

MENTAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

Statistics on Mental Health in Australia

- The 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing found that:
 - Almost half the total population (45.5%) experience a mental health disorder at some point in the lifetime.
 - One in five, or 20% of the Australian population aged 16-85 years, experienced mental disorders in the previous 12 months [of their survey]. This is equivalent to 3.2 million Australians.
 - One in 16 (6.2%) had affective (mood) disorders; one in seven (14.4%) had anxiety disorders; and one in 20 (5.1%) had substance use disorders.
 - Based on these prevalence rates, it is estimated that nearly 1 million Australians have affective disorders; over 2.3 million had anxiety disorders and over 800,000 had substance use disorders in the previous 12 months.
 - The prevalence of mental disorders declines with age: from 1 in 4 young people (16-24) to 1 in 20 (75-85 years)
 - Only one third of people (34.9%) with a mental health disorder used health services for their mental health problem – and two thirds of people with a mental health disorder did not report using services for their mental health disorder.
- Depression and anxiety are the most prevalent mental disorders experienced by Australians. Depression alone is predicted to be one of the world's largest health problems by 2020.¹
- Around one million Australian adults and 100,000 young people live with depression each year. On average, one in five people will experience depression in their lives; one in four females and one in six males.²
- Among young Australians aged 12-25 years, depression is the most common mental health problem. Around one in ten young Australians will experience an anxiety disorder in any given 12 month period.³ At least one third of young people have had an episode of mental illness by the age of 25 years.⁴
- Mental disorders and suicide account for 14.2 % of Australia's total health burden – which equates to 374,541 years of healthy life lost (DALYs).⁵
- Estimates suggest that up to 75 % of people presenting with alcohol and drug problems also have additional mental health problems.⁶
- Reports indicate that up to 85% of homeless people have a mental illness.

**The MHCA is the independent, national representative body of the mental health sector in Australia.
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¹ *The Global Burden of Disease: A Comprehensive Assessment of Mortality and Disability, Injuries, and Risk Factors in 1990 and Projected to 2020*, World Bank, Harvard School of Public Health, Geneva, 1996

² Beyondblue National Initiative, 2006

³ Orygen Youth Health. oyh.org.au

⁴ Making Sense of Orygen Youth Health – [www.orygen.org.au/docs/INFO/MS%200YH2\(1\)](http://www.orygen.org.au/docs/INFO/MS%200YH2(1))

⁵ Time for Service, MHCA 2006

⁶ *Drug Use in the Family*, ANCD Report, 2007