



8

HEALTH



Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of health statistics for Victoria. Data is provided on private hospitals, children's immunisation, causes of death, the 1989-90 National Health Survey and the 1993 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Private hospitals

In Victoria in 1993-94 there were 106 private acute hospitals, 7 private psychiatric hospitals and 24 day hospital facilities. Day hospital facilities provide investigation and treatment for acute conditions on a day-only basis. Of the 24 day hospital facilities in Victoria, 11 were classified as specialist endoscopy, 9 general surgery, 3 ophthalmic and 1 other.

TABLE 8.1 PRIVATE HOSPITALS BY TYPE AND SIZE, VICTORIA AND AUSTRALIA 1993-94

Hospitals	Victoria		Australia	
	Number	%	Number	%
Acute	106	93.8	302	91.8
Psychiatric	7	6.2	27	8.2
Hospital size (a) -				
0-25 beds	39	34.5	73	22.2
26-50	37	32.7	104	31.6
51-100	23	20.4	97	29.5
101-200	9	8.0	42	12.7
Over 200	5	4.4	13	4.0
Total acute and psychiatric	113	100.0	329	100.0

(a) Based on available beds (average for year).

Source: *Private Hospitals, Australia* (4390.0)

In Victoria, there were 344,500 separations in 1993-94, accounting for 1,485,000 occupied bed days. This represented 27.5% and 28.7% respectively of the Australian total. The Victorian occupancy rate was 67.5% and the average length of stay was 4.3 days, compared with the Australian average of 4.1 days.

Full-time equivalent staff represents the total full-time staff plus the full-time equivalent of part-time staff. In Victoria there were 10,001 full-time equivalent staff employed over the 1993-94 year in private acute and psychiatric hospitals. This number represented 29.6% of the total Australian full-time equivalent staff employed. In Victoria, 55.9% of employed staff comprised nursing staff. The average number of staff per occupied bed was 2.5, compared with the national figure of 2.4.

Total expenditure in Victorian private hospitals amounted to \$668.4 million. Wages and salaries (\$417.3 million) was the largest expenditure item, comprising 62.4% of total Victorian expenditure. Average expenditure per occupied bed day was \$450 and per separation was \$1,940. This compared with the Australian average of \$430 and \$1,780 respectively. Total revenue was \$739.6 million, of which 95.2% was patient revenue.

Children's immunisation

In April 1995, as an adjunct to the Monthly Population Survey, the ABS collected data on child immunisation. The results of the survey showed that compared with Australian children as a whole, Victorian children have higher rates of immunisation for all conditions other than diphtheria/tetanus and pertussis.

TABLE 8.2 CHILDREN AGED 2 YEARS OF AGE: FULLY IMMUNISED BY CONDITION, VICTORIA AND AUSTRALIA, APRIL 1995

	%						
Victoria	58.4	52.4	88.2	55.6	92.5	92.0	85.2
Australia	63.0	57.5	86.9	52.4	91.5	90.1	81.1

Source: *Children's Immunisation, Australia* (4352.0)

Causes of death

Tables 8.3 and 8.4 on the preceding pages provide information on the main causes of death in Victoria during 1993. The main cause of death for Victorian residents in 1993 was 'diseases of the circulatory system' (including ischaemic heart disease and cerebrovascular disease) (13,229), followed by malignant neoplasms (8,649). Diseases of the circulatory system accounted for 39% of male and 46% of female deaths, and malignant neoplasms (cancer) accounted for 29% of male and 26% of female deaths. As in 1992, the total number of suicides exceeded motor vehicle traffic accidents thus making suicide the major external cause of death.

'Diseases of the circulatory system' was the main cause of death for both males and females aged 65 years and over (11,715). The most common cause of death under this broad category was ischaemic heart disease, which accounted for 25% of all male and 22% of all female deaths. Acute myocardial infarction, which includes heart attack, was the most common form of ischaemic heart disease.

The number of deaths due to malignant neoplasms (cancer) increased by 2%, to 8,649 deaths in 1993. Cancer was the major cause of death for males aged between 45 and 64 years, and for females aged between 25 and 64 years. Malignant neoplasms located in the respiratory and intrathoracic organs for males, and in the breast for females, were the most common primary sites.

Accidents, poisonings and violence (external causes) were responsible for over 5% of total deaths in 1993 (1,730), and were the major causes of male deaths in the age groups 1 to 44 years, and female deaths in the age groups 1 to 24 years. The total number of suicides decreased by 11% to 497 in 1993, while deaths caused by motor vehicle traffic accidents remained steady (462). Suicide was the major cause of death for males aged between 25 and 44 years, whilst motor vehicle accidents were the predominant cause for both males and females in the 15 to 24 year age group (142).

Deaths where AIDS was determined as the underlying cause accounted for 115 males and 3 females in 1993, compared with 118 and 2 respectively in 1992.

TABLE 8.3 CAUSES OF DEATH: NUMBERS AND RATES, VICTORIA, 1993

Cause of death (a)	Number of deaths	Proportion of total	Rate (b)
Infectious and parasitic diseases (001-139)	209	0.7	47
Neoplasms (140-239)	8 784	28.2	1 967
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases, and immunity disorders (240-279)	1 164	3.7	261
Diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs (280-289)	112	0.4	25
Mental disorders (290-319)	700	2.2	157
Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs (320-389)	771	2.5	173
Diseases of the circulatory system (390-459)	13 229	42.4	2 961
Diseases of the respiratory system (460-519)	2 401	7.7	537
Diseases of the digestive system (520-579)	930	3.0	208
Diseases of the genito-urinary system (580-629)	489	1.6	109
Complications of pregnancy, childbirth, and the puerperium (630-676)	2	-	-
Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous tissue (680-709)	34	0.1	8
Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue (710-739)	187	0.6	42
Congenital anomalies (740-759)	193	0.6	43
Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period (760-779)	156	0.5	35
Signs, symptoms, and ill-defined conditions (780-799)	116	0.4	26
Accidents, poisonings, and violence (external causes) (800-999)	1 730	5.5	387
Total	31 197	100.0	6 982

(a) The classification used is the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) aggregated at the class level.

(b) Per 1,000,000 mean population

Source: *Deaths, Victoria* (3312.2)

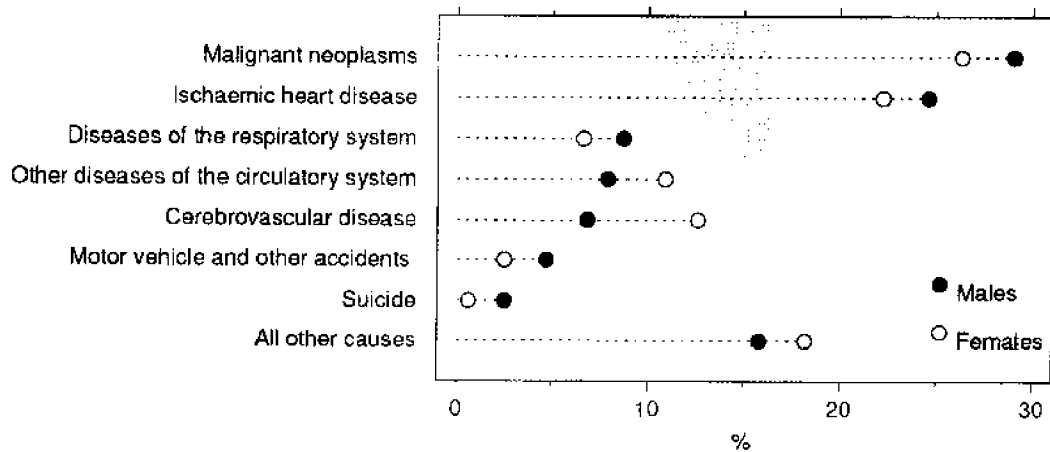
TABLE 8.4 MAIN CAUSES OF DEATH IN AGE GROUPS, VICTORIA, 1993

Cause of death	Deaths from specified cause		
	In age group Number	At all ages % (a)	Total Number
Under 1 year			
Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period (760-779)	154	44.4	156
Congenital anomalies (740-759)	109	31.4	193
Signs, symptoms, and ill-defined conditions (780-799)	51	14.7	116
1-14 years			
Other external accidents (excluding motor vehicle accidents and suicides) (800-807, 820-949, 960-999)	48	24.2	671
Motor vehicle traffic accidents (810-819)	31	15.7	462
Malignant neoplasms (140-208)	29	14.7	8 649
Diseases of the nervous system (320-389)	21	10.6	771
15-24 years			
Motor vehicle traffic accidents (810-819)	142	28.9	462
Suicide and self-inflicted injury (950-959)	123	25.0	497
Other external accidents (excluding motor vehicle accidents and suicides) (800-807, 820-949, 960-999)	83	16.9	671
Malignant neoplasms (140-208)	40	8.1	8 649
25-44 years			
Malignant neoplasms (140-208)	374	27.9	8 649
Other external accidents (excluding motor vehicle accidents and suicides) (800-807, 820-949, 960-999)	176	13.1	671
Suicide and self-inflicted injury (950-959)	169	12.6	497
Motor vehicle traffic accidents (810-819)	140	9.6	462
45-54 years			
Malignant neoplasms (140-208)	641	44.3	8 649
Ischaemic heart disease (410-414)	246	17.0	7 330
Cerebrovascular disease (430-438)	62	4.3	2 982
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis (571)	48	3.3	240
55-64 years			
Malignant neoplasms (140-208)	1 471	46.2	8 649
Ischaemic heart disease (410-414)	661	20.8	7 330
Diseases of the respiratory system (460-519)	205	6.4	2 401
Cerebrovascular disease (430-438)	144	4.5	2 982
65-74 years			
Malignant neoplasms (140-208)	2 665	37.7	8 649
Ischaemic heart disease (410-414)	1 794	25.4	7 330
Diseases of the respiratory system (460-519)	634	9.0	2 401
Cerebrovascular disease (430-438)	479	6.8	2 982
75 years and over			
Ischaemic heart disease (410-414)	4 562	26.7	7 330
Malignant neoplasms (140-208)	3 462	20.2	8 649
Cerebrovascular disease (430-438)	2 267	13.2	2 982
Diseases of the respiratory system (460-519)	1 444	8.4	2 401

(a) Deaths in this age group from the stated cause expressed as a percentage of all deaths in the age group.

Source: *Deaths, Victoria* (3312.2)

**ALL DEATHS: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION BY SEX BY CAUSE,
VICTORIA 1993**



Source: *Deaths, Victoria* (3312.2)

National Health Survey

During 1989-90 the ABS conducted the first of a new series of five yearly National Health Surveys. The survey focused on the health status of Australians, their use of health facilities and services and lifestyle factors affecting the health of the nation. Some data from this survey is provided in the tables below.

Health status

As shown in Table 8.5, about 80% of the Victorian population aged 18 years and over reported that their health was good or excellent in 1989/90.

Some 70% of the population reported experiencing one or more illnesses/injuries during the two weeks prior to interview. Of these recent conditions, headaches (due to unspecified or trivial cause) were the most frequently reported single condition affecting 12% of the population.

Of the total Victorian population, 65% reported having one or more long-term conditions (conditions which lasted or were expected to last for a period of six months or more) with more females reporting such conditions than males (67% and 63% respectively). It should be noted that reduced eyesight is considered a long term condition.

TABLE 8.5 PERSONS AGED 18 AND OVER: SELF ASSESSED HEALTH STATUS BY WHETHER REPORTED A RECENT OR LONG-TERM CONDITION, VICTORIA 1989-90

Whether condition reported as recent or long-term	Health Status				Total
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	
					'000
No recent or long-term conditions	198.6	197.7	16.5	-	413.7
Recent conditions only	165.3	205.5	28.7	*2.6	402.1
Long-term conditions only	196.2	226.8	33.6	*2.8	459.4
Both recent and long-term conditions	423.0	943.8	440.7	134.7	1 942.2
Total	983.2	1 573.7	519.6	140.9	3 217.3
Percentage	30.6	48.9	16.2	4.4	100.0

Source: *National Health Survey: Health Status Indicators, Victoria (4370.2)*

As shown in Table 8.6, of the Victorian working population, almost 1.4 million people (68%) reported the incidence of one or more long-term conditions. The occupation groups in which the highest incidence of long-term conditions was reported were managers and administrators (76.5%), professionals (76.0%), clerks (71.8%) and para professionals (70.0%). Tradespersons reported the lowest incidence of long-term conditions (59.2%).

The conditions which occurred more commonly across the working population were diseases of the nervous system and sense organs (including eyesight and hearing disorders) which affected 37% of the working population, diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue (including arthritis and unspecified back trouble) which affected 25%, and diseases of the respiratory system (including hay fever, asthma and common cold) which affected 22%.

The conditions which occurred least across the working population were infectious and parasitic diseases and diseases of blood and blood forming organs, which affected only 0.7% of the working population for each condition.

TABLE 8.6 EMPLOYED PERSONS WHO REPORTED LONG-TERM CONDITIONS: TYPE OF CONDITION BY OCCUPATION (a), VICTORIA, 1989-90

Type of condition (b)	Managers and administrators	Professionals	Para-professionals	Tradespersons	Clerks	Salespersons and personal service workers	Plant and machine operators and drivers	Labourers and related workers	Total
	'000								
Infectious and parasitic diseases	*1.6	*3.7	*	*	*2.2	*2.5	*	*1.6	14.7
Neoplasms	*1.9	*2.7	*	*2.0	*3.0	*1.8	*	*2.8	15.9
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases and disorders	15.8	13.1	6.4	11.3	15.3	9.9	7.0	15.1	94.1
Diseases of blood and blood forming organs	*1.6	*2.3	*	*	4.8	*2.4	*	*2.0	15.2
Mental disorders	5.1	*3.0	*1.7	*4.4	7.2	*4.2	*3.2	5.4	34.1
Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	115.9	133.4	43.9	89.9	136.2	80.2	54.0	94.2	750.3
Diseases of the circulatory system	34.9	24.5	11.6	25.3	35.5	19.1	14.6	29.6	195.8
Diseases of the respiratory system	52.2	80.7	30.3	65.5	84.9	62.8	22.8	52.6	453.7
Diseases of the digestive system	11.7	7.2	7.0	15.1	10.8	6.6	7.1	13.5	79.2
Diseases of the genito-urinary system	6.7	8.4	*3.0	*2.5	11.9	9.9	*1.9	7.9	52.3
Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous tissue	13.2	24.4	9.9	18.6	26.4	19.6	8.8	13.4	134.6
Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue	80.3	64.1	33.2	84.6	73.4	57.8	39.3	76.2	511.6
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions	*4.7	11.9	*3.2	5.8	11.6	6.7	6.1	9.5	59.8
Injury and poisoning	*2.4	*2.7	*	*4.4	*1.9	*2.9	*	*4.1	19.6
Disability n.e.c.	*	*	*	*	*1.6	*	*	*1.9	5.4
Total persons reporting conditions (c)	192.9	214.5	87.4	205.9	237.6	167.1	101.9	185.0	1 398.2
% of population	76.5	76.0	70.0	59.2	71.8	65.9	61.2	66.5	68.4
Total population	252.1	282.1	125.3	348.0	330.8	253.7	166.6	278.0	2 045.6

(a) Occupation of main job at time of interview.

(b) Includes not stated.

(c) Persons may have reported more than one type of illness and therefore components do not add to totals.

Source: National Health Survey: Health Status Indicators, Victoria (4370.2)

Medication usage

In Victoria just over 3 million people reported taking medication in the two weeks prior to interview for the 1989-90 National Health Survey. Of these people, almost 50% used pain relievers. More people reported non-prescription usage of vitamin and mineral supplements, cough and cold medications and pain relievers. For all other medications, more people indicated usage of prescription items. Except for medications for coughs and colds, more women than men used each type of medication. Table 8.7 provides details.

TABLE 8.7 PERSONS WHO USED MEDICATION IN THE TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO INTERVIEW: TYPE OF MEDICATION USED BY WHETHER PRESCRIBED AND SEX, VICTORIA 1989-90

Type of medication used	Prescribed	Not prescribed	Total		
			Males	Females	Persons
			'000		
Vitamin and mineral supplements	207.9	742.9	375.2	552.6	927.8
Medication for cough or cold	178.9	373.8	269.9	265.5	535.4
Medication for allergy	203.5	47.5	115.6	129.3	244.9
Skin ointments	401.5	370.8	339.5	411.8	751.3
Stomach medicine or laxatives	180.0	153.0	135.6	193.4	328.9
Medications for fluid, heart, blood pressure	488.4	6.9	202.3	292.1	494.4
Pain relievers	425.0	1 077.4	601.4	880.4	1 481.9
Sleeping medications	195.0	19.9	73.2	140.3	213.5
Tranquillisers or sedatives	98.2	3.5	39.3	62.4	101.7
Other medications	761.9	52.3	336.3	472.0	808.3
Total (a)	1 822.5	2 029.0	1 363.7	1 652.6	3 016.3

(a) Persons may have used more than one type of medication and therefore components do not add to totals.

Source: *National Health Survey: Health Related Actions, Victoria (4375.2)*

Disability and ageing

In 1993 the ABS conducted a Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, providing estimates of the numbers and main characteristics of persons with disabilities, persons with handicaps, persons aged 60 years or more, and carers.

A person was identified as having a disability if he/she had one or more of a group of selected limitations which had lasted, or was likely to last, for 6 months or more. A handicap results from a disability which limits a person's ability to perform certain tasks associated with daily living.

Results showed that 818,000 Victorians had a disability with 640,000 of these people experiencing a handicap because of their disability. The rates per 1,000 population were slightly higher than the Australian average.

There were more females than males with both disabilities and handicaps, putting the rates for females well above the Australian average.

TABLE 8.8 HANDICAP AND DISABILITY STATUS AND RATES (a), VICTORIA, 1993

	Disability			No disability	Total
	Handicap	No handicap	Total		
Males -					
number ('000)	295.1	102.5	397.5	1 812.8	2 210.3
rate	133	46	180	820	-
Australian rate	140	45	184	816	-
Females -					
number ('000)	345.0	75.47	420.5	1 830.7	2 251.2
rate	153	34	187	813	-
Australian rate	144	32	176	824	-
Persons -					
number ('000)	640.1	177.9	818.0	3 643.4	4 461.4
rate	143	40	183	817	-
Australian rate	142	38	180	820	-

(a) Rate per 1,000 population.

Source: *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings (4430.0)*