



Census

Every stat tells a story.

Census data helps the Public Health Information Development Unit campaign for improved population health outcomes

The Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), based at Torrens University, brings together a range of data sources to improve population health outcomes in Australia.

Census data helps PHIDU to track inequalities in our nation's health and wellbeing by looking at factors like income, education, where we live and family structures.

PHIDU Director, Professor John Glover said Census data is layered with other rich information sources like hospital visits, breast and cervical screening, education, family and housing data. It helps paint a more detailed picture of health in our communities and as a nation.

By mapping the data for communities across Australia, health authorities gain rich information to help better target their programs.

"GPs, mental health professionals, Aboriginal communities, primary health networks, community organisations and governments rely on our data to address a range of health conditions," Professor Glover said.

Victoria University and Brimbank City Council have used Census and PHIDU data since 2013. They have collaborated to identify approaches that address risk factors for poor health, education and social disadvantage affecting population sub-groups and geographic areas within Brimbank.

As a result, Brimbank City Council has committed \$65 million to the redevelopment of an older style leisure centre to provide a health and wellbeing hub for the community. The hub will include co-located health, education and social services alongside leisure facilities

The data also informs the Growing Brimbank program. This aims to tackle issues of disadvantage in health and education that affect residents of the area.

"Disadvantage isn't just related to health but also the levels of education in the community. We collaborate with GPs, for example, to educate people on things like patches and medications," Professor Glover said.

"We want to provide an accurate picture of the social determinants of health at a small geographical area level, and the Census provides us with a large part of the data we use.

"We strive to provide reports that are as accurate as possible to help health authorities. We need everyone to complete the Census, so we can provide these insights."