

UNSW School of Population Health



Strategy 2020-2025



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Acknowledgement of Country and our place in it

In line with the Faculty of Medicine and Health, UNSW School of Population Health recognises the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in both Australian and global culture and history as the original owners of the Lands and Waters upon which our campuses are located.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is one of the oldest surviving cultures in the world. We are proud of the remarkable resilience that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities demonstrate in their survival and recovery from the violence, discrimination and continuing disadvantage they face.

The School is sorry for the practices, policies and actions which have contributed to the injustices and trauma of the past, including the forcible removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and communities.

We note that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is not just the physical wellbeing of an individual but the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community, in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential, thereby bringing about the total wellbeing of their community. It is a whole-of-life view and includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life. We acknowledge and respect the unique lived cultural experiences and ways of being and doing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health staff, which makes them powerful advocates and agents of change to improve health outcomes for their communities.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce brings an intuitive understanding of cultural safety and competence to an organisation. We value the understandings and achievements for all staff and students gained through knowledge of and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and wisdom.

We are committed to the special, unique and critical position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the School and within the communities the School, Faculty and UNSW serves. We will develop methods for individuals and groups within the Faculty to implement their own processes for cultural safety, reconciliation and that will guide any subsequent actions. We will work to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through everything that we do.

Welcome from the Head of School



UNSW School of Population Health is a forward-looking School, in our research, teaching and engagement, as we consistently strive to have a positive impact on people's lives, health systems, policy and practice.

This Strategy is our roadmap to achieving this by harnessing the world-leading expertise of our partners and collaborators across UNSW and beyond; focusing on academic excellence, the social and commercial determinants of health, and health systems; and growing future leaders in health and research.

The rise of complex population health challenges in Australia and globally calls for greater impact through cross-disciplinary partnerships; innovation in healthcare, education and research; and a multi-disciplinary and system-level approach to improving health and inequities.

UNSW School of Population Health is rising to this challenge. Emerging health threats such as the COVID-19 pandemic and 2019-2020 Australian bushfire crisis are strong reminders that resilient

health systems are paramount to being able to respond to what the future brings. Yet, whatever this may be, we must also be able to continue addressing the priorities of today, such as the systemic inequities and health disparities that disproportionately affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

With this Strategy, we aim to benefit everyone who connects with us; to embrace and celebrate the diversity of our students, staff and the communities we work with; and to promote cultural safety through all that we do.

Our Strategy supports and aligns with the UNSW 2025 Strategic Plan and with UNSW Medicine Health 25 Plan released in 2020, to show how we will achieve excellence and drive innovation in population health research and education to have lasting societal impact.

I look forward to working together as we tackle the biggest health challenges today and in the future.

Professor Rebecca Ivers
Head of UNSW School of Population Health



"We are proud of UNSW's leadership and innovation in population health, which is transforming lives and communities globally, and developing the next generation of health leaders."

Professor Ian Jacobs
Vice-Chancellor
UNSW Sydney

How this Strategy will benefit you

Students

- High-quality education to succeed in the health workforce
- Research-informed learning e.g. via research projects and industry internships
- Being part of the local and global UNSW community and alumni

UNSW staff and alumni

- An environment that allows you to reach your potential
- A focus on relevance to communities, practice and policy for greater impact
- A global network of research and education experts and leaders
- World-leading education relevant to current health priorities

Partners

- Partnerships with UNSW experts to address the issues that matter to you
- Increased research capacity nationally and globally
- Evidence-based approaches to healthcare innovation, policy and practice

"As much as I thought I knew about healthcare, there were always so many more people doing so many more incredible things in the sector both nationally and internationally. Learning from these experiences was not only an interesting academic exercise - it provided lessons that could be taken back to the communities I work with."

Dr Lesh Satchithananda
Master of Public Health



Government and other stakeholders

- Evidence-based solutions to policy and practice challenges
- Graduates who are job ready, critical thinkers and able to solve problems
- Professional development that meets real-world workforce needs

Researchers

- An environment that fosters excellence in research, innovation and translation of evidence into impact
- Multidisciplinary approaches to research harnessing researchers from across and beyond UNSW

Medical Research Institutes and other UNSW Faculties

- Greater impact through combining and strengthening population health endeavours across UNSW and the wider precinct
- Collaborate with us on shared research strengths and priorities

UNSW executives

- How UNSW School of Population Health will deliver on the UNSW 2025 Strategy

Donors

- Have lasting societal impact globally through research and teaching excellence



Overview

UNSW School of Population Health delivers one of the most prestigious population health teaching programs in Australia and has the oldest and largest health leadership and management program in the country. In addition to our undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in population and global health, infectious diseases intelligence, and health management, we teach essential population health and health systems content to undergraduate medical students and host UNSW's academic discipline of general practice.

We educate students from all over the world – we are equipping them with the knowledge and skills to transform the health of populations and health systems, and to be compassionate leaders in health and research.

Our world class research culture supports our innovative teaching program. In addition to our strengths in public and global health, and health leadership and management, we generate high-impact evidence to tackle emerging threats, address the social and commercial determinants of health, and build resilient health systems.

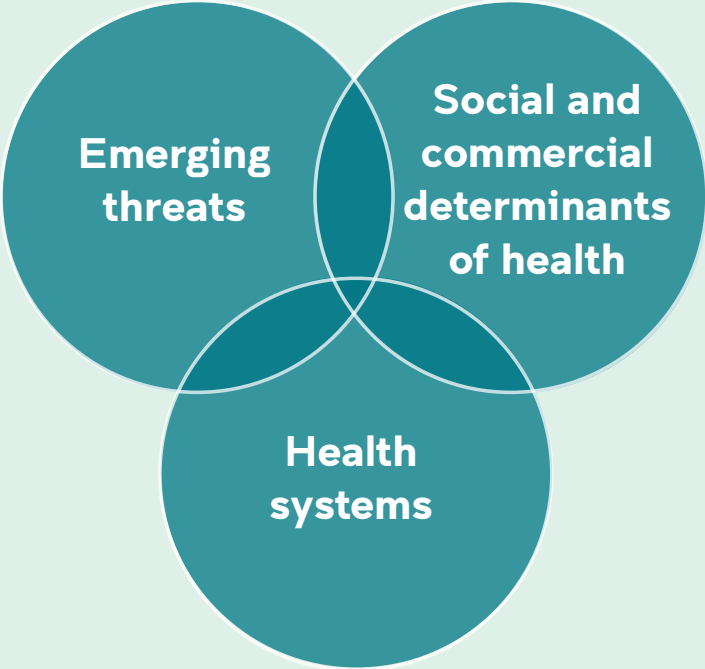
Health equity underpins all our teaching and research, as does our commitment to recognising the special position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and to work in partnership with them.

"My degree has given me a greater understanding of how to empower and encourage people to have agency over their own health, which I believe is key for public health and health promotion. It has taught me how to critically evaluate evidence-based research and how to interpret data relating to epidemiology. It is my hope that I will be able to use all that I have learnt to make a difference in the health of individuals living in developing countries."

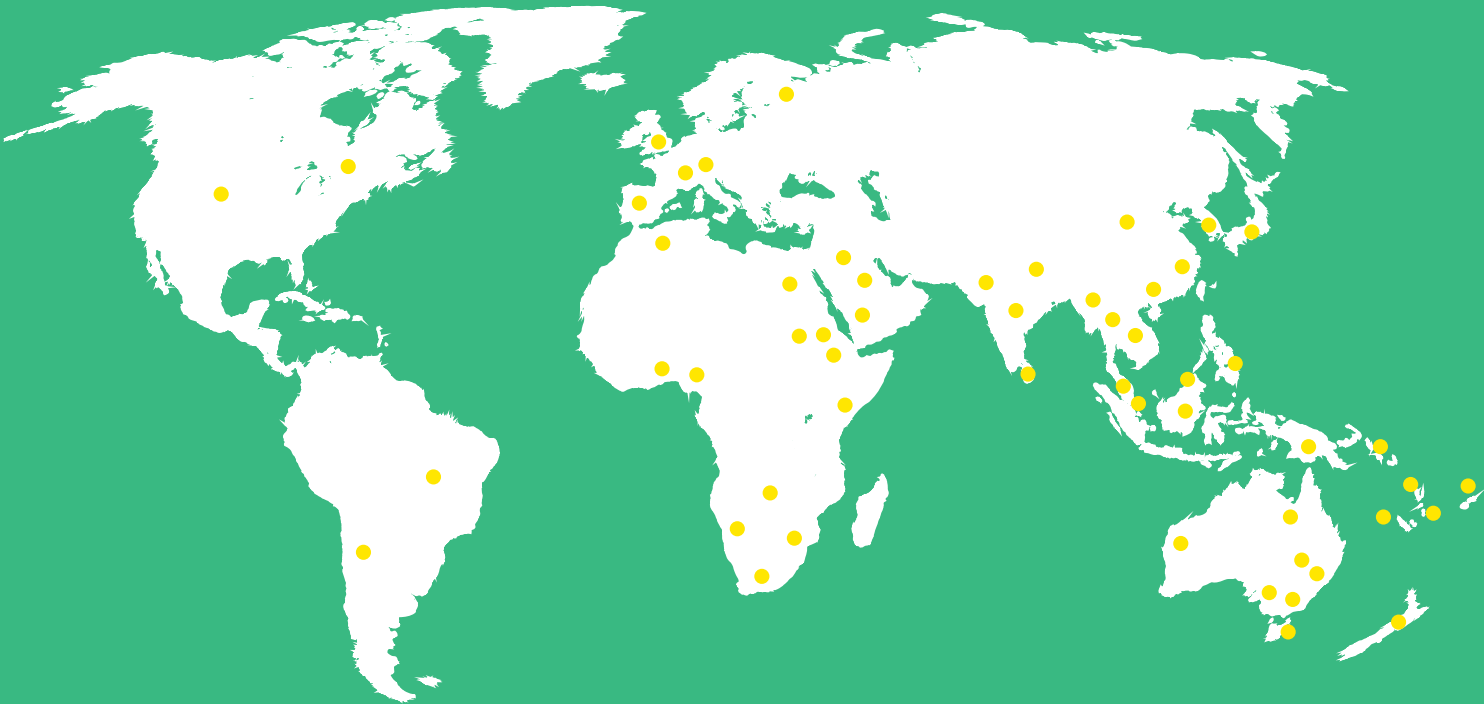
Rachel Karsten
Master of International Public Health



UNSW School of Population Health alignment with World Health Organization goals



Our students span the globe



A population health response

This Strategy builds on UNSW School of Population Health's many proud achievements in response to the changing landscape of local, regional and global population health needs.

The global shift in focus on underserved populations, health emergencies and promoting health and wellbeing

The World Health Organization's goal is to "ensure that a billion more people have universal health coverage, to protect a billion more people from health emergencies, and provide a further billion people with better health and well-being". In response, we focus on emerging threats, social, cultural, environmental and commercial determinants of health, and health systems; and the interconnectedness of these.

The rise of non-communicable diseases and injuries as a major global burden of disease

We will respond to the global need to prevent and manage rising levels of non-communicable diseases and injuries, and the crippling impact of these on health systems, particularly in underserved and under-resourced populations.

The ability of big health data to improve health systems and equity

We will capitalise upon the power of big health data to better understand health and inequity trends and to evaluate policy priorities. Insights gained will improve health systems, healthcare and the health and wellbeing of people, locally and globally.



"The program offered a wide range of opportunities which boosted my resume. It allowed me to broaden my perspective on health by learning in a new environment and interacting with experts from different health settings. This enabled me to gain a broader understanding of health and come up with ways to apply what I learned to my own setting, back home in India...UNSW equipped me to be a well-rounded master's degree holder, and that's exactly what organisations are looking for!"

Nikita Bathla

Master of International Public Health / Master of Health Management with extension (dual degree research component)

New ways of cross-sectoral collaboration to address the social determinants of health

The rise of complex population health challenges globally has increased the need for multi-disciplinary partnerships, and environmental, policy and systems-level actions that influence the social and cultural determinants of health and health equity.

The evolving needs of the health workforce

The health workforce needs to be agile and skilled to respond to emerging threats and a changing health landscape, including the double burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases. Workforce training that incorporates the upstream determinants of health (social, cultural, environmental, economic and commercial) is paramount to improving outcomes and inequities.



"I decided to study public health and health management because I felt that despite being a clinician and in the privileged position to make a difference in many unwell people's lives, I was not doing enough on a system-wide level to ensure good health for all...I now stand much better placed to open doors towards a broader career that includes health systems consulting, digital health and medical technology innovation, and health policymaking both domestically and across the wider globe."

Dr Jaffly Chen
Master of Public Health/Master of Health Management with extension (dual degree with research component)

Our Vision

UNSW Sydney

- By 2025, UNSW will be Australia's global university and a leading research-intensive and teaching university.

UNSW Medicine

- Improving health in Australia and globally, with a focus on eliminating health disparities.
- Our willingness to address the most difficult and important challenges in health will differentiate and inspire us.
- Our values will be based on excellence and impact, equity and diversity, innovations and accountability.


UNSW School of Population Health

- Transform people's health and health systems through excellence in population health research and education.
- Work with communities to improve health in Australia, our region and globally, with a focus on equity, diversity and social justice.
- Build healthier futures in Australia, our region and globally through research, teaching, and community and industry engagement.

"By working together, we can dramatically improve the health of our community and people around the world."

Scientia Professor Vlado Perkovic
Dean
Faculty of Medicine and Health, UNSW

Our Approach




To align and deliver on the
UNSW 2025 Strategic Plan
and UNSW Medicine Strategy
Health 25

To respond to
current and future
practice, research and
education, including
the UN Sustainable
Development Goals

To respond to a growing
competitive environment for
population health education
and research

To take full advantage of
existing and developing new
networks and infrastructures
surrounding UNSW, and harness
partnerships with Medical
Research Institutes



Strategic Priority 1: Academic excellence

We will transform people's health and health systems through excellence in population health research and education by:

Conducting high-quality research that addresses current and emerging population health challenges and priorities.

How we will do this:

- Develop, recruit and collaborate with world-class researchers in population health.
- Connect population health expertise across UNSW and partner organisations by fostering interdisciplinary research.
- Capitalise on and extend our leading research strengths.
- Build the next generation of researchers through fostering research talent in students and early career researchers, and attracting researchers with fellowships, conjoint appointments and through the Scientia program.
- Prioritise and support research led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to address community needs.
- Diversify sources of research funding to include government, philanthropic and commercial sources.
- Establish and strengthen supportive systems and processes to build a vibrant research culture.
- Engage with research teams and partnerships embedded in Local Health Districts (LHDs) and other government areas.

Providing the next generation of leaders with the skills to transform the health of populations and health systems, and address inequities.

How we will do this:

- Stay at the forefront of population health and health systems teaching through continuous curriculum development that reflects the changing needs of population health.
- Meet the diverse needs of students and stakeholders, through initiatives including short courses, using new technologies in education and promoting cultural safety.
- Enhance the student experience with innovative, tailored and flexible programs that create a thriving, engaged and supported student community that celebrates diversity.
- Capitalise upon the expertise of Medical Research Institutes (MRIs), alumni, health service partners and conjoins across UNSW to strengthen education.
- Support and advance the leadership role and self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in population health.
- Expand and strengthen population health and health services teaching across the wider faculty, e.g. UNSW Medicine and health services teaching, and undergraduate opportunities.
- Broaden our reach, solidify and expand our research and education partnerships globally, including with but not exclusively with the PLuS Alliance, NUW Alliance and SPHERE (Maridulu Budyari Gumal).
- Expand School internship program across leading population health and health service organisations for greater impact.
- Build and maintain connections and collaboration opportunities with graduates through an engaged alumni network.

Measures of progress

- Excellence for Research in Australia (ERA) rankings
- Global university rankings
- Quality indicators for learning and teaching (QILT) results
- myExperience feedback
- Number of collaborations and alliances
- Mutually beneficial governance, structures and processes established for UNSW cross-faculty, Medical Research Institutes (MRIs) and Local Health District (LHD) alliances





"The School also provides me with an opportunity for research. I am particularly interested in researching health promotion strategies to reduce health inequalities in rural settings. I believe, the research will help me in my vision of accessible healthcare even in the most remote of all places in my country. Research creates a path for generating new questions. Existing data helps create more opportunities for research."

Manik Singh

Master of International Public Health / Master of Health Management

Strategic Priority 2: Innovation and engagement

We will work with communities to improve health in Australia, locally and globally, with a focus on equity, diversity and social justice by:

Connecting and collaborating with communities and partners to co-design research and education on issues that matter to them.

How we will do this:

- Elevate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, and work in partnership to co-design and conduct research and provide education that meets community needs.
- Create and support education and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Support and partner with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) researchers and communities to address their health priorities.
- Strengthen relationships with global partners in population health research, with a decolonising approach that supports leadership from these partners.
- Work with partners, organisations and communities (e.g. healthcare providers, managers and policymakers) to understand and ensure our research and education priorities meet their needs.
- Build the capacity of partners, organisations and communities to undertake research.

Measures of progress

- Case studies of impact
- ERA – Engagement and Impact outcomes
- Number of linkage and partnership grants



Communicating and advocating with passion, clarity and authority for population health and social justice.

How we will do this:

- Develop skills in communication, stakeholder engagement and advocacy, and increase the public profile of UNSW School of Population Health and its experts.
- Communicate more effectively about the work of the School and the impact of its research, education and people, through increased public forums, advocacy, and media and social media outreach.

Creating pathways to ensure our research makes a difference to health outcomes and builds resilient health systems.

How we will do this:

- Build capacity, relationships and innovative methods to translate evidence into practice.
- Proactively communicate research findings to stakeholders, including community partners, to inform policy and practice.
- Create two-way knowledge exchange between researchers, policymakers and community partners to maximise opportunities for impact.



"My work is important to me because I want to make a meaningful difference to people's health and help to tackle inequity. Public health is people-centred and has social justice at its core. It's about thinking big and about systems of change. In short, public health is about making things better for everyone."

Dr Adam Craig
Deputy Director of the Bachelor of International Public Health program



"Doing the Masters of Infectious Disease Intelligence at the School has equipped me with knowledge I've gained from world-renowned experts and being exposed to perspectives of different stakeholders working in infectious diseases...The courses are very comprehensive and easy to apply to the real world. There's a never a dull moment in public health especially in the area of infectious diseases."

Isireli Rabukawa
Master of Infectious Diseases Intelligence

Strategic Priority 3: Societal impact

We will build healthier futures in Australia, locally and globally through research, teaching, and community and industry engagement by:

Strengthening our position as a trusted partner in the Asia-Pacific region to work together to further build capacity in population health policy, and to enhance research and education.

How we will do this:

- Expand and strengthen relationships with international agencies and alliances, multilateral organisations, and regional partners. We have a global mission, including a prime focus on the Asia-Pacific region.
- Grow our research to reflect the global health trends focused on: addressing emerging population health threats; strengthening health systems; and tackling the social and commercial determinants of health.
- Conduct research that helps achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in response to country specific priorities and with a focus on the upstream determinants of health (e.g. poverty, gender equity, education and climate action).

Measures of progress

- Number of collaborations and alliances
- Case studies of impact
- ERA – Engagement and Impact outcomes
- Engaged alumni through partnerships and training
- Increased funding from national and international agencies



Partnering with health leaders who work locally and globally to transform people's health and health systems.

How we will do this:

- Privilege voices in the Asia-Pacific region and support capacity development in research and education for health leaders in the region (e.g. short courses as part of professional development for health leaders).
- Harness the networks of our global alumni in research and educations.



"Studying the Masters of International Public Health at UNSW was a very positive experience. The School – and all the university – is made up of an incredibly diverse group of staff and students and there's a strong commitment to respecting cultural diversity. I was also attracted to the School's contribution to teaching and research in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and its strong track record in the management of chronic disease, especially in primary health."

Ebony Lewis

Associate Lecturer, School graduate, Scientia PhD student



About this Strategy

With a focus on 2025, this is an ambitious Strategy but one we believe is critical to achieving better health and equity for all. Thank you to all who contributed to its development - it is the outcome of an extensive consultation process with the whole UNSW School of Population Health, and with UNSW Faculty of Medicine and Health and Medical Research Institutes' leadership, and the School's external advisory committee. We look forward to building on this collective effort as we work with our global community of staff, students, alumni, partners, and collaborators to implement this Strategy over the next five years and bring our vision to life.

More information about the UNSW School of Population and this Strategy:

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Facebook: facebook.com/sphcmunsw

[View UNSW Medicine and Health Strategy – Health 2025](#)

[View UNSW Strategy 2025](#)

Our Strategy at a glance

Our Vision

- Transform people's health and health systems through excellence in population health research and education.
- Work with communities to improve health in Australia, our region and globally, with a focus on equity, diversity and social justice.
- Build healthier futures in Australia, our region and globally through research, teaching, and community and industry engagement.

We will do this through:

Academic excellence

- Conducting high-quality research that addresses current and emerging population health challenges and priorities.
- Providing the next generation of leaders with the skills to transform the health of populations and health systems, and address inequities.

Innovation and engagement

- Connecting and collaborating with communities and partners to co-design research and education on issues that matter to them.
- Communicating and advocating with passion, clarity and authority for population health and social justice.
- Creating pathways to ensure our research makes a difference to health outcomes and builds resilient health systems.

Societal impact

- Strengthening our position as a trusted partner in the Asia-Pacific region to work together to further build capacity in population health policy, and to enhance research and education.
- Partnering with health leaders who work locally and globally to transform people's health and health systems.

