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GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

In May 1997, the Prime Minister, with the support of the Premiers and Chief Ministers, requested that the Review give particular attention to the performance of mainstream services in relation to Indigenous Australians. This request was reinforced by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) at its 3 November 2000 meeting.

This fact sheet summarises key data from the Report in relation to the provision of mainstream services to Indigenous Australians in the areas of early childhood, education and training, justice, health, community services and housing.

Improvements in information in the 2008 Report include national data in the School education chapter on Indigenous learning outcomes by geolocation. Data on the Indigenous health workforce have been introduced into the Health preface, along with improved data for infant and overall Indigenous mortality rates. The Public hospitals chapter now includes data on hospital procedures by Indigenous status of the patient, whilst the Primary and community health chapter reports data against the new indicator of equity of access, 'early detection and early treatment for Indigenous people'. The Health management chapter now includes data for Indigenous people on levels of psychological distress. Expenditure data for Indigenous specific services is reported for the first time in the Aged care services chapter. In the Housing chapter, data for the new Indigenous community housing performance indicator framework are reported for the first time.

As always, readers should exercise caution in interpreting data on services to Indigenous people. Indigenous people are not always identified in some data collections, and surveys designed to report on the whole Australian population may not include sufficient numbers of Indigenous people to provide reliable data. The likelihood of Indigenous people being identified as Indigenous in both surveys and administrative data collections can vary in different situations and over time.

In April 2004, the Review published for the first time a compendium of data on services to Indigenous people, drawn from the *Report on Government Services 2004*. A compendium with data from the 2008 Report is scheduled for April 2008.

In April 2002, COAG commissioned the Review to produce a separate regular report on key indicators of Indigenous disadvantage. The Review released the third edition of this Report, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007*, in June 2007. The fourth edition of the *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* report will be released in mid-2009.

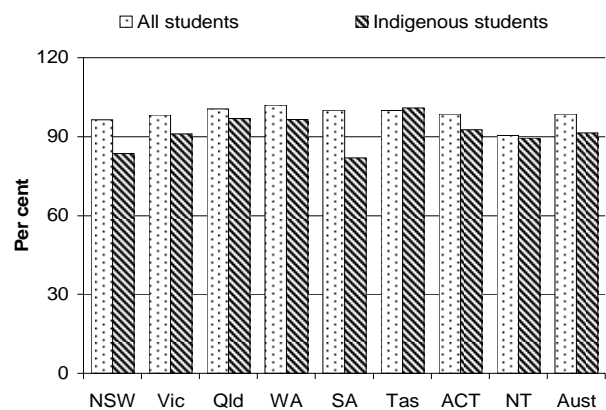
Selection of results

School education: the proportion of Indigenous students achieving national benchmarks in years 3, 5 and 7 reading, writing and numeracy was lower than for non-Indigenous students almost without exception in 2005 (tables 4A.77–94). Indigenous students are, on average, less likely to stay at school through secondary education. The national apparent retention rate from the commencement of secondary school until year 10 for Indigenous students was 91.4 per cent, compared with 98.6 per cent for all students, in 2006 (pp. 4.21–22). Retention rates do not account for students who did not commence secondary schooling and are based on enrolment, not attendance.

Police services: The proportion of police staff who self-reported as Indigenous in 2006-07 was similar to the representation of Indigenous people in the population aged 20–64 years for most jurisdictions. The largest differences were in the NT, where Indigenous staff accounted for 6.9 per cent of total staff compared with Indigenous representation in the working age population of 24 per cent, and Tasmania, where Indigenous staff accounted for 1.8 per cent of total staff compared with Indigenous representation in the working age population of 3.1 per cent, (pp. 6.11–13, table 6A.19). Data for Indigenous staff were not available for Victoria for 2006-07.

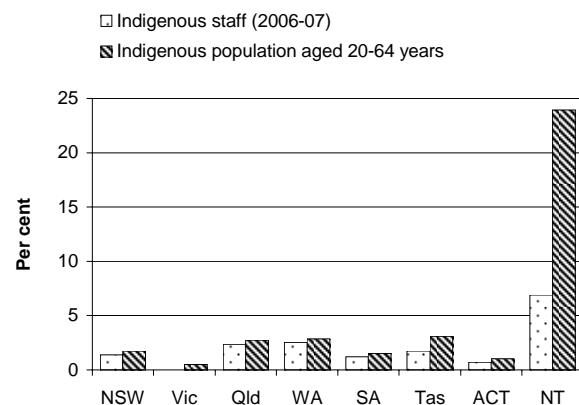
Corrective services: Indigenous people were far more likely to be in prison custody in 2006-07 than non-Indigenous people. The non-age-standardised national imprisonment rate per 100 000 Indigenous adults was 2142.2 compared with a rate of 122.4 for non-Indigenous adults. While imprisonment rates for Indigenous people are far higher than those for non-Indigenous people, the majority of prisoners are non-Indigenous (74.2 per cent of all prisoners were non-Indigenous in 2006-07) (p. 8.5). Prisoner death rates from apparent unnatural causes in 2006-07 (p. 8.13) and community corrections offender rates (pp. 8.6–9) are also reported by Indigenous status.

Apparent rates of retention from year 7 or 8 to year 10, full time secondary students, all schools, 2006^a



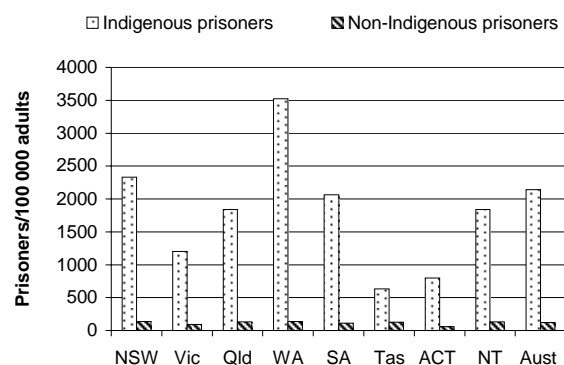
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Proportion of Indigenous police staff (sworn and unsworn) and proportion of the Indigenous population aged 20–64 years, 2006-07^a



See last page for footnote.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous imprisonment rates, 2006-07^a

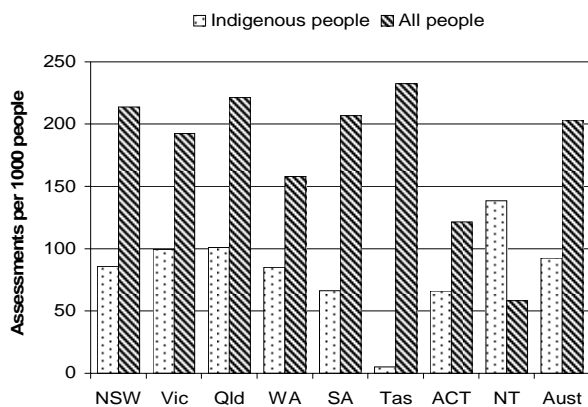


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Health preface: For Queensland, WA, SA and the NT combined, the overall rates of mortality for Indigenous people were around twice as high as mortality rates for non-Indigenous people in 2001–2005 (pp. E.26–27). Similarly, in 2003–2005, in those jurisdictions for which data are available, the Indigenous infant mortality rate was markedly higher than for all Australian infants (p. E.28). The Health preface also includes data on Indigenous health workforce, causes of death, life expectancy, median age at death, and birth weight.

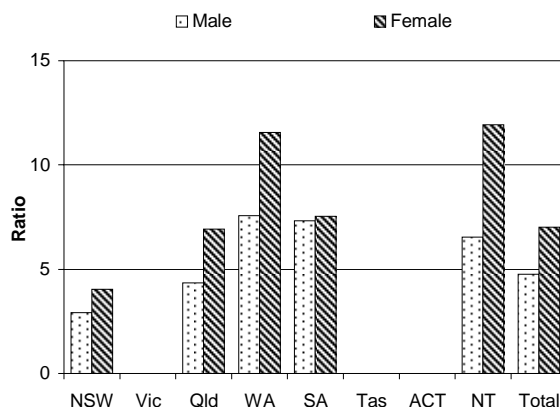
Primary and community health: The proportion of Indigenous older people who received a voluntary annual health assessment under Medicare was considerably lower than for all older people in 2006-07, in all states and territories except the NT (pp. 11.22–23). Age standardised hospital separation ratios are shown for all diabetes diagnoses for NSW, Queensland, WA, SA and the NT in 2005-06. The quality of Indigenous identification in hospital records is considered acceptable for the purposes of analysis for these jurisdictions only. For these jurisdictions combined, the separation rate for Indigenous males was 7.3 times higher than the rate for all Australian males. The separation rate for Indigenous females was 12.2 times the rate for all females (pp. 11.63–64).

Older people who received an annual health assessment by Indigenous status, 2006 07^a



See last page for footnote.

Ratio of separation rates of Indigenous people to all people for all diabetes diagnoses, 2005-06^a

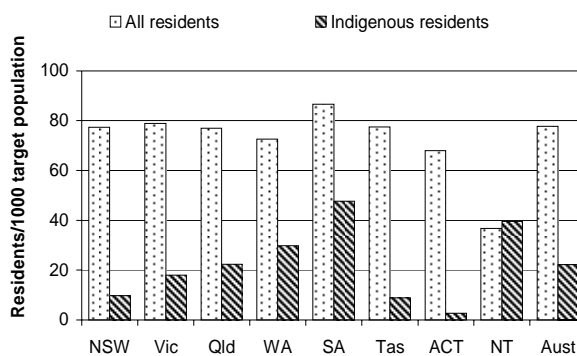


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Health management issues: The national age standardised participation rate for Indigenous women aged 50–69 in BreastScreen Australia programs (38.0 per cent) was below the total participation rate in that age group (56.7 per cent) in 2005-06, although this may be influenced by problems with the identification of Indigenous status (table 12.4, p. 12. 16).

Aged care services: Nationally, at 30 June 2007, the target population of Indigenous people had a lower rate of use of aged care residential services (22.2 per 1000) than the total Australian target population (77.7 per 1000). Indigenous people had lower rates of use of aged care residential services than the total population, across most jurisdictions (p. 13.34). The proportion of Indigenous Home and Community Care (HACC) clients who are aged 70 years and over is 31.4 per cent and the proportion of non-Indigenous HACC clients who are aged 70 years and over is 71.2 per cent (pp. 13.37-38).

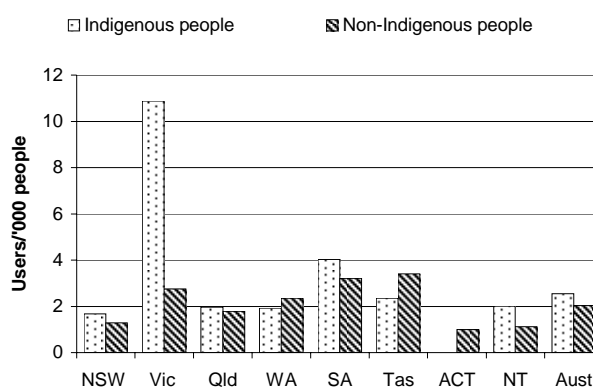
Aged Care residents per 1000 target population, 30 June 2007^a



See last page for footnote.

Services for people with a disability: the proportion of the Indigenous population using community access services in 2005-06 (2.5 Indigenous service users per 1000 Indigenous people aged under 65 years) was higher than the proportion of the non-Indigenous population using these services (2.0 service users per 1000 people aged under 65 years) (pp. 14.31–32). The proportions of the Indigenous population who used accommodation support, employment, community support and respite services were also higher than the proportions of the non-Indigenous population who used these services (pp. 14.30–33).

Users of community access services per 1000 people, by Indigenous status, 2005-06^a



See last page for footnote.

Protection and support services: The rate of children who were the subject of child protection substantiations per 1000 children aged 0-16 years was 31.8 for Indigenous children and 5.8 for non-Indigenous children (p. 15.10). The Report also includes data on the placement of Indigenous children in out-of-home care, placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (pp. 15.27–29). Nationally, at 30 June 2007, 55.6 per cent of Indigenous children in out-of-home care were placed with a relative/kin, 20.3 per cent placed with other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care, and 24.1 per cent were not placed with relative/kin, or other Indigenous residential care (p. 15.28).

Housing: Nationally, 70.0 per cent of Indigenous and 79.0 per cent of non-Indigenous public housing tenants rated amenity aspects as important and meeting their needs, whilst 80.0 per cent of Indigenous and 86.0 per cent of non-Indigenous public housing tenants rated location aspects as important and meeting their needs (p. 16.42). Nationally, 57 per cent of Indigenous and 72 per cent of non-Indigenous public housing tenants were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall service provided by their State housing authority in 2007 (p. 16.44). Data for the Indigenous community housing performance indicator framework are reported for the first time.

Data on other services to Indigenous people: The Report also contains data on Indigenous people in relation to vocational education and training, hospital separations, fetal, neonatal and perinatal death rates, hospitalisations for vaccine preventable conditions, potentially preventable acute conditions and potentially preventable chronic conditions, hospitalisations for diabetes, juvenile detention and children’s services.

Footnote: Data and caveats for these figures are available electronically on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report and from the Review of Government Service Provision website (<http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2008>). Data may be subject to revision. The most recent data will be available on the Review website.

[END]

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Please do not approach other parties for comment before Thursday 31 January 2008.

Media copies of this report are available from Clair Angel on 02 6240 3239.

Hard copies of this publication are available from Pirion/J.S. McMillan (ph: 02 9795 1200 or email custserv@jsmcmillan.com.au). The report will be available via the Internet at <http://www.pc.gov.au/> on the morning of Thursday 31 January 2008.

Tables with an ‘A’ suffix (eg table 4A.77) are in the attachments on the CD-ROM or on the Review website.