










Gippsland PHN Health Needs 2021

Vision: A measurably healthier Gippsland

Life expectancy in Gippsland is 83.0 years for females (84.6 years in Australia);
78.9 years for males (80.5 years for Australia)

Areas of need	What we know	
	Gippsland data and information	Gippsland community feedback
Australian priorities		
 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing	 Median age of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Gippsland is 22 years compared to 45 years for the total Gippsland population	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are less likely to be comfortable using a health service that they need compared to other community members
 People 65 years or over	 Almost 1 in 4 people are 65 years or older compared to 1 in 6 in Victoria	Use health services more but are less likely to use digital tools
 Alcohol and other drugs	 Adults in Gippsland consume alcohol at riskier levels than the rest of Victoria. More than half of adults in Gippsland drink alcohol at levels likely to cause injury, compared to 43% in Victoria.	Drug and alcohol services are not connected with mental health services
 Cancer	 Avoidable deaths from cancer are higher in Gippsland than in Victoria (35.4 per 100,000 population compared to 28.3)	There should be more advertising of bowel, breast and cervical cancer screening to promote access
 Mental health and wellbeing (including suicide prevention)	 Adults in Gippsland experience higher psychological distress compared to the rest of Victoria (17.5% of adults in Inner Gippsland report high or very high psychological distress compared to 15.4% in Victoria)	Mental health was the most reported health need with significant service gaps, especially for children and young people
 Health workforce	 Gippsland has a low rate of psychologist availability in the state. There are 46 full-time psychologists per 100,000 people compared to 113 in Victoria	Timely and affordable access to a GP was the most reported service issue in the community
 Digital health and care coordination	 People with complex disease often report difficulty in navigating the health service system	Internet reliability is a major issue and can't be relied on Being connected to all health professionals is important
 Service access and quality	 Some admissions to hospital could be avoided with good access and quality care by GPs. Gippsland has a higher-than-average rate of potentially preventable hospitalisations (3,010 per 100,000 compared to 2,697 for Victoria)	Cost is a barrier to accessing health care and it can be difficult to access bulkbilling GPs

			What we know	
Areas of need		Gippsland data and information	Gippsland community feedback	
Gippsland local needs				
	Social determinants of health		More than half of Gippsland households are classified as 'low income' (i.e. bottom 40% of income distribution), compared to 40.9% of Victorian households	Looking at cause of illness rather than just prescribing medication
	Healthy and safe environment		General practices in Gippsland experienced an increase in respiratory presentations as a result of poor air quality caused by the bushfires (January–March 2020)	Increase in mental health concerns related to climate change, bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic
	Family violence		Gippsland experiences higher rates of family violence incidents, including some of the state's highest rates in Latrobe, East Gippsland and Wellington. 66% increase in calls to 1800RESPECT during pandemic	Family violence is recognised as an important factor affecting health with reports of service gaps
	Children and young people (0-25 years)		More than 1 in 10 children in Gippsland are considered vulnerable for emotional development when starting school (8.1% in Victoria)	Mental health is the most common health concern Work and study opportunities are important Parents want affordable access to GPs, including after-hours access
	People with a disability		Gippsland has higher rates of people living with a severe or profound disability (6.7% compared to 5.4% in Victoria). Many of these people live with multiple health issues (comorbidities)	These community members are most likely to report poor health service quality (lack of respect, poor communication)
	Carers		The 24/7 nature of the carer role can be very demanding and mental health concerns are commonly reported	Carers can feel isolated at times
	Chronic disease (COPD, ongoing heart related issues, diabetes)		High rates of avoidable deaths for ongoing lung issues, heart disease and diabetes, especially among disadvantaged populations	Having a regular GP helps to identify problems and manage health care better
	Reproductive and sexual health		Gippsland has almost 30% more teenage pregnancies (aged 15 to 19) than the state average (10.3 per 1000 people compared to 7.7)	Easier access to medical and surgical termination of pregnancy
	Dementia		An estimated 7,488 people live with dementia in Gippsland. Dementia is the second cause of death for people in Gippsland (behind coronary heart disease)	Health professionals, of all backgrounds, continue to have a lack of knowledge

References via Gippsland PHN website: <https://gphn.org.au/what-we-do/health-planning/population-health/resources-ph/>