

## Fact sheet number 4: Australia

Social Health Atlas series

PHIDU

### Older people

#### Life circumstances

##### Distribution

*Volume 1: Australia, page 26 -29*

- People aged 65 years and over made up 12.1% of the Australian population at the 1996 Census, a higher proportion than in 1989.
- There are slightly higher proportions of older people living outside of the capital cities. Adelaide has the highest proportion of older people in a capital city (14.1%) and New South Wales has the highest proportion of older people living in non-metropolitan areas (14.4%).
- The proportion of older people falls with increasing remoteness.

##### Age pensioners

*Volume 1: Australia, page 84 -87*

- Over two thirds (68.9%) of Australians over 65 years of age receive age pensions.
- Brisbane (69.9%) and Perth (69.9%) have the highest proportions, while Darwin has the lowest (41.3%).
- The highest proportions in non-metropolitan areas were in Tasmania (77.6%) and the lowest was in the Northern Territory (37.3%)
- The proportion of Australians in receipt of the age pension has declined in all capital cities since 1989, while numbers in non-metropolitan areas have increased.
- The proportion of people on age pensions decreases with increasing remoteness.
- Areas in capital cities with a large proportion of older people also had high rates of death due to respiratory system diseases ( $r=0.51$ ) and greater use of GPs (males  $r=0.53$ , females  $r=0.64$ ). (*pages 353-354*)

#### Health

##### Hip replacement admissions

*Volume 1: Australia, page 298-301*

- Standardised admission ratios (SARs) for a hip replacement varied little between the capital cities, other than Hobart, with the highest ratio (an SAR of 135) and Darwin the lowest (51).
- Except in Tasmania, SARs were higher in non-metropolitan areas than in the capital cities. The highest ratio was in the non-metropolitan areas of Victoria (129) and the lowest in Queensland (82).
- SARs for hip replacements decreased with increasing remoteness.
- SARs for hip replacements increased with increasing socioeconomic status.
- Areas in the capital cities that had high rates of hip replacements also had high rates of admissions to private hospitals ( $r=0.52$ ). (*pages 353-354*)

##### Lens insertion admissions

*Volume 1: Australia, page 302-305*

- Darwin had the highest ratio of lens insertions (130) while Canberra had the lowest (36).
- The highest ratios in non-metropolitan areas were in Queensland (119) and New South Wales (112) while the lowest were in Victoria (78) and Tasmania (82).
- The highest socioeconomic quintile has the most lens insertion admissions.

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### Health services

#### Nursing homes

*Volume 1: Australia, page342-345*

- There were 56 nursing home places per 1,000 population aged 70 years and over in the capital cities. The highest rates were in Sydney (65/1,000), Adelaide (58/1,000) and Hobart (57/1,000) and the lowest in Canberra (39/1,000) and Darwin (41/1,000).
- There were fewer places in non-metropolitan areas, at 40 places per 1,000 population aged 70 years and over. The lowest non-metropolitan rates were in South Australia (28/1,000) and Western Australia (31/1,000) and the highest were in Tasmania (49/1,000) and Victoria (45/1,000).
- Rates in the capital cities and all states (except South Australia) have decreased since 1992, reflecting an attempt to move beds to the target rate of 40 per 1,000 population aged 70 years and over.

#### Hostel beds

*Volume 1: Australia, page346-349*

- There were 43 hostel places per 1,000 population aged 70 and over in the capital cities. The highest rates were in Canberra (57/1,000) and Perth (50/1,000), and the lowest were in Sydney (36/1,000). There has been an increase in the provision of hostel places in all capital cities except Brisbane since 1992.
- There were more hostel places in non-metropolitan areas, at 46 places per 1 000 population aged 70 years and over. The lowest non-metropolitan rates were in the Northern Territory (28/1,000) and the highest were in Victoria (49/1,000) and Queensland (49/1,000).