

Mental Health and Wellbeing Issues and Impact



Gippsland Mental Health Status



37% of adults across Gippsland have ever been diagnosed with anxiety or depression, higher than in Victoria at 32%.

20% of people rate their satisfaction with life as low or medium (Victoria 22%).

13% of total burden of disease is caused by mental health and substance use disorders in Australia (23% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people).

According to national mental health prevalence estimates, 40% of the population are either experiencing mental illness or are at risk of mental illness. Applying these estimates to the 2021 Gippsland population shows that:

- Over 9,000 people have severe mental illness
- 13,500 people have moderate mental illness
- 26,500 people have mild mental illness
- 68,000 are at risk of mental illness

Burden of disease measures the impact of living with illness and injury and dying prematurely.

Among Children



Aged 5–14 years - mental disorders contribute significantly to burden of disease; anxiety disorders (10.6%), depressive disorders (7.1%) and conduct disorders (6.0%).

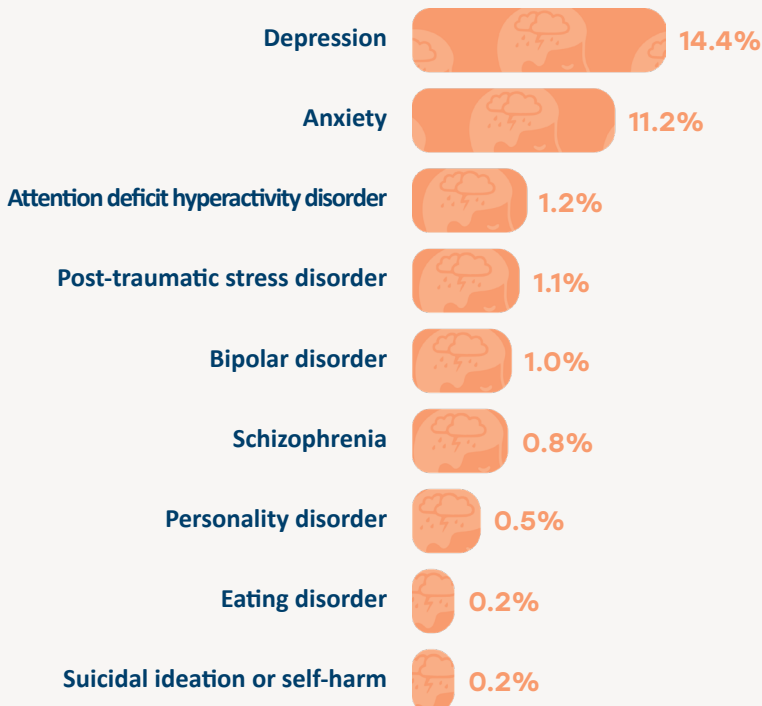
An estimated 14% of 4-17 year olds experienced a mental disorder in the past 12 months. East Gippsland and Latrobe had the highest modelled prevalence estimates (up to 17%).

'Suicide and self-inflicted injuries' - Is the leading cause of burden of disease among people aged 15–44 years old.



22% of Gippsland general practice patients had an active mental health diagnosis in 2022

Top diagnoses (a patient can have more than one):



Community Insights



Significant impacts on communities when services are not available and issues are prolonged or exacerbated.



Young people experience a pressure to succeed that can impact their wellbeing.



Older people can feel shame and guilt when they can no longer look after themselves and avoid seeking help.



LGBTIQ+ people may avoid accessing services due to poor past experiences.



Financial stress can lead to poor mental health.



Need to understand a person's experiences, their circumstances and the underlying reasons for mental health issues.



Caring, trusted professionals and follow up leads to good outcomes.



A need for inclusive and psychologically safe services that are more available in community based settings.

"If you can help someone's mental health and their wellbeing, a lot of other stuff falls into place."

Workshop participant

Mental Health and Wellbeing Issues and Impact



Population groups more likely to have a high prevalence of mental illness:



Severe Disability: 43% of people with a profound or severe disability, compared to 17% of people with no disability.



Homelessness: In 2019-20, 7,746 people in Gippsland received assistance from homelessness services; more than 2,500 are likely to have a mental health issue based on national estimates.



LGBTIQ+: 24% of LGBTIQ+ adults had high or very high levels of psychological distress compared with 15% of heterosexual, non-LGBTIQ+ Victorians.



Perinatal Depression: Affects around 10% of new mothers and is more common among mothers who were; younger (aged under 25), smokers, came from lower income households or were overweight or obese.



Drug Use: 26% of people who use illicit drugs had been diagnosed with a mental illness.



Family Violence: 55% of adults diagnosed with depression or anxiety (26% for adults with no experience of family violence)

Hospital Data



The rate of mental health related emergency department presentations is high in Gippsland compared to Victoria; **the highest rate was in East Gippsland.**

The rate of hospital admissions for mental and behavioural disorders was **4.9 times higher for Aboriginal people** compared to non-Aboriginal people in Gippsland in 2019-20.

An analysis of the number of mental health admissions for Gippsland residents to a Victorian hospital show a shift to more people aged 50 years or older being admitted, **especially people aged 70-79 years.**

"I need to see a psychiatrist and a psychologist and a very good GP who understand not just general mental health but complex mental health."

- Community member

Help Seeking

HELP



In 2019, significantly more people in Gippsland (**26.8%**) sought professional help for a mental health problem in the previous year compared to Victoria (**18.7%**); and females were significantly more likely to seek professional help for a mental health problem in Gippsland (**36.2%**) compared to Victorian females (**23.8%**).



10.3% of Baw Baw, Bass Coast and South Gippsland residents used a Medicare subsidised GP service related to mental health, compared to **9.3%** across Australia; the lowest rate was in East Gippsland (**8.3%**). East Gippsland and Wellington also had among the lowest rates for allied health, clinical psychology and psychiatrist use for mental health.



There were **13,027** general practice patients with a new mental health diagnosis in **2019-20**, up from **12,300** in **2017-18**; **35%** of diagnoses were for people **between 20 and 39 years**.



There were **14,975** referrals for psychology from general practices across Gippsland in **2020**; **12,483** of these were for a patient with an active mental health diagnosis. **22%** were for patients in East Gippsland, **21%** for Latrobe, **18%** Baw Baw, **17%** Wellington, **14%** Bass Coast and **8%** South Gippsland.



Over half (**58.7%**) of student presentations to a Doctors in Secondary Schools clinic across nine secondary schools in Gippsland were related to mental health issues.



For crisis support 24/7 contact:

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636