

# Huon Valley Health Profile

September 2011

This health profile uses the latest available information and has been prepared on request to support health planning and routine health monitoring and surveillance activities in the Huon Valley.

## Population Characteristics

In the 2006 Census, there were 14,001 persons usually resident in the Huon Valley Local Government Area, representing 2.8% of the total Tasmanian population (489,900). Compared to Tasmania, the Huon Valley has a slightly higher proportion of children, smaller incomes and mortgages, and greater home ownership with significantly fewer rentals.

### Population Characteristics, Huon Valley, 2006

	Number	%	Tasmania
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	1,238	8.8%	3.5%
0-14 years	3,078	21.9%	19.7%
15-24 years	1,537	11.0%	13.0%
25-64 years	7,538	53.8%	52.4%
65 years and over	1,847	13.2%	14.9%
Couple families with children	1,661	42.8%	41.4%
Couple families without children	1,631	42.0%	40.5%
One parent families	548	14.1%	16.7%
Unemployed	5,190	7.3%	6.6%
Dwelling fully owned	2,260	42.8%	36.8%
Dwelling being purchased	1,831	34.6%	32.3%
Dwelling being rented (includes rent-free)	899	17.0%	24.6%
Median individual income (\$/weekly)	349	-	\$398
Median household income (\$/weekly)	711	-	\$801
Median rent (\$/weekly)	130	-	\$135
Median housing loan repayment (\$/monthly)	780	-	\$867
Average household size	2.6	-	2.4

ABS, Census 2006

## Hospitalisations and Mortality

The number of patients being treated in both public and private hospitals each year continues to increase, mainly because of Tasmania's ageing population.

The top five conditions for hospitalisations for the ten year period 2000-2009 were digestive diseases, injury/poisoning, musculoskeletal diseases, cancers, and circulatory conditions. Of those categories, musculoskeletal and injury/poisonings were statistically significantly higher than the State rate.

### Hospitalisations by the top 5 major conditions, Huon Valley, 2000-2009

	Number	Age Standardised Rate*	
		Huon Valley	Tasmania
Digestive diseases	3,826	26.2	30.5
Injury and poisoning	3,001	<b>^21.8</b>	19.9
Musculoskeletal diseases	3,159	<b>^21.2</b>	20.2
Cancer	3,140	20.9	20.0
Circulatory diseases	2,623	17.8	18.8

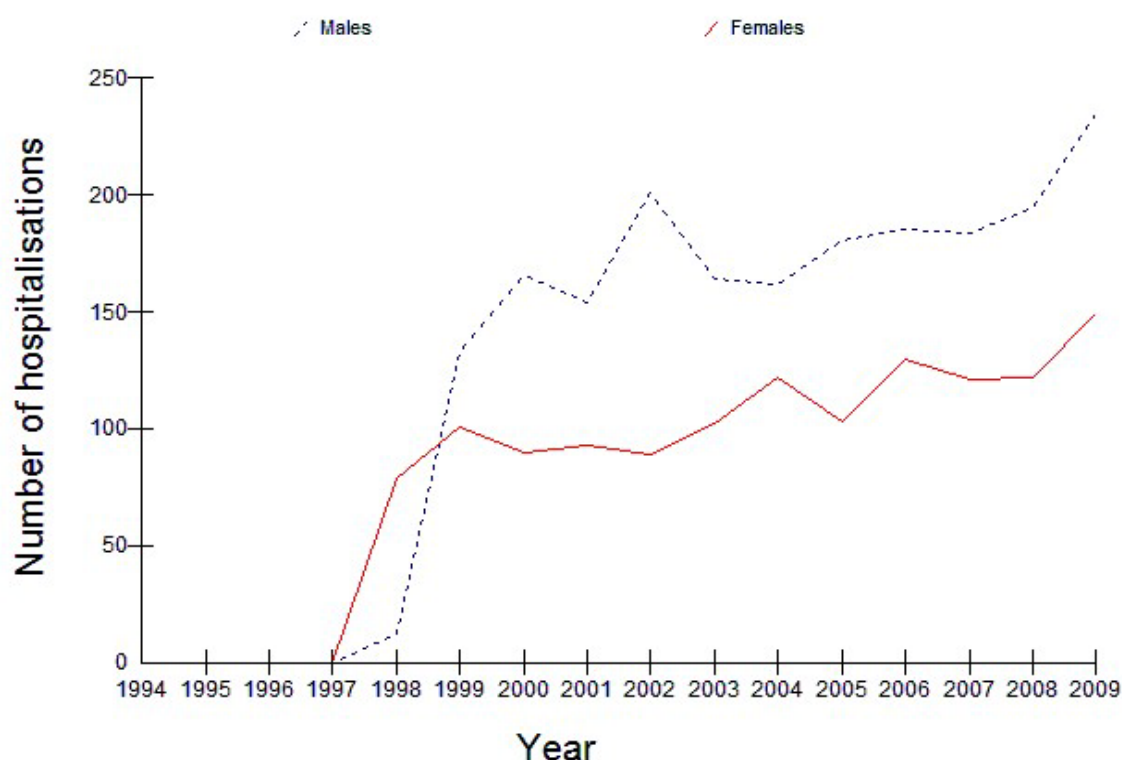
\*Rate per 1,000 population, age standardised to the 2001 Australian population

Source: Epi Web System

**^statistically significantly different**

After allowing for any differences in the population age structure, the number of hospitalisations for injury/poisoning in the Huon Valley LGA was significantly higher for males but similar for females compared to that expected based on the State rate. Falls, transportation accidents, medical misadventures and other unintentional injuries were the most common causes of injuries.

### Number of hospitalisations due to injury and poisoning conditions by sex, Huon Valley



For males, the age group most affected by injury and poisoning is the 25-44 year age group, followed by age 45-64 years. The largest proportion of hospitalisations involved females aged 65 years plus.

**Percentage of hospitalisations for injury/poisoning by age and sex, Huon Valley, 2005-2009**

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Total
Males	4.5	9.3	19.2	<b>27.6</b>	24.0	15.4	100.0
Females	4.0	10.2	9.7	23.2	22.9	<b>30.0</b>	100.0

Source: Epi Web System

Prostate cancer and breast cancer have the highest incidence rate in the Huon Valley comparable to Tasmanians rates.

**Top three newly diagnosed cancers for males and females, Huon Valley, 1998-2007**

Males	ASR*	% of total cancers	Females	ASR*	% of total cancers
Prostate	182.2	31.4%	Breast	87.3	22.0%
Lung	60.8	10.0%	Colon	36.6	9.4%
Colon	40.8	7.5%	Lung	33.3	8.4%

\*Age Standardised Rate per 100,000 population, standardised to the 2001 Australian population

Source: Epi Web System

The age standardised rate of deaths in the Huon Valley for the 10 year period 1998-2007 was slightly below the State rate.

**Deaths, all causes, Huon Valley, 1998-2007**

	Number	Age Standardised Rate*
Huon Valley (LGA)	938	724.4
Southern Region	18,665	724.5
Tasmania	38,525	727.2

\*Rate per 100,000 population, age standardised to the 2001 Australian population

Source: Epi Web System

The rate of deaths caused by injury and poisoning and endocrine/nutritional disorders is greater than the Tasmanian rate, but because of the small numbers involved, this difference is not statistically significant for either condition.

**Cause of death by major condition, Huon Valley, 1998-2007**

	Number	Age Standardised Rate*	
		Huon Valley	Tasmania
Circulatory diseases	321	255.5	262.0
Cancer	275	202.3	210.9
Injury and poisoning	77	57.3	48.6
Respiratory diseases	73	58.1	61.5
Endocrine and nutritional conditions	43	34.8	31.0

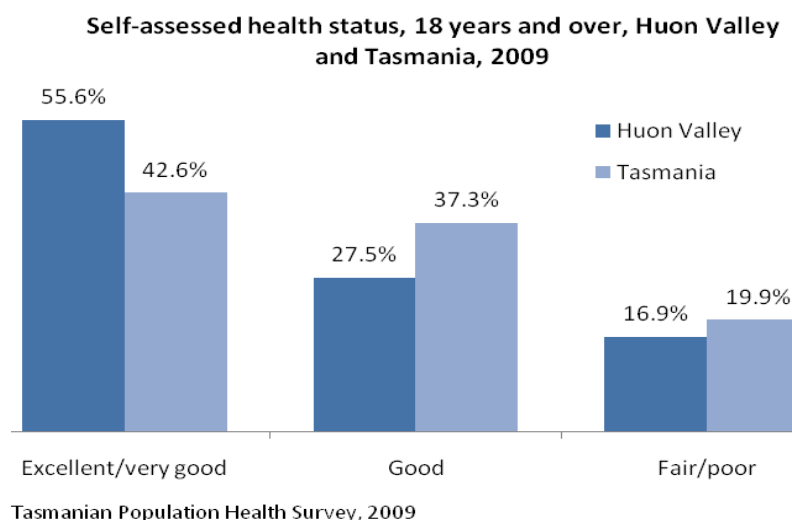
\*Rate per 100,000 population, age standardised to the 2001 Australian population

Source: Epi Web System

## Health Status and Chronic Conditions

Self-assessed health status is believed to principally reflect physical health problems and, to a lesser extent, mental health problems. Self-assessed health is associated with age and socio-economics, with persons of low socio-economic status and/or of older age more likely to rate their health as fair or poor.

The self-assessed health status of Huon Valley residents compares favourably with that of Tasmanians. Excellent and very good health is reported by more than half of the population in the Huon Valley. Fair and poor health is reported by 16.9% of the Huon Valley population.



Huon Valley residents report less asthma, diabetes, cancer, osteoarthritis, heart disease and stroke than Tasmanians overall. However, self-reported depression/anxiety for the Huon Valley was statistically significantly higher than for Tasmania.

### Chronic disease prevalence, self-reported, 18 years and over, 2009

	Huon Valley %	Tasmania %
Depression/Anxiety	<b>^32.0</b>	21.8
Arthritis	25.2	25.0
Asthma	13.5	20.6
Diabetes	<b>*4.5</b>	6.6
Cancer	<b>*4.6</b>	7.8
Osteoporosis	<b>*4.1</b>	6.4
Heart disease	<b>*3.6</b>	6.9
Stroke	<b>*3.1</b>	3.4

Tasmanian Population Health Survey, 2009

**\*Relative standard error higher than 25%, use with caution**

**^ Statistically significantly higher**

## Risk Factors

Health risk factors are associated with an increased risk of developing a chronic disease. The prevalence of lifestyle risk factors is higher for the Huon Valley than for Tasmania for daily smoking, obesity, high levels of psychological distress and risky alcohol consumption.

### Risk factor prevalence, 18 years and over, Huon Valley and Tasmania, 2009

	Huon Valley %	Tasmania %
Daily smoker	18.9	16.1
Current smoker <sup>(a)</sup>	16.6	19.8
Insufficient exercise level <sup>(b)</sup>	23.9	27.5
High/Very High Psychological Distress <sup>(c)</sup>	12.2	10.9
Risky alcohol consumption - long term harm <sup>(d)</sup>	8.2	5.9
Insufficient fruit consumption <sup>(e)</sup>	49.6	49.2
Insufficient vegetable consumption <sup>(f)</sup>	87.7	88.1
Overweight (25<=BMI<30)	31.4	36.3
Obese (BMI>=30)	24.3	20.4

Source: Tasmanian Population Health Survey 2009

(a) Includes daily and occasional smokers

(b) Based on the DHS Victoria definition of insufficient physical activity which means "Insufficient time or sessions", defined as "Less than 150 minutes OR 150 or more minutes weekly but fewer than 5 sessions"

(c) Psychological distress is an aggregate measure based on responses to the 10 component questions of the Kessler 10 index.

(d) Risky alcohol consumption is more than 2 drinks on average daily for both men and women

(e) Insufficient fruit consumption is less than 2 serves daily

(f) Insufficient vegetable consumption is less than 5 serves daily

### Notes on the Tasmanian Population Health Survey

- The Tasmanian Population Health Survey was undertaken using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI). The target population was defined as all non-institutionalised Tasmanian residents aged 18 years and over with access to a landline telephone. The survey sample included a total of 6,300 respondents, and interviewing was conducted late 2009.
- *In interpreting these data it should be noted that the survey may not be fully representative of the Tasmanian population as Tasmanians without access to a landline telephone, such as sole mobile phone users, were not included in the survey.*