

Women

In the Hume region 2011

WOMEN'S HEALTH
GOULBURN NORTH EAST



Women's Demographic Snapshot

- ❖ Women in the Hume region comprise 50% of the population.¹ The estimated resident population in 2010 in Hume region was 274,236.²
- ❖ There were 3,094 births in Hume region in 2010, giving a total fertility rate of 2.14 compared to 1.8 in Victoria.³
- ❖ In 2008 the birth rate for women less than 20 years of age in the Hume region was 4.6% (306 births) compared to the Victorian rate of 2.6%. The birth rate for Victorian Indigenous women under 20 was 16.5%.⁴
- ❖ 11.7% of the Hume region population is between 10-17 years of age, ranking the region as the 2nd highest adolescent population in Victoria.⁵
- ❖ In the over 85 population in the Hume region, 3,552 are women and 1,824 are men⁶. 2.4% of people in the region over 75 years live alone; 74% of whom are women.⁷
- ❖ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people comprise 1.58% of the Hume region population compared to 0.65% in Victoria⁸. The life expectancy of Aboriginal women is 10 years less than for non-Aboriginal women.⁹
- ❖ The Hume region has grown at 1.03% (1999-2009) compared to 1.51% across Victoria. The main driver of population change is the over 60's group.¹⁰
- ❖ Whilst the Hume region is less culturally diverse (10.3% born overseas) than Victoria (25.5%), the region is ranked highest (31.9%) for humanitarian arrivals as a percentage of new settlers with Shepparton and Wodonga ranking 1st & 2nd.¹¹
- ❖ 85% of women in the Hume region are Australian-born. Mostly, those born overseas come from England, Germany, New Zealand, and the Netherlands.¹²

The Australian government recognizes that women and men have different health and wellbeing experiences and needs, especially those at greatest risk of poorer health outcomes – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, migrant and refugee people and women and men living in rural and remote areas.³⁰

Why women?

An examination of the social determinants of health shows that women are more likely to be poor, to be under-employed, to be sole parents, and to work in positions which are poorly paid. Women have fewer opportunities for advancement and experience less financial security. Women undertake most of Australia's domestic labour, including most child-rearing and primary carer responsibilities, whilst also having less access to positions of power and influence. They are many times more likely to experience family violence, rape and sexual assault. These inequalities affect women's health and wellbeing.

Conversely, women are strong, resilient and capable; with a track record of contributing to the wellbeing of their families, friends and communities during good times and bad.

In the Hume region:¹³

- ∅ Women earn less than men. The 2011 (June quarter) Poverty Line for a single person was \$446.47 per week¹⁴. 61.6% of the Hume region women had a gross individual income of below \$400 in 2010 compared to 38.4% of men¹⁵.
- ∅ In Australia, women working full-time earn 16.9% less than men.¹⁶
- ∅ In 2009, the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) found that the total on-farm contribution of women in agriculture was valued at more than \$8.5 billion. However, while women make up about 30% of the rural workforce they are poorly represented in higher level decision making positions.¹⁷
- ∅ In the Hume region, of people holding a diploma or degree or higher, 55% are women.
- ∅ Australian superannuation fund balances for men are 45% greater than women's across all age groups. In the 50 to 54 years age bracket men have an average balance of \$99,988 while women have only \$49,596.¹⁸
- ∅ In 2009 over two thirds (68%) of primary carers for people with a disability or older people were women.¹⁹ This responsibility greatly hinders a woman's ability to fully participate in paid work.²⁰
- ∅ 14.9% of the Hume region families are sole parent families compared to 15.4% in Victoria.
- ∅ In Hume region 60% of sole parent families are headed by women.²¹
- ∅ 29% of women in the Hume region volunteer.²² 26.7% of people in the Hume region volunteer in comparison to 19.7% across the state.²³
- ∅ Women with disabilities make up 20% of the population of women in Australia. 51% of women with a disability earn less than \$200 per week. ²⁴

CRIME

- ∅ The rate for crime against the person is 807 per 100,000 in the Hume region compared to 868 in Victoria. The rate for crimes against property is 3206 per 100,000 in the Hume region and 4519 in Victoria.²⁵
- ∅ According to the Personal Safety Survey, one in three Australian women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15, and almost one in five have experienced sexual violence.²⁶ In 2010-11 there was a family violence incident call-out rate of 680 per 100,000 people in the Hume region compared to 732 for Victoria.²⁷

Women's Health

Goulburn North East is the government funded specialist women's health service for the Goulburn Valley and North-East Victoria.

We are dedicated to promoting the health and wellbeing of all women and to improving the delivery of health and community services for women in their local communities.

Our work is underpinned by a social model of health which recognizes that a complex array of factors influence a woman's sense of self, health, safety and wellbeing.

We acknowledge that many women have limited access to social and economic resources. We respect and affirm diversity among women.

We provide training, information, and assistance with service improvement for service providers and planners, as well as consultancy services on equity, gender and health, and evaluation, planning, and research.

All our work involves collaboration with outside organisations and with women.

- Ø In 300 per 100,000 family violence incidents where police were called, children were present compared to 260 for Victoria.²⁸
- Ø There were 90 rape offences, 337 sexual assaults and 2071 assaults. Sex of victims is not provided.²⁹

DISADVANTAGE

- Ø In 2010 Hume region has the third highest rate of unemployment (6.1%) across the state and 66.5% did not complete year 12.³¹
- Ø Women are under-represented in public life and decision-making. In 2010 the number of sitting members on Australian Government boards stood at 34.5%. Women hold only 8.4% of board directorships and 2.5% of chair positions in the ASX200. ³² Currently women make up 29% (24 out 83) of local government councilors across the 12 Local Government Areas in the Hume region, including 1 female Mayor and 3 female Deputy Mayors. ³³

HEALTH

- Ø Female life expectancy is 84.1 years and for men 79.3 year, both of which are slightly lower than the state averages.³⁴
- Ø The top three causes of avoidable mortality for women are:
 - Ischaemic heart disease
 - Strokes
 - Dementia and Alzheimer's disease. ³⁵
- Ø Women in the Hume region are ranked 2nd highest (47.3%) in the state for being overweight and obese. Hume region men are ranked highest in the state (63.8%) for being overweight and obese.
- Ø 41% of women in the Hume region do not meet fruit and vegetable dietary guidelines, and 25% do not meet physical activity guidelines.
- Ø Hume region women are ranked 3rd in the state for females 18+ who are current smokers with a rate of 19.1% compared to the state average of 16.9%.³⁶
- Ø In 2008-9 the rate of sexually transmissible infections (STIs) in the Hume region was 2.5 per 1000 adolescent, with the most notified STI being Chlamydia in adolescent females. The STI rate was higher than the state average (1.7) and ranks Hume region as 2nd highest in the state. ³⁷
- Ø Indigenous women are 34 times more likely than non-Indigenous women to be hospitalized due to family violence and indigenous women living in rural and remote areas being 45 times more likely to be a victim of family violence than the non-indigenous population. ³⁸

This information is a resource for the ongoing improvement of planning, delivering and evaluating services to women in the Hume region. It shows the value of sex-disaggregated data.

29 November 2011

Women's Health Goulburn North East
 57 Rowan Street, PO Box 853,
 Wangaratta 3677
 P 03 5722 3009 F 03 5722 3020
whealth@whealth.com.au

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