



**ASTHMA
AUSTRALIA**

ASTHMA IN TASMANIA

OVERVIEW 2021

INTRODUCTION

Asthma Australia is a for-purpose, consumer organisation which has been improving the lives of people with asthma since 1962.

Asthma is an inflammatory condition of the airways which restricts airflow and can be fatal. There is no cure, but most people with asthma can experience good control of their condition. Asthma affects one in nine Australians, or 2.7 million people. It has various degrees of severity (mild to severe) and affects people of all ages, from childhood to adulthood. Asthma can appear at all ages and stages of life.

Our purpose is to help people breathe better so they can live freely.

Our goal is to halve the number of avoidable hospitalisations due to asthma by 2030. It is estimated that 80 per cent of asthma related hospital presentations are avoidable.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

After a recent frightening episode, Tasmanian local and Asthma Champion, Toni McLean called **1800 ASTHMA** for help.

"Until I spoke with an Asthma Educator, I did not realise how poorly controlled my asthma was," Ms McLean said. "I'd been putting up with it for so long. I didn't understand my asthma, so I wasn't able to communicate my symptoms and triggers clearly with my doctor."

"After speaking to the Educator, I gained the knowledge and confidence I needed to treat my symptoms proactively, rather than letting my asthma unravel. I am now working closely with my doctor to create a good asthma management plan together." (Toni McLean)



ASTHMA IN AUSTRALIA



1 IN 9

Australians have asthma (11.2%)³



Asthma remains in the

TOP 10

of Australia's burden of disease (and is the 5th leading cause of non-fatal disease burden)²



Asthma was responsible for

419 DEATHS

in Australia in 2019³



In 2015-2016, asthma cost the Australian health system an estimated

\$770 MILLION



representing 19% of disease expenditure on respiratory conditions and 0.7% of total disease expenditure¹



Asthma is the

LEADING CAUSE

of burden of disease for Australians aged 5-14 years²



ASTHMA IN TASMANIA

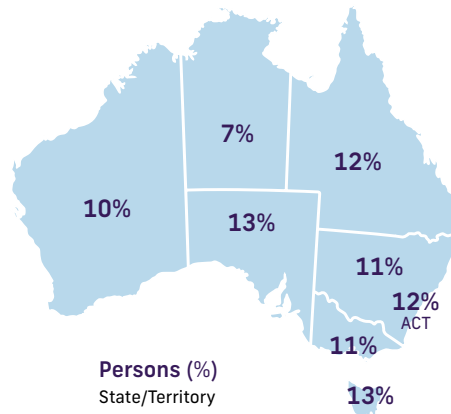
ASTHMA IS A MAJOR CHRONIC DISEASE IN TASMANIA

PREVALENCE

Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition affecting

66,000

Tasmanians



OR more than

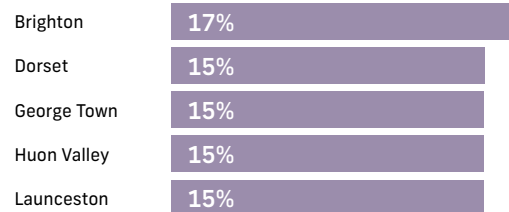


1 in 8 people

13%

of people in TAS are estimated to have asthma, one of the highest prevalence rates in Australia and higher than the national average of 11%¹

Top 5 Highest Asthma Prevalence in Tasmanian Local Government Areas³



HOSPITALISATIONS



In 2016/17

1,451

Tasmanians presented to emergency departments for their asthma⁵

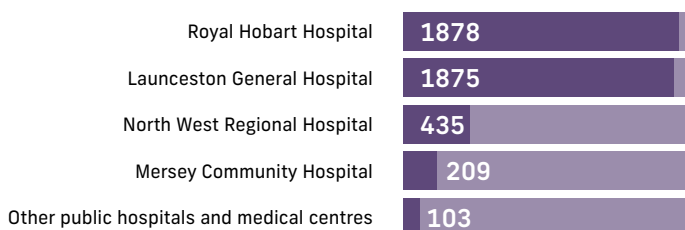
Between 2015 and 2019 hospitalisations in public hospitals in Tasmania doubled from 586 in 2015 to 1,149 in 2018, and then fell marginally to 1,083 in 2019⁸

It is estimated that **80%** of asthma related hospital presentations are avoidable⁴

In 2016/17, **90%** of hospitalisations in Tasmania were potentially preventable, compared to the national average of 80%⁶

In 2108/19 there were **1,121** potentially preventable hospitalisations for asthma in Tasmania⁷

Hospitalisations by hospital 2015 - 2019⁹



MORTALITY



Asthma was responsible for

13 DEATHS

in Tasmania in 2019¹⁰ with the national toll at 436 deaths in the same year¹¹

DOCTOR VISITS



23%

of visits to the doctor in Tasmania were for asthma in 2019, making it one of the top 3 most common reasons.²

ASTHMA AUSTRALIA'S PRESENCE IN TASMANIA

In 2019, the Asthma Foundation of Tasmania and Asthma Australia merged, following a long history of service by the Foundation in Tasmania since 1965.

On 1 July 2020, a renewed three-year agreement between Asthma Australia and the Tasmanian Government commenced with funding by the Crown through the Department of Health, for Asthma Australia to provide information and support services.

The purpose of the funding is for Asthma Australia to assist Tasmanians to better manage their asthma by providing information, support and resources to health professionals, people with asthma, family, carers and supporters of people with asthma.



The primary activities undertaken by Asthma Australia in Tasmania are:



Providing quality asthma management information to consumers, including through 1800 ASTHMA and the COACH Program®



Supporting hospital emergency departments to develop best practice discharge processes for asthma, which will in turn assist in reducing asthma presentations and hospital admissions



Providing evidence-based resources, tools and education for all people who encounter asthma, such as family members, carers, GPs and other health professionals, and community members



Identifying partnership opportunities that will support smoking cessation programs and activities for people with asthma



Promoting services and resources on air quality in Tasmania, such as the AirRater app



Collaborating with community sectors and health organisations to maximise outcomes that advance chronic conditions management in Tasmania

ASTHMA AUSTRALIA'S PRESENCE IN TASMANIA CONT.

Asthma Australia's current focus in Tasmania is reaching out with evidence-based information and resources to people with asthma and those who support their health journey such as family, friends, carers and health professionals and teachers.

Connecting with local communities in priority locations around the state is central to our approach.

Asthma Australia seeks to connect with existing community health programs and community service organisations. Our vision is to develop consumer-led programs in collaborations which suit the nuances of the local area.

CASE STUDY: THE BRIGHTON CARE COLLECTIVE

Brighton has the highest asthma rates in Tasmania and is a priority area for Asthma Australia. The Brighton Care Collective is a group of organisations which provide services in the Brighton municipality. It promotes better communication to ensure people get the right service, at the right time, in the right place. The Brighton Care Collective's focus is on achieving better health outcomes by improving care coordination from the providers in Brighton. Membership of the Brighton Care Collective has given Asthma Australia an unparalleled opportunity to connect directly with the local population to work alongside them on designing a program that will improve their asthma outcomes.

A key tactical approach is boosting Asthma Australia's national consumer-focused campaigns in the local media and through local health promotion networks, with the aim of reaching the consumer and those who influence their health decisions.

CASE STUDY: REACHING PRIORITY POPULATIONS

To engage consumers in the SEIFA 1-4 postcode areas of Tasmania, we delivered a targeted 1800 ASTHMA consumer campaign delivering digital resources developed for our National Spring promotion, as well as our new Referrer Pack for health professionals to all practices in the catchment area. The Tasmanian component of the campaign saw a significant rise in the number of interactions by consumers with our 1800 ASTHMA helpline and an improvement in the number of resources downloaded from our website by consumers and health professionals.

Health professionals play a central role in supporting people with asthma. Asthma Australia offers an extensive program of education and accredited training opportunities through our dedicated health professional information service. This service is delivered in Tasmania both directly to health professionals and via the local branches of industry associations and representative bodies.

Schools remain a top priority stakeholder in the asthma landscape, and our priority is to equip staff with the latest best-practice resources and information. In Tasmania, we recently launched Asthma Australia's new Asthma Guidelines for Australian Schools and the Schools Health Check. We support schools to become asthma ready through our dedicated schools information service.

RESEARCH FUNDED BY ASTHMA AUSTRALIA IN TASMANIA

An assessment framework for evaluating bushfire risk reduction strategies



"People with asthma are amongst the most and first affected with fire smoke episodes. I hope that my research helps raise awareness of the health burden associated with fire smoke and pushes for improving the lives of people with asthma at least in the following two ways: Informing people with asthma about the risks of being exposed to fire smoke, whether this comes from prescribed burn activities or bushfires, and increasing awareness of decision makers so that this issue (fire smoke and health) is incorporated in the fire management risk communication process." (Nicolás Borchers)

Asthma Australia supports the Menzies Institute for Medical Research, University of Tasmania, with funding for PhD candidate Nicolás Borchers, research into introducing health impact and economic assessments in evaluations of bushfire risk reduction strategies.

Bushfire risk reduction strategies such as hazard reduction burning have significant impacts on people with asthma through exposure to smoke and fine particulate matter. There is strong evidence this causes increased asthma symptoms and medication use and increases hospital admissions for asthma.

References

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- ³ Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU) 2020. Social Health Atlas of Australia. Adelaide: PHIDU. Accessed online: <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlas-of-australia-primary-health-networks> (accessed 9 December 2020).
- ⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2019. Potentially preventable hospitalisations in Australia by age groups and small geographic areas, 2017-18. Accessed online: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/primary-health-care/potentially-preventable-hospitalisations/contents/overview> (accessed 4 February 2021).
- ⁵ AIHW 2017. Emergency department care 2016-17: Australian hospital statistics. Canberra: AIHW. Accessed online: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/hospitals/ahs-2016-17-emergency-department-care/data> (accessed 9 December 2020).
- ⁶ PHIDU 2019. Asthma Atlas of Australia. Adelaide: PHIDU. Accessed online: http://www.atlasesaustralia.com.au/asthma_aust/atlas.html (accessed 9 December 2020); AIHW 2020. Admitted patients 2018/19: Australian hospital statistics. Canberra: AIHW. Accessed online: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reportsdata/myhospitals/sectors/admitted-patients#more-data> (accessed 9 December 2020).
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- ⁸ Epidemiology Unit, Department of Health, Tasmania (unpublished data).
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- ¹⁰ ABS 2019. Causes of Death, Australia. Canberra: ABS. Accessed online: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/causesdeath/causes-death-australia/latest-release#data-download> (accessed 9 December 2020).
- ¹¹ ABS 2020. Causes of Death, Australia, 2019. Canberra: ABS.

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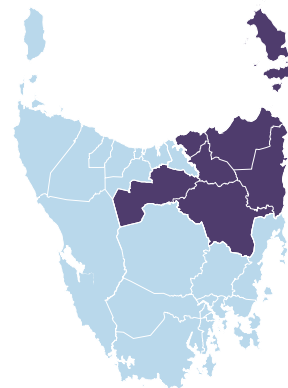


ASTHMA AROUND TASMANIA

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

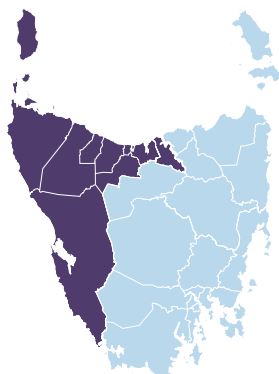


NORTH



Local Government Area	No. of people with asthma FY18 ¹	People with asthma ASR per 100 ¹	Total hospitalisations 2015-2019 ²
Launceston	9,622	14.8	1070
Meander Valley	2,643	13.3	182
Northern Midlands	1,886	14.3	121
George Town	1,050	15.1	41
Dorset	1,022	15.1	60
Break O'Day	943	14.7	101
Flinders	N/A	N/A	18
TOTAL	17,166	12.47	1593

NORTH WEST



Local Government Area	No. of people with asthma FY18 ¹	People with asthma ASR per 100 ¹	Total hospitalisations 2015-2019 ²
Devonport	3,569	14.3	194
West Tamar	3,191	13.5	254
Central Coast	2,913	13.3	147
Burnie	2,790	14.7	163
Waratah/Wynyard	1,894	13.7	78
Latrobe	1,545	13.7	151
Circular Head	1,051	13.1	65
Kentish	925	14.6	27
West Coast	552	13.1	8
King Island	N/A	N/A	6
TOTAL	18,430	12.4	1093

SOUTH



Local Government Area	No. of people with asthma FY18 ¹	People with asthma ASR per 100 ¹	Total hospitalisations 2015-2019 ²
Clarence	6,903	12.5	439
Glenorchy	6,317	13.5	241
Hobart	5,404	10.6	356
Kingborough	4,640	12.5	240
Brighton	2,761	16.5	184
Huon Valley	2,562	15	149
Sorell	2,143	14.5	79
Derwent Valley	1,368	13.4	75
Southern Midlands	817	13.3	19
Glamorgan/Spring Bay	527	11.4	23
Tasman	321	13.1	5
TOTAL	33,763	13.3	1810

References: ¹ Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU) 2020. Social Health Atlas of Australia. Adelaide: PHIDU. Accessed online: <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data#social-health-atlas-of-australia-primary-health-networks> (accessed 9 December 2020). ² Epidemiology Unit, Department of Health, Tasmania (unpublished data).

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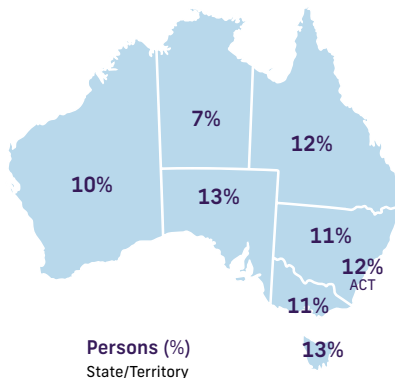
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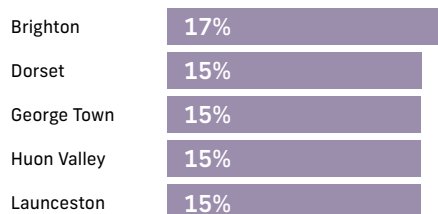
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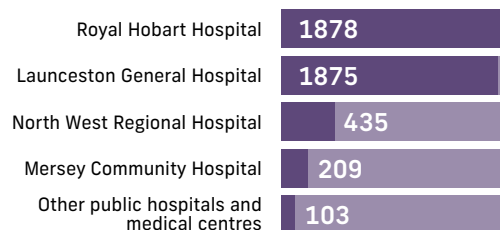
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