

NHS 2007/8: Health Status and Chronic Conditions

Fact Sheet (November 2009)

This fact sheet presents the results for physical health status and chronic conditions from the National Health Survey (NHS) conducted from August 2007 to early 2008. A total of 1,970 Tasmanians participated in this survey.

All chronic conditions in the NHS were self-reported by respondents. Chronic conditions refer to conditions which are current and experienced for 6 months or more. Data reliability was evaluated using relative standard errors (RSEs). The RSE is the sampling error expressed as a percentage of the survey estimate to which it relates. Data items with RSEs of more than 25% have been identified and should be used with caution.

Self-Assessed Health Status

Self-assessed health status has been shown as a reliable predictor of general health and chronic disease prevalence.

The proportion of Tasmanians reporting fair or poor health status (18.0%) is higher than at the national level (15.1%).

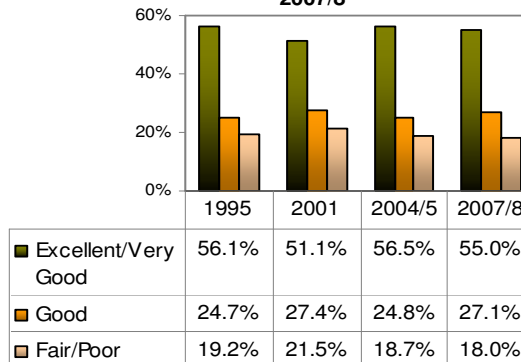
Self-Assessed Health Status, 15 Years and over by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

	Fair/poor	Excellent/very good
NSW	15.3%	55.5%
Vic	13.8%	60.1%
Qld	16.3%	51.4%
SA	18.2%	52.7%
WA	12.7%	57.2%
ACT	12.5%	56.4%
Tas	18.0%	55.0%
Aus	15.1%	55.8%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

Self-assessed health has remained relatively constant since 1995. The majority of Tasmanians continue to consider themselves to be in good health.

Self-Assessed Health Status, 15 Years and Over, Tasmania, 1995-2007/8



NHS 1995, Table 7; NHS 2001, State Table No 3; NHS 2004/5, State Table No 3; NHS 2007/8 State Table 13

Compared to 1995, self-assessed fair or poor health by Tasmanians aged 65 years and over has declined from 37.1% to 35.8%, and excellent and very good health has increased from 38.4% to 40.0%.

Self-Assessed Health Status 65 Years and Over, Tasmania 1995 – 2007/8

	Excellent/Very good	Good	Fair/poor
1995	38.4%	24.5%	37.1%
2001	27.8%	31.5%	40.7%
2004/5	36.2%	29.1%	34.7%
2007/8	40.0%	24.4%	35.8%

NHS 1995, Confidentialised Unit Record File; NHS 2001, State Table No 3; NHS 2004/5, State Table No 1, NHS 2007/8 CURF

Chronic Conditions

Chronic conditions include diabetes, asthma, mental health conditions, arthritis, cardiovascular health, injury, and cancer.

The prevalence of some chronic conditions, such as type two diabetes or arthritis, may be underestimated as a result of under-diagnosis and the exclusion of residents in hospitals, nursing or convalescent homes in NHS household surveys.

A majority Tasmanians of all ages (79%) reported one or more chronic health conditions in 2007/8.

Prevalence of Chronic Conditions, Tasmania, 2007/8

No long term condition	21.0%
Less than 3 conditions	34.1%
More than 3 conditions	44.9%

NHS 2007/8, Table I.3

Tasmania (44.9%) had the highest proportion of residents reporting more than three chronic conditions.

Three or More Chronic Conditions by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

	>3 conditions
NSW	37.4%
Vic	39.1%
Qld	38.6%
SA	42.0%
WA	39.7%
ACT	39.6%
Tas	44.9%
Aus	38.8%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

Mental Health

Mental health is one of the leading causes of burden of disease. It is associated with increased exposure to health risk factors, poorer physical health, and higher rates of death from many causes including suicide.

Tasmania had one of the lowest levels of psychological distress (11%) of all jurisdictions in 2007/8.

High and Very High Levels of Psychological Distress, 18 Years and over by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

	High/very high distress
NSW	12.8%
Vic	11.9%
Qld	11.6%
SA	12.9%
WA	10.0%
ACT	10.9%
Tas	11.0%
Aus	12.0%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

The proportion of Tasmanians, both males and females, reporting high and very high levels of psychological distress has declined since 2001.

High/Very High Level of Psychological Distress*, 18 Years and Over, Tasmania, 2001 to 2007/8

	Males	Females	Persons
2001	11.5%	16.4%	14.0%
2004/5	10.9%	14.3%	12.6%
2007/8	9.5%	12.4%	11.0%

*as measured by the Kessler 10 Scale
NHS 2001 State Table No 12; NHS 2004/5 State Table No 14,
NHS 2007/8 State Table

About one in nine Tasmanians (54,000 persons) reported a long term mental or behavioural disorder in 2007/8. Mood/affective disorders were the most frequently reported problem (35,500 Tasmanians) of all self-reported mental or behavioural disorders.

Mental and Behavioural Problems, Tasmania 2007/8

Type of Condition	Males	Females	Total
Mood problems	5.8%	8.8%	7.3%
Anxiety problems	3.1%	4.9%	4.0%
Other	5.7%	5.9%	5.8%
Total	9.8%	12.4%	11.1%

NHS 2007/8, Tables 3.2 and 3.3

Diabetes Mellitus

Diabetes is one of the ten leading causes of disease burden (DALYS) in Australia.¹ There is evidence for an increased risk of type 2 diabetes associated with overweight/obesity, physical inactivity, abdominal obesity, gestational diabetes and diet.²

Around 19,900 or 3.8% of Tasmanians reported diabetes as a long term condition in 2007/8, slightly below the national average of 4.0%. According to the Australian Diabetes, Obesity and Lifestyle Study (AusDIAB), which provided a prevalence rate of 8.7% for Tasmania in 2000, this may be an underestimate.

Prevalence of Diabetes Mellitus by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

	Diabetes mellitus
NSW	4.0%
Vic	3.8%
Qld	3.9%
SA	4.7%
WA	3.5%
ACT	2.8%

¹ Mathers C et al, The Burden of Disease and Injury in Australia, AIHW, 1999

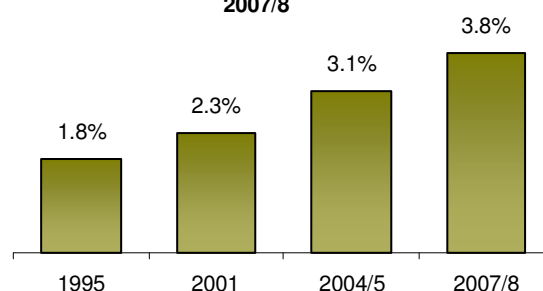
² Steyn NP et al, Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes, Public Health Nutrition, Vol 7, No 1A, 2004, pp 147-65

Tas	3.8%
Aus	4.0%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

According to NHS results, diabetes in Tasmania has more than doubled since 1995. ($p < 0.01$)

Diabetes Mellitus, Tasmania, 1995-2007/8



NHS 1995 Summary Results, Table No 9; NHS 2001, State Tables No 5; NHS 2004/5, Summary Results Table No 8, NHS 2007/8

More males than females report diabetes and prevalence rates increase with age, with 14.3% (9,800) of Tasmanians aged 65 years and over reporting diabetes in 2007/8.

Asthma

Asthma is a chronic disabling condition associated with high levels of morbidity. Disease severity and poor disease management are risk factors for asthma mortality.

Tasmania's self-reported asthma prevalence was 11.8% in 2007/8, one of the highest of all jurisdictions.

Prevalence of Asthma by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

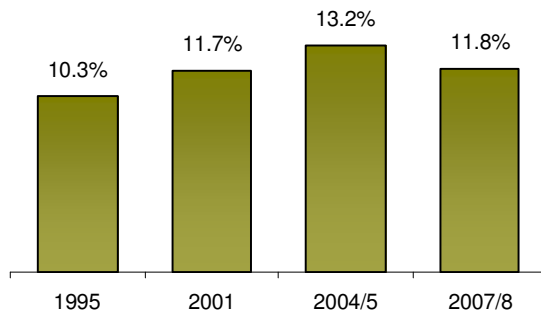
	Asthma
NSW	9.1%
Vic	9.4%
Qld	11.8%
SA	10.0%
WA	9.7%

ACT	9.6%
Tas	11.8%
Aus	9.9%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

The prevalence of asthma in Tasmania has increased by 1.5% since 1995. In 2007/8, 11.8% of Tasmanians of all ages (57,000) reported asthma as a long term condition.

Asthma Prevalence, Tasmania, 1995-2007/8



NHS 1995, Summary Results, Table 9, NHS 2001, Summary Results Table 8, NHS 2004/5, Summary Results, Table 8; NHS

More females (13.4% than males (10.0%) reported asthma, with younger people under 24 years reporting asthma more frequently.

Asthma Prevalence by Age, Tasmania, 2007/8

Age	Asthma %
0-24	14.2%
25-44	11.7%
45-64	10.4%
65+	8.9%

NHS 2007/8, Table 3.3

Arthritis

Tasmania and South Australia had the highest proportion of people reporting arthritis as a chronic condition.

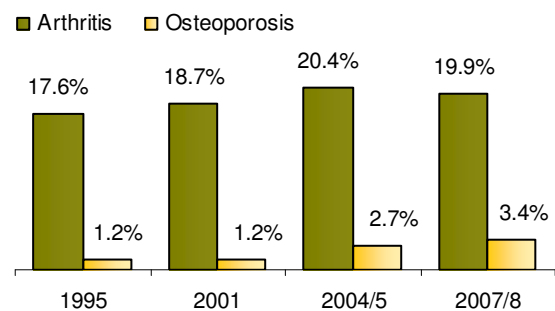
Prevalence of Arthritis by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

Jurisdiction	Arthritis (%)
NSW	15.0%
Vic	15.2%
Qld	14.8%
SA	17.6%
WA	14.2%
ACT	13.0%
Tas	19.9%
Aus	15.2%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

The prevalence of arthritis has increased since 1995, and the proportion of people reporting osteoporosis has almost tripled since 1995.

Arthritis and Osteoporosis Prevalence, Tasmania 1995-2007/8



NHS state tables

Arthritis affects one in two people aged 65 years and over and one in three people aged 45-64 years. More females (23.0%) than males (16.7%) are affected by arthritis, possibly as a result of greater life expectancy.

Arthritis Prevalence by Age, Tasmania, 2007/8

Age	Arthritis %
0-24	1.4%
25-44	9.9%
45-64	34.2%
65+	53.1%

NHS 2007/8, Table 3.3

Circulatory Disease

Diseases of the circulatory system are potentially preventable and include heart, stroke and vascular diseases, hypertension, and various other disorders. Major modifiable risk factors include smoking, inactivity, obesity and hypertension. The prevalence of heart, stroke and vascular conditions in Australia has increased by 18.2% over the last decade.³

Tasmania had the highest prevalence of heart, stroke, vascular diseases and hypertensive disease of all jurisdictions. The difference between the national and Tasmanian rates was statistically significant for both. (<0.05)

Prevalence of Circulatory Diseases by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

	Heart, stroke, vascular diseases	Hypertensive disease
NSW	4.7%	8.8%
Vic	5.5%	10.4%
Qld	5.7%	9.2%
SA	6.1%	11.4%
WA	4.4%	7.6%
ACT	4.2%	8.4%
Tas	7.6%	13.2%
Aus	5.1%	9.4%

³ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Heart, stroke and vascular diseases—Australian facts 2004. AIHW, 2004, Cat. No. CVD 27

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

In Tasmania, of all diseases of the circulatory system (22.4%), hypertension was the most frequently reported condition (13.2%). In 2007/8, about 1 in 7 or 62,200 Tasmanians reported that they had high blood pressure.

Hypertension is very prevalent among older age groups, with almost one out of two Tasmanians 65 years and over reporting hypertension. The prevalence of hypertension was slightly higher among females (13.9%) than males (12.5%).

Hypertensive Disease by Age, Tasmania 2007/8

Age	%
25-44	5.0%
45-64	19.7%
65+	46.5%

NHS 2007/8, Table 3.3

