

Fact sheet

Government services and Indigenous people

Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision

Under embargo until 1.00am on Friday, 30 January 2009

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GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The performance of mainstream services in relation to Indigenous Australians has been identified by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) as an area where the Report should focus particular attention.

This fact sheet summarises key data from the 2009 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 2009 Report include a measure and associated data on Indigenous preschool attendance in the Children's services chapter. Data have also been provided for the first time for Indigenous learning outcomes by geolocation by State and Territory (for 2006 and 2007) for the School education chapter. Reporting of vocational education and training (VET) and TAFE graduates who improved their employment circumstances after training, by Indigenous status, is reported in the VET chapter. This year the Corrective services chapter has been enhanced to include age standardised imprisonment rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners, along with the previously reported crude rates. In the Public hospitals and Primary and community health chapters, data on Indigenous hospitalisations for Victoria are reported for 2006-07.

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 2009 Report is scheduled for publication in April 2009.

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 is scheduled for release in July 2009.

Footnote: Data and caveats for the following figures are available electronically on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report and from the Review of Government Service Provision website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2009). Data may be subject to revision. The most recent data will be available on the Review website.

[MORE]

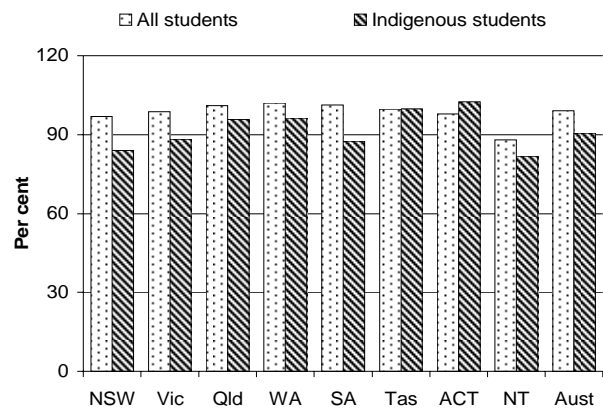
Selection of results

School education: the proportion of Indigenous students achieving national benchmarks in years 3, 5 and 7 reading, writing and numeracy was lower than for all students almost without exception in 2007 (tables 4A.80–97). 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 90.5 per cent, compared with 99.1 per cent for all students, in 2007 (p. 4.26). 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 2007-08 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 8 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 3.2 per cent, (pp. 6.11–13, table 6A.19). Data for Indigenous staff were not available for Victoria for 2007-08.

Corrective services: Indigenous people were far more likely to be in prison custody in 2007-08 than non-Indigenous people. The non-age standardised national imprisonment rate per 100 000 Indigenous adults was 2156.6 compared with a rate of 123.2 for non-Indigenous adults. While imprisonment rates for Indigenous people are higher than those for non-Indigenous people, the majority of prisoners are non-Indigenous (74.4 per cent of all prisoners were non-Indigenous in 2007-08) (p. 8.8). Prisoner death rates from apparent unnatural causes in 2007-08 (p. 8.16) and community corrections offender rates (pp. 8.8–10) are also reported by Indigenous status.

Apparent rates of retention from year 7 or 8 to year 10, full time secondary students, all schools, 2007^a



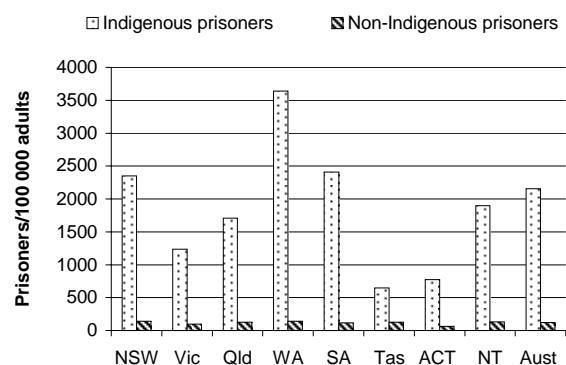
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Proportion of Indigenous police staff (sworn and unsworn) and proportion of the Indigenous population aged 20–64 years, 2007-08^a



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Indigenous and non-Indigenous non-aged standardised imprisonment rates, 2007-08^a

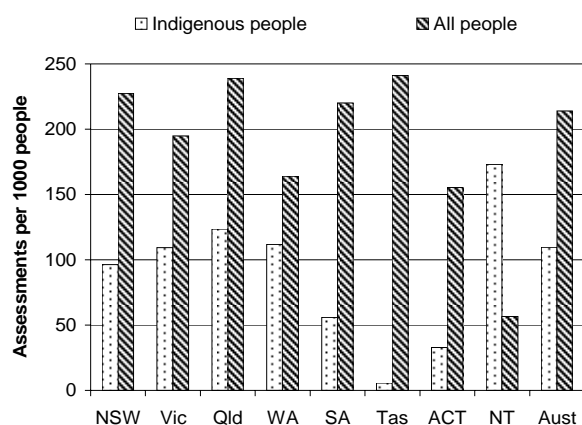


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Health preface: For Queensland, WA, SA and the NT combined, the overall rates of mortality for Indigenous people were almost three times as high as mortality rates for non-Indigenous people in 2002–2006 (pp. E.29-30). Similarly, in 2004–2006, in those jurisdictions for which data are available, the Indigenous infant mortality rate was markedly higher than for all Australian infants (p. E.31). The Health preface also includes data on Indigenous health workforce, causes of death, life expectancy, median age at death, and birth weight.

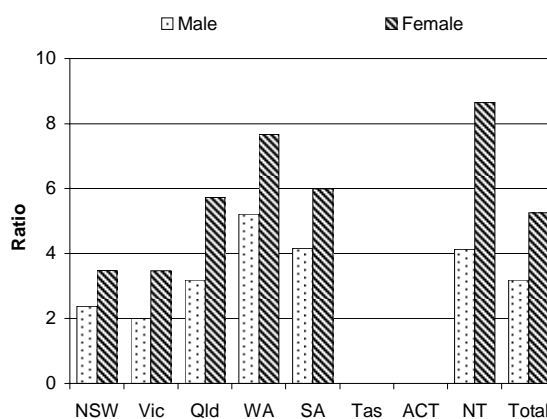
Primary and community health: The proportion of Indigenous older people who received a voluntary annual health assessment under Medicare was considerably lower than for all older people in 2007-08, in all states and territories except the NT (pp. 11.22-23). Age standardised hospital separation ratios are shown for all diabetes diagnoses — except where dialysis is the principal diagnosis — for NSW, Victoria, Queensland, WA, SA and the NT in 2006-07. 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 3.2 times higher than the rate for all Australian males. The separation rate for Indigenous females was 5.3 times the rate for all females (pp. 11.73-74).

Older people who received an annual health assessment by Indigenous status, 2007-08^a



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Ratio of separation rates of Indigenous people to all people for all diabetes diagnoses, 2006-07^a

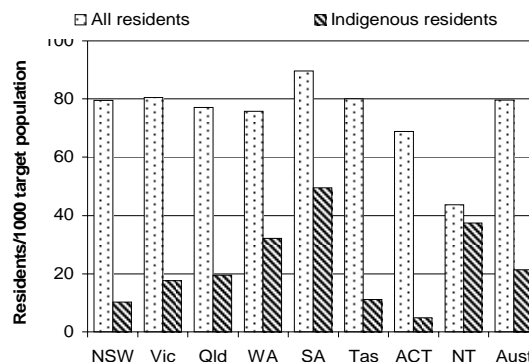


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Health management issues: The national age standardised participation rate for Indigenous women aged 50–69 in BreastScreen Australia programs (40.3 per cent) was below the total participation rate in that age group (56.1 per cent) in 2006-07, although this may be influenced by problems with the identification of Indigenous status (table 12.4, p. 12.17).

Aged care services: Nationally, at 30 June 2008, Indigenous people aged 50 years and over had a lower rate of residential aged care use than the total target population for residential aged care (Indigenous people 50–69 and all people aged 70 years and over). For Community Aged Care Packages, Indigenous people had a higher rate of use than the total population (pp. 13.40-41). Of those aged 50 years and over, Indigenous clients represent 2.0 per cent of all Home and Community Care clients, but in this age group Indigenous people represent 0.9 per cent of the Australian population (table 13A.35).

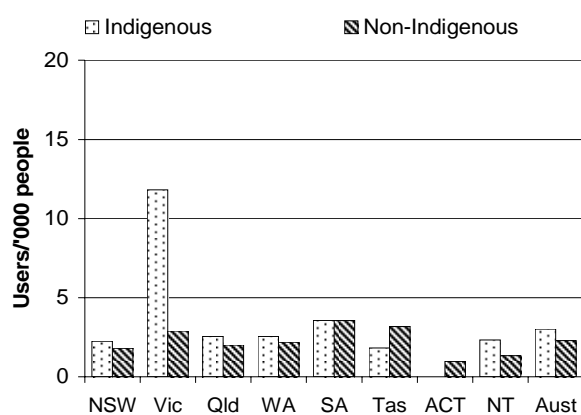
Aged Care residents per 1000 target population, 30 June 2008^a



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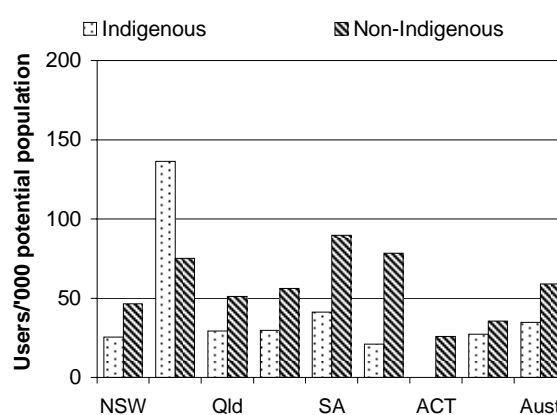
Services for people with a disability: Nationally, the proportion of the Indigenous population who used CSTDA funded community access services in 2006-07 (3.0 service users per 1000 people aged under 65 years) was higher than the proportion of the non-Indigenous population who used these services (2.3 service users per 1000 people aged under 65 years). In contrast, *experimental estimates* show that the proportion of the Indigenous potential population (that is, people with the potential to require disability support services) who used CSTDA funded community access services in 2006-07 was lower than for the non-Indigenous potential population (34.8 compared to 59.1 service users per 1000 potential population) (pp. 14.39-40).

Users of community access services per 1000 people, by Indigenous status, 2006-07^a



See first page for footnote.

Experimental estimates — users of community access services per 1000 potential population, 2006-07^a



See first 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 35.3 for Indigenous children and 5.5 for non-Indigenous children in 2007-08 (p. 15.12). 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. 15.32–34). Nationally, at 30 June 2008, 53.3 per cent of Indigenous children in out-of-home care were placed with a relative/kin, 20.6 per cent placed with other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care, and 26.0 per cent were not placed with relative/kin, other Indigenous carer or other Indigenous residential care (p. 15.33).

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. 16.40). 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 (pp. 16.45-46).

Data on other services to Indigenous people: The Report also contains data on Indigenous people in relation to other service areas not covered in this fact sheet.

[END]

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Please do not approach other parties for comment before Friday 30 January 2009.

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

Hard copies of this publication are available from McMillanprint (ph: 02 9795 1200 or email custserv@mcmillanprint.com.au). The report will be available via the Internet at www.pc.gov.au on the morning of Friday 30 January 2009.

Tables with an 'A' suffix (eg table 4A.5) are in the attachments on the CD-ROM or on the Review website.