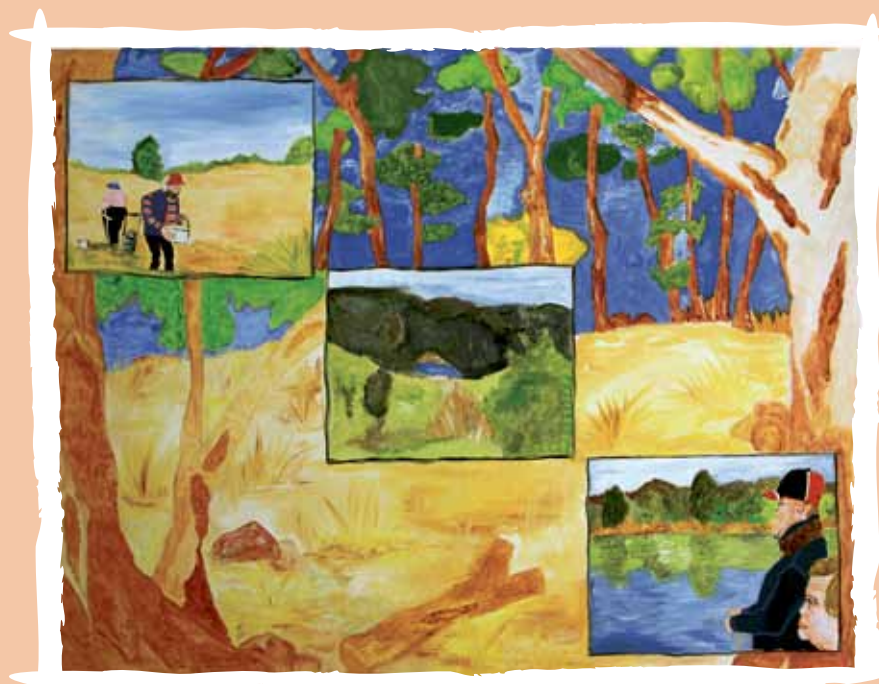


The tenth biennial welfare report of the
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare



Australia's **2011** **welfare**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is a major national agency which provides reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. The Institute's mission is *authoritative information and statistics to promote better health and wellbeing*.

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Australian Government
Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare

*Authoritative information and statistics
to promote better health and wellbeing*

The Hon Nicola Roxon MP
Minister for Health and Ageing
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

On behalf of the Board of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare I am pleased to present to you *Australia's welfare 2011*, as required under subsection 31 (1A) of the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*.

I commend this report to you as a significant contribution to national information on welfare services and assistance and to the development and evaluation of welfare policies and programs in Australia.

Yours sincerely

Dr Andrew Relshauge
Chairperson of the Board

22 September 2011

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Preface

Welcome to *Australia's welfare 2011*, the tenth biennial report on welfare services and statistics produced by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The social and political context within which welfare services are delivered have evolved considerably since the first edition of *Australia's welfare* was published in 1993.

In the policy arena, a number of intergovernmental agreements have been finalised in recent years that more clearly identify government responsibility for funding and providing services across the welfare sector and increasingly measuring outcomes.

This is also a time of active consideration of future reforms in the welfare sector, with recent major inquiries and ongoing community discussion about the future structure of aged care services, support for people with disability, and closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage. Among the cross-sectoral themes raised in these areas are a focus on person-centred service delivery, integration between services—both mainstream and specialised—and the increasing role of the non-government sector.

Australia's welfare 2011 contributes to this discussion by bringing together the high-quality national statistics that form much of the evidence base for contemporary policy development. By providing an overview of the welfare sector in all its diversity, this report also highlights a number of important themes that transcend any individual component. These include the recognition that population ageing influences demand for welfare services beyond the scope of aged care; that the way we engage in education and work affects our need for government services and our capacity to provide informal care; and that while most Australians enjoy a high standard of living, disparities between population groups continue to exist.

Sound data underpins robust policy development, as well as playing a key role in monitoring progress towards nationally agreed targets. This is core to the AIHW's mission:

Authoritative information and statistics to promote better health and wellbeing.

This tenth edition of *Australia's welfare* has a modified structure and expanded content compared to previous years. The report is divided into distinct sections that present statistics on population factors underpinning demand for welfare services; details of the particular needs and assistance provided to key groups; and information about the resourcing of welfare services in Australia. Finally, it ends with updated indicators of Australia's welfare, last reported by the AIHW in *Australia's welfare 2007*. These measures provide an overview of the wellbeing of Australians across domains of healthy living, autonomy and participation, and social cohesion.

This report also includes a summary of major recent or upcoming data developments that will improve the coverage, timeliness and comparability of information, which should improve our understanding of the need for welfare services, the way in which services are delivered, and outcomes achieved from the range of welfare services.

In keeping with the contemporary information environment, and to make the AIHW's work available to new audiences, this report is, for the first time, accompanied by *Australia's welfare in brief*—a booklet and companion website that presents highlights from the main report.

David Kalisch

Director

Acknowledgments

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Symbols



| | |
|--------|---|
| \$ | Australian dollars, unless otherwise specified |
| % | per cent |
| '000 | thousands |
| n.a. | when used in a table: not available |
| n.e.c. | when used in a table: not elsewhere classified |
| n.e.s. | when used in a table: not elsewhere stated |
| n.p. | when used in a table: not published by the data source |
| .. | when used in a table: not applicable |
| — | when used in a table: nil (including null cells) |
| * | when next to a numerical value in a table: estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution |
| ** | when next to a numerical value in a table: estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use |

