



Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services Aboriginal health state of play

Aboriginal controlled health services working to close the health gap

The comprehensive primary health care approach delivered by our services is broader than mainstream services. Emphasis is placed on a multidisciplinary care team approach and long-term relationships. The culturally safe and secure environment fostered by ACCHSs allows Aboriginal people to draw strength in their identity, community and culture. Health and wellbeing not just white coats.

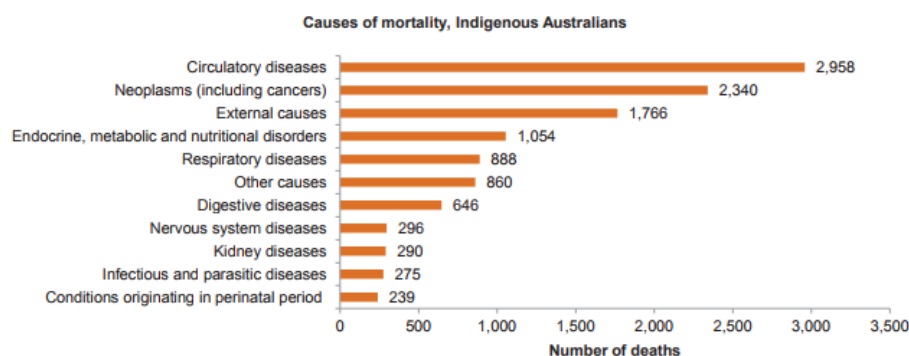
Some specific challenges in Indigenous health

In 2012–13 the proportions of Indigenous people with the long-term health conditions included:

- *diabetes/high sugar levels* — 8.6% (3.2 times higher than non-Indigenous Australians)
- *heart and/or circulatory disease* — 13% (1.2 times higher than non-Indigenous Australians)
- *kidney disease* — 1.8% (3.7 times higher than non-Indigenous Australians)

Causes of death and chronic disease burden

In 2008–2012 the three most common causes of death among Indigenous Australians were: circulatory diseases (25%), cancer (20%), and external causes (injury and poisoning) (15%).¹



Note: Data are for 2008–2012 for New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory only.
Source: AIHW 2015a.

Chronic diseases were responsible for more than two-thirds (70%) of the total health gap and for 64% of the total disease burden among Indigenous Australians. The five disease groups that caused the most burden were mental and substance use disorders (19%), injuries (including suicide) (15%), cardiovascular diseases (12%), cancer (9%) and respiratory diseases (8%). Much of this could be prevented. Reducing exposure to modifiable risk factors such as tobacco and alcohol use, high body mass, physical inactivity, high blood pressure and dietary factors may have prevented over one-third (37%) of the burden of chronic disease.¹

Aboriginal controlled health services are achieving

Our health services represent a vital part of the health system. There is increasing evidence of more positive outcomes.

- Models of care use a proven patient-centred medical home model
- We service the health needs of 61% living in outer regional areas²
- We are meeting and consistently improving performance against best-practice care indicators
- We record superior performance to mainstream general practice.³

¹ AIHW <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129557718>.

² *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework: 2017 Report* (p. 21).

³ Kathryn S Panaretto, Mark Wenitong, Selwyn Button and Ian T Ring *Med J Aust* 2014; 200 (11): 649-652. | | doi: 10.5694/mja13.00005.