

Queensland Heat Health Community of Practice (QHHCop) Charter (1st September 2022)

Driving Purpose

Climate change research across the globe has indicated that increased ambient temperatures are a significant threat to both humans and ecosystems. Indeed, here in Australia, the State of the Climate (BoM & CSIRO, 2020) illustrated the increase in extreme weather events, with a particular emphasis on extreme heat. Moreover, modelling predicts the increase in extreme heat events are not only projected to continue but increase in duration and intensity. This has serious consequences as nationally, extreme heat leads to more deaths than all other natural hazards combined (Coates et al. 2014). Further, elevations in temperature, even those not technically defined as 'extreme', have the potential to impact on vulnerable sub-populations, particularly those on specific medication or with co-morbidities.

The Human Health and Wellbeing Climate Adaptation Plan (H-CAP), highlighted heatwave impact on health as its greatest concern. The H-CAP was developed by stakeholders from the health care, aged care and early childhood education stakeholders and released in 2019. Related to this work, Queensland's Department of Environment and Science (DES) put forth the idea of establishing a Queensland Heat Health Community of Practice (QHHCop). The QHHCop is a diverse group of researchers and professionals working within the heat health space, who share resources, knowledge, and best practice.

Objectives of the QHHCop

- Establishing an Advisory Group to provide oversight, as well as guide working procedures and broad directions
- Design and host events for members to provide an opportunity to showcase work undertaken, share learnings and methods and seek opportunities to build teams to answer questions and advocate for identified needs
- Establishing an online platform which engages members through:
 - Networking and connecting members
 - Facilitating a constructive dialogue through discussion boards, news sharing and seminars
 - Collating resources related to heat health research projects and opportunities, funding and real-world examples of best practice
- Link to other National and International heat-health focussed networks (e.g. HEAL, USyd Heat-Health research incubator, GHHIN)

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Benefits of Membership

The QHHCOP facilitates the connection between all members, fostering a supportive environment among passionate professionals across a range of different sectors. Involvement encourages problem solving, collaboration, sharing new research opportunities, and investment in heat-health action.

By adhering to the objectives (connecting members, facilitating discussion, upholding relevant events and activities related to QHHCOP, and collating resources), the QHHCOP will be able to expand membership across heat health networks and create movements which can potentially increase awareness, investment and uptake of heat mitigation and adaptation policies across Queensland.

Scope

The QHHCOP will:

- Recommend, share, critique and develop but not implement, examples of best practice
- Create open discussion around adaptation, policy reform and advocating for increased investment in heat health research and action across Queensland
- Share resources not limited to:
 - Available grants
 - Share and promote research within the heat health space
 - Facilitate a network of dedicated individuals focused on heat adaptation
 - Share and promote research applications
 - Archive relevant resources for different sectors within the heat health space
- Hold virtual and face to face seminars aiming to increase transdisciplinary working capacity among QHHCOP members

The QHHCOP will not:

- Provide funding to attend internal or external activities advertised within the QHHCOP. Activities may include, but are not limited to, exhibitions, conferences, workshops, seminars, or professional development courses.

Operational Characteristics

1. Key roles

- Core leadership team
- Executive sponsor willing to secure resources and troubleshoot issues

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- Other necessary personnel dedicated to:
 - Resource management
 - Discussion management
 - Organising, recording and facilitating QHHCOP meetings and activities
 - Communications
 - Outreach to external communities of practice, organisations and groups within the heat health space

2. Resources required for QHHCOP development and sustainability

- Recruitment and training of personnel to fulfill key roles (listed above)
- Time for members to lead and participate in discussions, seminars and activities
- Supportive digital technology which enables interaction among QHHCOP members and aligns with QHHCOP objectives
- Member commitment and passion for working together within the heat health space

3. Metrics of success

- Number of seminars and webinars hosted
- Number of attendees at seminars
- Documentation of best practices
- Engagement with the established online platform which houses the QHHCOP (e.g, through discussion board posts, comments, resource shares and page visits)
- Fostering opportunities for practice to inform research
- Capacity for multisectoral collaboration
- Conversion of knowledge into policies, plans and programs

4. Plan to overcome barriers to success

- Non-supportive technology
 - Work with Digital Solutions to identify the best and most-user friendly online platforms to support the needs of the QHHCOP

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- Discuss online platform options with QHHCOP members. Pilot an agreed upon online platform alongside a survey for QHHCOP member feedback
- Adjust platform based on member feedback before launching the final online platform
- Regularly seek and implement feedback about the online platform to ensure it is meeting the needs of members
- Member commitment
 - Establish an agreed upon list of roles and responsibilities for members
 - Seek feedback from members on what the QHHCOP needs to ensure it is valuable and relevant to members
- Time
 - Be flexible with meetings, seminars and workshops, opting for online options for those who are unable to attend face to face activities
- Lack of trust
 - Ensure the online platform is a supportive place which actively encourages diverse initiatives and allows for difference in opinion and perspective
- Lack of interaction
 - Seek feedback from members about content within the QHHCOP, ensuring it is consistent and facilitates an open discussion
 - Encourage new members to share their thoughts and experiences through discussion boards and during activities
 - Update members on news, events, discussions and activities through a monthly QHHCOP newsletter