnvHealthAu and @NEHA.org this #WorldFoodSafetyDay on June 7th to hear from food safety regulators from around the world.

## July

NatRUM featuring EHA President - EHA supports the National Return of Unwanted Medicines and encourages the safe disposal of medications. Recently, Phil Swain featured in an article on the NatRUM blog, check it out here: <https://returnmed.com.au/environmentalist-philip-swain-passion-environment/>

## August

One Health - COVID19 has reminded us how environmental health, human health and wildlife health are all interconnected. Now more than ever we are seeing the importance of the One Health approach to regulating wildlife trade. <https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2021/07/action-address-wildlife-crimes-environmental-health->

# Making Food Safety Easier for the Food Industry

## Food Safety Select

When it comes to food safety, Environmental Health professionals know that businesses and individuals within the food industry face many challenges. Understanding complex standards and regulations, the threat of new and emerging viruses, toxins, bacteria, maintenance issues, supplier verification, food safety culture issues, finding appropriate products and services, a million records to keep, and acronyms to remember... are just a few.

Introducing Food Safety Select... Food Safety Select is an online food safety platform focused on making food safety easier for Australia's food industry. It's a platform created to help food handlers and businesses sell safe and suitable food in Australia.

Since its establishment, the platform has been connecting food handlers and food businesses with suppliers of products, training, and services that promote food safety, as well as the best supplier deals, food safety

news, events, training, and resources. Whether an individual is looking for information on how to start a new food business or for the latest food safety technology, they can search Food Safety Select to find whatever they need to start and run a food business safely.

Food Safety Select was founded in Melbourne, Australia, by ex EHO and entrepreneur Melissa Boyle - a professional with a passion and background in food safety, public and environmental health, and the food industry. Food Safety Select has since become a pioneer in the food safety economy, with thousands of users since its establishment. Food Safety

Select is dedicated to making food safety easy for the food industry, using technology to change the way that food safety solutions are made available in Australia.

With plenty to offer and some great new features about to be launched, including an interactive community and jobs search feature, we invite EHA members to register your interest in helping us help the food industry through surveys, content and feedback. To take part, please feel free to email [admin@foodsafetysselect.com](mailto:admin@foodsafetysselect.com) Food Safety Select was launched in October 2020... a great journey so far, but just the beginning!



# News Abroad

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## National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)

September is National Food Safety Education Month and this year the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) will be celebrating all month long! Join us throughout September for our Emerging Trends in Food Safety Webinar series and as we highlight and uplift the work of the food safety community on our Food Safety Heroes blog.

Catch up with the rapidly evolving technology and consumer trends impacting retail food safety during our Emerging Trends in Food Safety Webinar Series! During this series, subject matter experts will share innovations and insights on topics from third-party delivery to cannabis. Join us for a peek into the rapidly changing landscape of retail food safety kicking off on Wednesday, September 1 and continuing each Tuesday throughout the month. Visit our National Food Safety Education Month page for the latest information and all the details.

And, as a part of our celebration, we want to highlight the tireless work of our food safety workforce. While often underrecognized, the food safety and environmental health professionals go above and beyond every day to protect the public from contaminated foods. NEHA is proud to support our members in the invaluable work they do every day. We invite you to share a Food Safety Hero: someone whose passion, dedication, and contributions have had a significant impact on those around them. We will be accepting for Food Safety Hero nominations throughout the month, so share someone who deserves to be recognized with us!

You can find more details, as well as information about NEHA's other food safety education resources, on our National Food Safety Education month webpage.

## 2022 AEC Call For Abstracts Now Open Through September 27

NEHA is pleased to announce that the Call for Abstracts for the 2022 Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition is now open. This year's theme is Safeguarding a Road Less Traveled.

NEHA invites you to submit an abstract for consideration for the 2022 AEC, scheduled to take place in person in Spokane, Washington, on June 28–July 1, 2022. By presenting at the NEHA AEC you will provide the audience with practical skills and knowledge they can take back to implement in their own jurisdictions and departments.

The education and networking provided during the AEC has earned it the reputation as the premiere conference for individuals working in the environmental health profession. We invite you to take advantage of this opportunity to provide unique insights and share your experience, expertise, knowledge, and research.

To submit your abstract online, please view our abstract submission guidelines and review the list of 2022 AEC tracts and disciplines.

Visit the 2022 AEC website for more details about the conference. Check back frequently for the latest conference news and announcements.



Here's an update from our kiwi friends across the ditch at the New Zealand Institute of Environmental Health (NZIEH). NZIEH has undergone a facelift! As part of this, we have a new logo and website: [www.nzieh.org.nz](http://www.nzieh.org.nz) and are pleased to welcome onboard new partners who support us and our wider membership in their day to day roles.

Check out an image of our new home page below:



Other projects we have been working on recently include offering more training and development opportunities for our members. We have webinars coming up before the end of this year for Safe Food Pro to introduce Food verifiers to paperless record keeping systems, as well as a presentation by Coeliac New Zealand introducing their 'Dining out' scheme for New Zealand food businesses to help raise awareness of best practice measures to handle and prepare gluten free foods.

All Regional branches have face to face training events scheduled before the end of the year covering various Environmental Health topics.

Our National President Tanya Morrison also recently guest lectured to Massey University students in Wellington during the Environmental Health law paper contact course on legislation tips and tricks. As part of this visit, NZIEH undertook a student membership drive and successfully signed up new members to the institute. NZIEH is committed to working with the Environmental and Public Health students to ensure they receive training and support as they head towards a career within our industry. We are also committed to being more visible on the international stage and highlighting the great work that our kiwi EHO's and public health staff undertake.



NZIEH National President Tanya Morrison Guest Lecturing at Massey University, Wellington

If you would like to learn more about NZIEH, please get in touch via our website or by emailing [info@nzieh.org.nz](mailto:info@nzieh.org.nz)



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Food safety Level 2 and Level 3 available end 2021. HACCP available early 2022.

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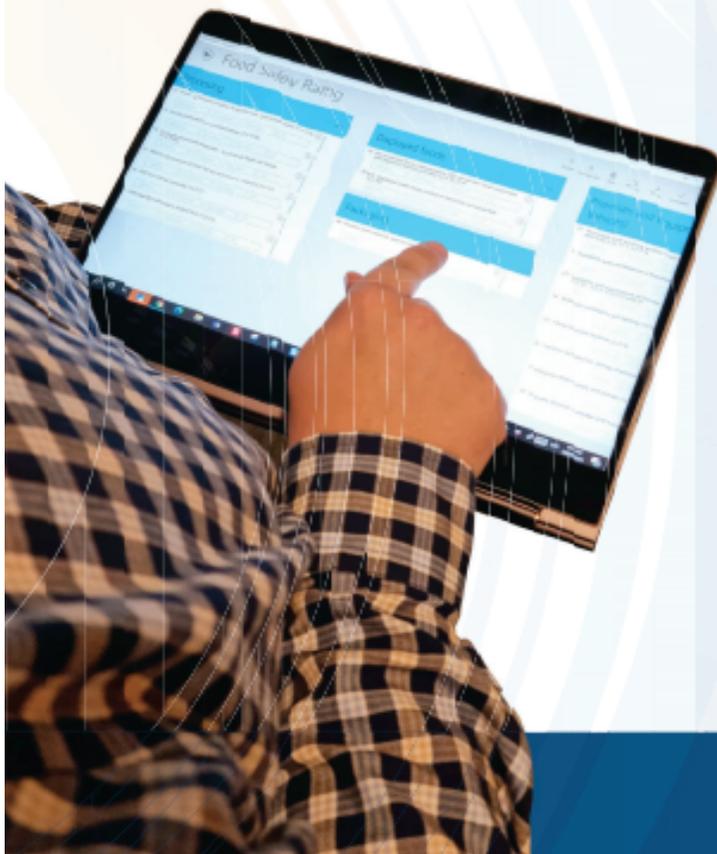
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Our Environment, Our Health, Our Future

# The City of Port Adelaide Enfield explored the market to select a Health Mobility System Solution that would overcome their current limitation of being desktop usage only.

Key objectives sought by Council did include meeting its legislated obligations regarding health inspections of food premises to provide community confidence and community wellbeing, whilst having a system that can be relied upon to support the assessment and compliance of food businesses. Furthermore, the ability to have necessary integration with Council finance, property and record systems was pivotal.



The City of Port Adelaide Enfield have implemented the Open Office world class leading solution for Environmental Health Management that will enable and support Council to deliver outstanding services to their community.

The advantage of introducing Open Office Health Manager and Mobile Health not only includes the reduction of administrative burden of data re-entry, but it will also provide confidence in having a mobile solution that can automatically switch between online and offline without fear of losing data. Mobile Health will not only upload inspection outcomes to Health Manager but can also automatically generate and send inspection reports via email, all of which is recorded, for traceability and Council integrity.

The introduction of Open Office Health Manager and Mobile Health will ultimately allow Environmental Health Officers to increase their capacity, whilst promoting consistency with the use of pre-defined observations and compliance instructions.

OpenOffice looks forward to continuing to work with Environmental Health Professionals throughout the region to deliver best practice solutions.



L - R; Rebecca Powell, Bradley Prosser and Summa Bragg

[OpenOffice.com.au](http://OpenOffice.com.au)

Our Environment, Our Health, Our Future

# Noise App Survey Results

By Peter Wright

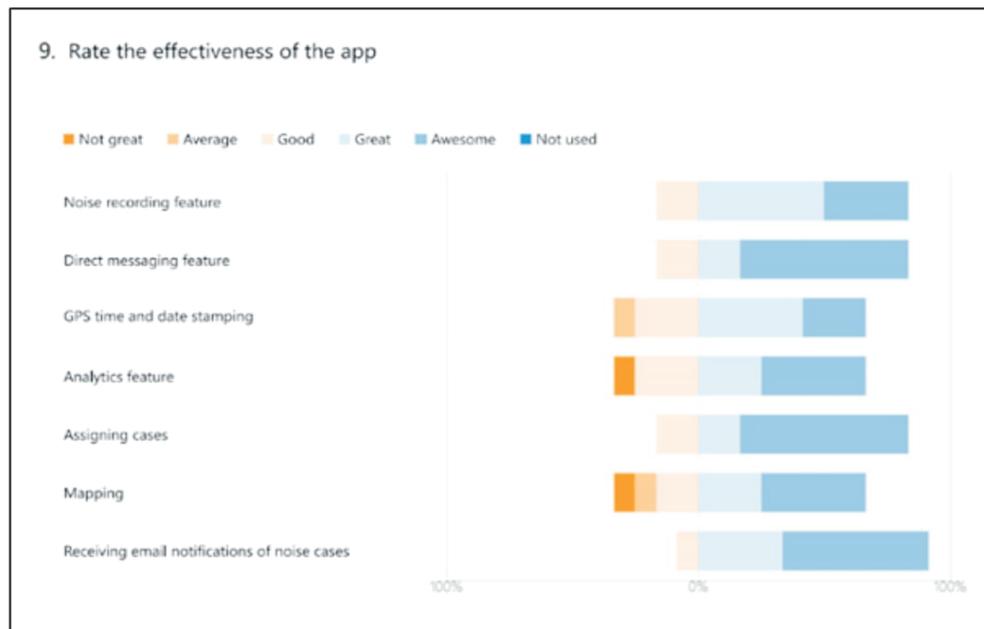
**80% of Councils using the app say that it is effective in resolving noise issues. Most Councils rated the app to be easy to set up and introduce to the team**



## Survey Key Findings

‘It was fairly straight forward process by working with our IT team and manager.’

‘We discussed in team meetings and had a go at using it. Eventually as we were using it, we saw the great benefits of the app.’



‘I think the location of noise source and place where complainant is taking the readings from is really helpful in determining the likely nuisance noise is causing.’

‘Easy access to listen to recordings’

### The top three benefits of the app:

- Able to hear the noise via the recordings feature before having to go out on site to verify
- Having an accurate location, time and date of the noise event
- Being able to correspond with the complainant via direct messaging is convenient and saves officer time.

# MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Samantha Smith

It's hard to think that Christmas is just 17 short weeks away! Sadly one of the EHA calendar highlight events - the EHA National Conference, was necessarily postponed to 2022 this year due to the COVID situation in NSW. Please keep an eye on EHA social media channels for updates on the rescheduled event.

Before the year comes to an end, there are still plenty of exciting events to look forward to with EHA. Our WEHD LiveChat event on September 24th is definitely one not to miss! Featuring speakers from around the world, including the US, UK, NZ, Malaysia and Australia. We also have our WEHD competitions which is open to all Australian high school students as well as accredited university students this year.

World Food Safety week is also coming up in November so keep an eye on EHA social media channels for events to celebrate world food safety.

Unfortunately, there were no submissions for our 'It Happened to Me' section in the newsletter this edition. I would like to remind everyone that **this section in the newsletter is only possible with your contributions**. All articles will remain anonymous and any information which can be used to identify specific businesses/people/places will not be published.

Please send your articles/experiences to [samantha.smith@eh.org.au](mailto:samantha.smith@eh.org.au). There is no strict word limit for articles. If you aren't comfortable writing an article, send me an email as I'm more than happy to send you 6 easy questions to answer or have a chat over the phone.

I want to encourage everyone to reflect on some of your most challenging/unusual career moments and share those experiences with fellow EHA members, after all *"knowledge is wasted if it isn't shared"*.

That's all from me for this edition, the next newsletter will be released in December.

I'm looking forward to hearing and sharing your stories!

*Samantha*

National Communications Officer



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