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Summit 2023  
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## #116 - 'Evidence generation during the NSW COVID-19 response: lessons in rapid research translation, implementation and scale up'

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### Objectives/aims

The global COVID-19 pandemic had enormous impacts on societies around the world. In NSW, a public health response of an unprecedented scale and duration was mounted in January 2020. Given the magnitude of the response, it is critical we learn from what was done well and where there is room for improvement. The purpose of the NSW COVID-19 Public Health Response Debrief was to examine the public health response since January 2020 to identify best practices and areas that require strengthening, and to provide implementable recommendations for a stronger and more integrated public health network now and into the future. See: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/evidence-hub/Pages/phr-report.aspx>

### Methods

A multi-method debrief process that involved interviews, focus groups, group consultations, document review and literature scans engaged over 250 people across NSW Health and partners.

### Main findings

Among the many strengths of the NSW public health response was the effective engagement of senior public health and health system representatives to identify research priorities and provide funding to support rapid evidence generation and policy decision support. Leveraging existing relationships and investment within the



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health research sector meant that the sector's capability to monitor, evaluate and research policy priorities could be rapidly deployed. Embedding academic partners in the public health response was an important enabler of both evidence generation and policy support, and workforce surge. Research was able to be rapidly conducted and translated into policy action, by building on a long-term investment in 'research ready' environments in population health in NSW. The presentation will synthesise the key learnings and implications from the debrief process for more rapid research generation, implementation and scale up of large policy initiatives.

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