



## MEDIA RELEASE

# Gippsland PHN snapshot shows high avoidable cancer deaths

22 August 2023

Gippsland has some of Australia's highest rates of avoidable deaths due to cancer, including breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

These statistics were released in a cancer snapshot by Gippsland Primary Health Network and highlight the importance of people screening for cancer. They also raise awareness of the importance of Daffodil Day on 31 August 2023 which raises funds for a cancer free future.

Avoidable cancer death rates (average per 100,000 people) in Gippsland are at 35.9 per cent, significantly higher than Victoria at 28.2 per cent and Australia at 28.8. Latrobe City and Wellington Shire have rates of 52.7 per cent and 51.6 per cent respectively.

In cancer screening, the results were mixed. The snapshot shows in Gippsland:

- 47.3% of people aged 50-74 years participated in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (Victoria 43.9%)
- 51.8% of women aged 50-74 years screened for breast cancer (Victoria 45.9%)
- 56.4% of women 25-74 years screened for cervical cancer (Victoria 62.2%)

National Bowel Cancer Screening Program data shows that participants who identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, those who lived in very remote areas and those who lived in low socioeconomic areas all had higher rates of positive screens. They also had lower rates of follow-up diagnostic assessment and a longer median time between a positive screen and assessment.

Gippsland PHN Acting Chief Executive Officer, Angela Jacob, said it was important to raise awareness of the importance of screening for cancer.

"We are working closely with general practitioners as we know they are central to increasing cancer screening participation rates," Mrs Jacob said. "Tragically, with one-in-two people being affected by cancer in their lifetimes, we will all be touched by disease."

"Finding cancer at an early stage increases the chances of successful treatment and improved survival. I encourage everyone to talk about screening to their trusted GP or nurse."

The snapshot is available [here](#). To learn how you can contribute to Daffodil Day, go to the [Cancer Council website](#).

**ENDS**

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