
This report from NSW Health goes into this in great detail:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/Publications/HNE-respi-cardio-disease.pdf>

The conclusion on page 57 and Next Steps on page 58 are of particular interest:

Conclusions from the data

"Compared to the rest of NSW, one or both of Upper Hunter and Lower Hunter, the geographical regions of HNEAHS that are most affected by open-cut coal mining and power generation activities, have higher rates of:

- emergency department attendance for asthma and respiratory disease (but also for all other conditions, which may indicate a general tendency to greater use of emergency departments in these regions),
- hospital admission for all respiratory conditions together and for asthma (Upper Hunter Only)
- hospital admission for cardiovascular disease and
- death from all causes and cardiovascular disease (lower Hunter only).

These data may indicate an adverse health effect due to exposure to coal mining or coal-fired power generation activities in HNEAHS, or may be due to other factors (such as smoking, for example, which is higher in adults in Upper Hunter, although not statistically significantly higher). Thus they do not establish that these adverse health effects are attributable to air pollution or to any other specific exposure.

Further investigation is required to determine the role of pollutant exposures. Once the level and distribution of exposure to pollutants from coal mining and power generation is established, any health effects resulting from these pollutant exposures can be assessed. Other recognised disease risk factors, such as smoking, poor diet, lack of exercise, occupational hazards and lack of effective use of self-management strategies should also be considered as possible contributors to the poorer health of residents of some areas of HNEAHS."

Under **Next steps** on page 58 it says:

"Most notably, there is an urgent need to establish appropriate air quality monitoring in population centres to more accurately assess the community's cumulative exposures to pollutants from coal mines and coal-powered electrical power stations."

Thank you for all your help arranging the hearing.

Kind regards,

Will Belford