

MENTAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

Statistics on Mental Health in Australia

- One out of every five Australians [about 20%] will experience some form of mental illness each year. Three out of every ten [about 30%] will be seriously affected.¹
- 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 2020.²
- Nearly one in 10 Australians will experience some type of anxiety disorder each year – around one in 12 women and one in eight men. One in four people will experience an anxiety disorder at some stage of their lives.³
- 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.⁴
- Mental illness affects young people. Around 14% of 12-17 year olds and 27% of 18-25 year olds experience a mental illness in any given year. At least one third of young people have had an episode of mental illness by the age of 25 years.⁵
- The majority of mental illnesses begin between the ages of 15-25 years. This poses a significant threat to our nation's future workforce capacity and economic prosperity.
- The 2001 National Health Survey estimated that 1.8 million Australians (9.6% of the population) had a long-term mental or behavioural problem of more than 6 months duration. Of these, 130,600 (0.7%) were related to drug and alcohol problems.⁶
- Approximately two-thirds of people with a mental illness do not receive any treatment in any 12 month period.⁷
- 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).⁸
- Estimates suggest that up to 75 % of people presenting with alcohol and drug problems also have additional mental health problems.⁹
- 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 Mental Health and Wellbeing: Profile of Adults, Australia 1997, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998

² *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

³ Beyondblue Fact Sheet 21, *Anxiety Disorders*, 2007

⁴ Beyondblue National Initiative, 2006

⁵ 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))

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

⁷ Mental Health and Wellbeing: profile of adults, Australia 1997, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998

⁸ Time for Service, MHCA 2006

⁹ *Drug Use in the Family*, ANCD Report, 2007