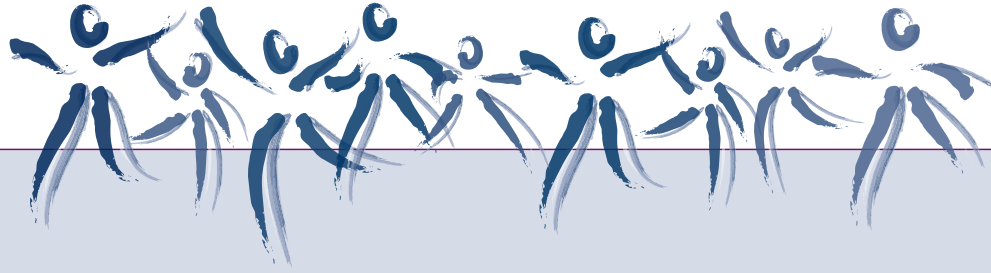


Glossary



Aboriginal	A person of Aboriginal descent who identifies as an Aboriginal person and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.
Admission	Admission to hospital. In this report, the number of separations has been taken as the number of admissions. Hence, admission rate is the same as separation rate.
Adult	In this document, a person may be classified as an adult from the age of 15 years, rather than strictly according to the legal age of 18 years.
Age-specific rate	A rate for a specific age group. The numerator and denominator relate to the same age group. See Appendix 1 (Section A1.1) for full description.
Age-standardisation	A method of removing the influence of age when comparing populations with different age structures. This is usually necessary because the rates of many diseases vary strongly (usually increasing) with age. The age structures of the different populations are converted to the same 'standard' structure, then the disease rates that would have occurred with that structure are calculated and compared. See Appendix 1 (Section A1.1) for full description.
Airway hyperresponsiveness	Excessive twitchiness or narrowing of the airways in response to certain stimuli. This is a characteristic feature of asthma.
ARIA/ASGC classification	The Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia and Australian Standard Geographical Classification provide classification of the level of accessibility to goods and services (such as general practitioners, hospitals and specialist care) based on the proximity to these services (measured by road distance).
Arthritis	A group of disorders in which there is inflammation of the joints, which can become stiff, painful, swollen or deformed. The two main types of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.
Associated cause of death	Any condition(s), diseases and injuries—other than the underlying cause—considered to contribute to a death. See also <i>Cause of death</i> .
Asthma	A chronic inflammatory disorder of the airways in which many cells and cellular elements play a role, in particular mast cells, eosinophils, T lymphocytes, macrophages, neutrophils and epithelial cells. In susceptible individuals, this inflammation causes recurrent episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and coughing, particularly at night or in the early morning. These episodes are usually associated with widespread but variable airflow obstruction that is often reversible either spontaneously or with treatment. The inflammation also causes increases in existing bronchial hyperresponsiveness to a variety of stimuli. (NAEPP 1997).

Asthma action plan	A plan that provides instructions on how to recognise and respond to worsening asthma. It is recommended that these instructions be given in writing ('written asthma action plan'). The action plan is based on symptoms and/or peak expiratory flow measurements and is individualised according to the pattern of the person's asthma. These plans have sometimes been referred to as 'asthma management plans', 'asthma plans', 'self-management plans', 'asthma care plans' or 'personal asthma plans'.
Asthma expenditure	The component of total health expenditure that is attributable to asthma. Compare with <i>Total health expenditure</i> .
Asthma management plan	An individualised plan of management for patients with asthma formulated in accordance with the Six Step Asthma Management Plan. (The asthma action plan forms one part of this.)
Asthma Cycle of Care	An incentive scheme funded by the Australian Government aimed at people with moderate to severe asthma. The plan entails two visits to the general practitioner at which asthma is assessed, an individualised asthma management plan is developed and reviewed, and the patient receives appropriate education about asthma.
Average length of stay	The average length of stay for admitted patient episodes. Calculated by dividing total patient days in a given period by the total number of hospital separations in that period. See <i>Patient days</i> , <i>Hospital separation</i> and <i>Length of stay</i> .
BEACH (Bettering the Evaluation and Care of Health) survey	A continuous cross-sectional paper-based data collection that collects information about the reasons for seeking medical care, the type of patients seen, the types of problems managed and treatment provided in general practice across Australia.
Bronchial challenge tests	Tests designed to detect the presence of airway hyperresponsiveness; include the bronchial provocation challenge test and methacholine challenge. See <i>Airway hyperresponsiveness</i> .
Bronchitis	Inflammation of the main air passages (the bronchi). May be acute (because of infection) or chronic (most often because of tobacco smoking).
Cancer	A large range of diseases, in which some of the body's cells become defective, begin to multiply out of control, can invade and damage the area around them, and can also spread to other parts of the body to cause further damage.
Cardiovascular disease	Any disease of the circulatory system, namely the heart (cardio) or blood vessels (vascular). Includes heart attack, angina, stroke and peripheral vascular disease. Also known as circulatory disease.

Cause of death	The disease or factor contributing to a death. When used technically, this term is usually applied to the 'underlying cause' listed on the medical certificate issued at death. From information reported on the medical certificate of cause of death, each death is classified by the underlying cause of death according to rules and conventions of the International Classification of Diseases of the day (currently ICD, 10th Revision). The underlying cause is defined as the disease that initiated the train of events leading directly to death. Deaths from injury or poisoning are classified according to the circumstances of the violence that produced the fatal injury, rather than to the nature of the injury. See <i>Underlying cause of death</i> and <i>Associated cause of death</i> .
Cerebrovascular disease	Any disorder of the blood vessels supplying the brain or its covering membranes. A notable and major form of cerebrovascular disease is stroke.
Chronic bronchitis	Long-term condition with inflammation of the bronchi, the lungs' main air passages, causing frequent coughing attacks and coughing up of mucus.
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Serious, progressive and disabling long-term lung disease where damage to the lungs, usually due to both <i>Emphysema</i> and <i>Chronic bronchitis</i> , obstructs oxygen intake and causes increasing shortness of breath. By far the greatest cause is cigarette smoking.
Comorbidity	When a person has two or more health problems at the same time.
Confidence interval	A statistical term describing a range (interval) of values within which we can be 'confident' that the true value lies. For example, a 95% confidence interval implies that there is 95% confidence that the true value will be included in this interval.
Country of birth	This term is used to describe the multicultural nature of the Australian population, including those from English-speaking countries and those from countries where English is not spoken as the first language. See also <i>English-speaking background</i> and <i>Non-English-speaking background</i> .
Defined daily dose	The assumed average maintenance dose per day for a drug used for its main indication in adults.
Diabetes (diabetes mellitus)	A chronic condition in which the body cannot properly use its main energy source, the sugar glucose. This is due to a relative or absolute deficiency in insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas. Insulin helps glucose enter the body's cells from the bloodstream and then be processed by them. Diabetes is marked by an abnormal build-up of glucose in the blood and it can have serious short- and long-term effects. The three main types of diabetes are type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes.
Disability-adjusted life year	Years of healthy life lost through premature death or living with disability due to illness or injury.

Emphysema	A chronic lung disease where over-expansion or destruction of the lung tissue blocks oxygen intake, leading to shortness of breath and other problems.
English-speaking background	Includes anyone born in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, United States of America, Canada, Zimbabwe or South Africa (Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) English proficiency group 1).
Estimated resident population	An estimate of the resident population derived from the 5-yearly census counts. It is based on the usual residence of the person.
Health-related quality of life	A term used to describe the impact that a disease has on an individual's health status and everyday functioning. It is most often used when referring to chronic diseases.
Health risk factor	Any factor which represents a greater risk of a health disorder or other unwanted condition or event. Some risk factors are regarded as causes of disease, others are not necessarily so.
Health service use	Use of the available health-care services within the population, including hospitals, emergency departments and general practitioners.
Health survey	A research method in which health information is collected from participants at a point in time. In population health monitoring, this typically involves selecting a representative sample of the population and administering questionnaires to the participants. This can be done in person, over the phone or by post. Some surveys have additionally included physiological measurements.
Hospital separation	The formal process by which a hospital records the completion of treatment or care for an admitted patient. The episode of care may be completed by an admitted patient's discharge, death, transfer to another hospital or change in the type of care.
Incidence	The number of new cases (of a disease, condition or event) occurring during a given period. Compare with <i>Prevalence</i> .
Indicator	A key statistical measure selected to help describe (indicate) a situation concisely, track progress and performance, and act as a guide to decision-making. It may have an indirect meaning as well as a direct one; for example, Australia's overall mortality rate is a direct measure of mortality but is often used as a major indicator of population health.
Indigenous	A person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person and is accepted as such by the community with which he or she is associated.
Indigenous Australians	Refers to people who identify themselves as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

International Classification of Diseases (ICD)	International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems. The World Health Organization's internationally accepted statistical classification of death and disease. The 10th Revision (ICD-10) is currently in use. In this report, hospital separations before 1998–99 and causes of death before 1997 under previous revisions have been reclassified to ICD-10. ICD-10-AM is the Australian modification of ICD-10, used for diagnoses and procedures recorded for patients admitted to hospitals.
Length of stay	Duration of hospital stay, calculated by subtracting the date the patient is admitted from the day of separation. All leave days, including the day the patient went on leave, are excluded. A same-day patient is allocated a length of stay of one day. See also <i>Average length of stay</i> .
Life expectancy	An indication of how long a person can expect to live. Technically it is the number of years of life remaining to a person at a particular age if mortality rates do not change.
Mechanical ventilation, invasive	A medical intervention used in situations where patients become unable to breathe by themselves. It involves the use of a positive pressure ventilator to maintain respiration via an endotracheal tube. This intervention is generally administered in hospital intensive care units.
Median	The midpoint of a list of observations ranked from the smallest to the largest.
Medicare Benefits Schedule	A national, government-funded scheme that subsidises the cost of personal medical services for all Australians and aims to help them afford medical care.
Morbidity	Refers to ill-health in an individual and to levels of ill-health in a population or group.
Mortality	Death.
Neoplasm	An abnormal ('neo', new) growth of tissue. Can be 'benign' (not a cancer) or 'malignant' (a cancer).
Non-English-speaking background	This term is used to describe people who have settled in Australia but who come from countries where English is not the primary language spoken. Includes people born in all countries not identified as English-speaking-background countries (equivalent to DIMIA English proficiency groups 2 to 4). See also <i>English-speaking-background</i> .
Non-Indigenous	People who have declared they are not of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Used interchangeably with <i>Other Australians</i> .
Outcome (health outcome)	A health-related change due to a preventive or clinical intervention or service. (The intervention may be single or multiple and the outcome may relate to a person, group or population or be partly or wholly due to the intervention.)

Other Australians	People who are not of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, or whose status is not known. Used interchangeably with <i>Non-Indigenous</i> .
<i>p</i> value	The probability that the observed difference or association could have occurred by chance. If that probability is less than 5% (i.e. $p < 0.05$), it is conventionally held that it did not occur by chance and is a true difference or association.
Patient days	The number of full or partial days of stay for patients who were admitted for an episode of care and who underwent separation during the reporting period. A patient who is admitted and separated on the same day is allocated one patient day. Compare with <i>Length of stay</i> and <i>Average length of stay</i> .
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)	A national, government-funded scheme that subsidises the cost of a wide range of pharmaceutical drugs, and that covers all Australians to help them afford standard medications.
Prescription drugs	Pharmaceutical drugs available only on the prescription of a registered medical practitioner and available only from pharmacies.
Prevalence	The number or proportion (of cases, instances, and so forth) present in a population at a given time. Compare with <i>Incidence</i> .
Principal diagnosis	The diagnosis describing the problem that was chiefly responsible for the patient's episode of care in hospital.
Quintile	A group derived by ranking the population according to specified criteria and dividing it into five equal parts.
Risk factor	See <i>Health risk factor</i> .
Same-day patients	Admitted patients who are admitted to hospital and separated on the same day.
SAND data	Additional questions asked of patients in subsamples of general practice encounters, as part of the BEACH survey.
SEIFA Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage	An index of socioeconomic status which provides a summary score for a range of key socioeconomic variables that are related to health status, including household income and resources, education, occupation, fluency in English, and Indigenous status.
Separation	See <i>Hospital separation</i> .
Six Step Asthma Management Plan	Consensus-based guidelines for the management of asthma. The six steps are: (1) assess asthma severity; (2) achieve best lung function; (3) maintain best lung function: identify and avoid trigger factors; (4) maintain best lung function: optimise medication program; (5) develop an action plan; and (6) educate and review regularly.
Spirometer/spirometry	Spirometry is a measure of lung function performed by a spirometer. Spirometry is used to establish the presence of airflow obstruction and its reversibility in response to bronchodilator, which is an important feature in the diagnosis of asthma.



Statistical significance	An indication from a statistical test that an observed difference or association may be significant, or 'real', because it is unlikely to be due just to chance. A statistical result is often said to be 'significant' if it would occur by chance only once in twenty times or less often. See also <i>P value</i> .
Torres Strait Islander	A person of Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as a Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.
Total health expenditure	The sum of health expenditure for all health conditions (i.e. allocated recurrent health expenditure). This excludes expenditure that cannot be allocated to a specific disease (e.g. ambulance services) and capital expenditure (non-recurrent).
Underlying cause of death	The condition, disease or injury initiating the sequence of events leading directly to death; that is, the primary, chief, main or principal cause. Compare with <i>Associated cause of death</i> .
Wheeze	Breathing difficulty accompanied by an audible whistling sound.