



Australian Government  
Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare  
**Annual report 2005–06**



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**Australian Government**  
**Australian Institute of Health and Welfare**

The Hon. Tony Abbott MP  
Minister for Health and Ageing  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the annual report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare for the year to 30 June 2006.

Section 4(2)(a) of the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* defines the Institute as a body corporate subject to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (CAC Act).

In accordance with the requirements of Section 9 of the CAC Act, the report was endorsed on 21 September at a meeting of directors responsible for the preparation and content of the report of operations, in accordance with Finance Minister's Orders.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Collins'.

Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC  
Chair of the Board

6 October 2006



*Australia's health 2006*



*Australia's welfare 2005*

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## THE AIHW AND THIS REPORT — A QUICK GUIDE

### The AIHW


The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is Australia's national agency for health and welfare statistics and information. The AIHW is established under an Act of Parliament to report to the nation on the state of its health and welfare. Thus, in alternate years the AIHW publishes *Australia's health* and *Australia's welfare*, which have become key national resources of these major areas. The AIHW also publishes many other reports.

The AIHW's unique combination of features keeps it at the forefront of health, community service, and housing statistics and information in Australia:

- Expertise is varied and strong. We have a highly committed staff in Canberra of around 200 people and a network of collaborations across Australia with specialist groups.
- The work aims at meeting the needs of a wide range of stakeholders including policy makers, researchers, service providers, clients and the general community.
- National data are held on three important and related areas — health, community services and housing — and therefore information from these areas can be combined in ways that shed further light on the life of Australians and how it may be improved.
- The Act protects the confidentiality and long-term security of the data held. It is therefore guaranteed that any data provided to the AIHW will be used only as the provider permits. High ethical standards are followed.
- Major interested parties are brought together to develop and promote standardised data definitions and collection methods, new national collections, the linking of separate national collections, and key summary statistics (or indicators).
- The AIHW acts openly and transparently, putting all work in the public arena.

### This report

This annual report has been written to inform the community of the AIHW's roles and responsibilities and to summarise achievements over the past year. It also fulfils legislative and parliamentary reporting requirements. The report is a key document for reference, for internal management and as part of the historical record.



This report contains the following sections:

The **Overview** provides some highlights from the past year. It includes reports from the Chair of the Board and the Director, a statement of the AIHW's mission and values, and a presentation of the values of the Australian Public Service.

**Chapter 1** outlines the governance, structure and functions, business and people focus of the AIHW.

**Chapter 2** summarises the achievements that the AIHW has made against the priorities for the reporting year.

The **Appendixes** provide detailed information on aspects of the AIHW's business.



## OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR

### Chair's report

I am pleased to present the 2005–06 annual report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). This is the nineteenth annual report produced by the AIHW and the third that I, as Chair of the AIHW, have had the privilege to present.

The key goal of the AIHW is to provide governments and the community with objective, independent reports on Australia's health and welfare system as a basis for decision making and community debate.

Many factors contribute to the success of the AIHW in continuing to make significant achievements towards this goal. One of these is undoubtedly the skill and dedication of the staff, who are highly qualified in their various fields. I have the highest regard for the staff and the contribution they make to Australia's ability to make evidence-based policy decisions.

Another key element which is perhaps less well recognised is that the AIHW relies very heavily on the cooperation of the Australian, state and territory governments in supplying data in a timely and consistent way. A large proportion of these data are provided by state and territory agencies.

The AIHW's independent status, its rigorous privacy and confidentiality regime, and the involvement of stakeholders in its governance provide a strong framework to support that cooperation.

In recognising the key role of the states and territories, the AIHW has decided to offer them the opportunity to read its publications in advance of their formal release, so that all Ministers may be briefed about the content of reports. I am pleased that these new arrangements will come into practice in 2006–07.

I would like to pay tribute to the former Director, Dr Richard Madden, who, after 10 years leading the AIHW through a significant period of growth and achievement, left to take up an appointment as Professor and Director of the National Centre for Classification in Health. Under Dr Madden's leadership the AIHW has become firmly established as the nation's premier authority on health and welfare statistics and has gained an international reputation. On 13 February 2006, the AIHW welcomed Dr Penny Allbon as the new Director. Dr Allbon's extensive leadership experience in the health and welfare sectors positions her well to lead the AIHW through the next phase of its development.

*The Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC*

Board Chair



## Director's overview



Throughout 2005–06 the AIHW has pursued a very full work program, culminating in some 130 publications and three national conferences. Behind the scenes the AIHW has also continued its work to ensure national consistency of information through data classification, standards and definitions. The year saw some new ventures for the AIHW, with several areas of health and welfare being reported for the first time.

## Publications

Highlights of the year include the publication of the three biennial AIHW 'flagship' reports:

- *Australia's welfare 2005*
- *Australia's health 2006*
- *The health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2005* (in conjunction with the Australian Bureau of Statistics).

*Australia's welfare 2005* was the seventh biennial welfare report produced by the AIHW and on this occasion it included a special chapter on children, youth and families. *Australia's welfare 2005* was launched by Senator Kay Patterson MP, the then Federal Minister for Family and Community Services, on 30 November 2005. A one-day conference held in conjunction with the launch, 'Connected challenges, connecting response', explored the relevance of the information to existing and future welfare policies, programs and reforms.

On 21 June 2006, the Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon. Tony Abbott MP, launched *Australia's health 2006*, followed by a one-day conference that explored some of the major trends outlined in the report.

*Australia's health* and *Australia's welfare* have grown to be significant publications, each comprising around 500 pages of information drawn from the AIHW's work as well as other research.

In collaboration with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the AIHW produced another significant biennial publication, *The health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2005*. Launched on 26 August 2005, this fifth edition of the biennial report contains a comprehensive overview of the latest information on population, housing circumstances, health risk factors, disability prevalence, and health status as well as the availability, resourcing and use of services.

Among the many other publications, some of the more significant include:

- *Juvenile justice in Australia 2000–01 to 2003–04*, a joint project between the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators and the AIHW, which

provides, for the first time, national information on juveniles under community supervision and in detention, based on the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set.

- Detailed findings of the *National Drug Strategy Household Survey*, which was launched by the Hon. Chris Pyne on the Gold Coast on 22 November 2005.
- *Arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions in Australia, 2005*, launched by the then Minister for Ageing, the Hon. Julie Bishop, in late October 2005.
- *Indigenous housing needs 2005: a multi-measure needs model*, which was a first-time report examining homelessness, overcrowding, affordability, dwelling condition and connection to essential services among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- *Use of routinely collected national data sets for reporting on induced abortion in Australia*, which was an innovative approach to bring together what is known about the numbers of induced abortions in Australia, using Medicare data and hospital data.
- *Improving the quality of Indigenous identification in hospital separations data*, including a comprehensive assessment of the quality of indigenous status data, and recommendations for its appropriate use and improving its quality.

As in previous years, AIHW publications received wide publicity in the media, bringing important findings to the attention of the general public, as well as to the professional and research community.

The website continued to serve as a major communication channel for the AIHW, with the full text of all publications freely available on the website.

### **Data development**

Behind the publications the AIHW continued to build its solid foundation of data development work, ensuring that definitions, classifications and standards are developed in a consistent and high-quality manner. Use of the AIHW's metadata management tool, METeOR, has extended into new areas, and continues to provide a sound basis for national data development.

In December 2005 the AIHW hosted a national forum on *Improving information on disability and functioning*, involving an array of national and international experts.

### **Work program**

In 2005–06 the work funded by appropriation remained a small proportion of the total work undertaken by the AIHW. Over 60% of the work was funded by external business arrangements for specific projects. In future years the AIHW will be looking to expand its independent work program to ensure that it is able to respond appropriately to emerging needs for data and information.

### *Organisational change*

In response to the growth of the AIHW and the changing environment, the organisational structure underwent some changes in the course of the year. In particular, the creation of the new position of Deputy Director brought a focus to the cross-cutting aspects of statistical and information management, and to the AIHW's role as secretariat to many national information committees.

In addition to the retirement of the former Director, other significant staffing changes during the year included the retirement of Dr Ching Choi, head of the Health Division and formerly the inaugural head of the Welfare Division. Dr Choi acted as Director for a period of 2 months after Dr Madden left and I am particularly grateful to him for delaying his retirement from the public service until after my arrival.

The staff of the AIHW are highly qualified and committed to their work. Their passion for their work is evident in the culture of the AIHW. They have continued to produce high-quality work throughout the year and I would like to place on record my appreciation for their welcoming attitude and cooperative approach.

*Dr Penny Allbon*

Director

## **AIHW mission**

*Better health and wellbeing for Australians through better health and welfare statistics and information.*

We inform community discussion and decision making through national leadership and collaboration in developing and providing health and welfare statistics and information.

## **AIHW values**

<b>Accessibility</b>	making our work available to all Australians
<b>Expertise</b>	applying specialised knowledge and high standards to our products and services
<b>Independence</b>	ensuring our work is objective and impartial, and reflects our mission
<b>Innovation</b>	showing curiosity, creativity and resourcefulness in our work
<b>Privacy</b>	respecting and safeguarding the privacy of individuals and the confidentiality of those who provide the information we use
<b>Responsiveness</b>	seeking and responding to the needs of all those who supply or use our data and information.

## **Australian Public Service values**

The Australian Public Service:

- is apolitical, performing its functions in an impartial and professional manner
- is a public service in which employment decisions are based on merit
- provides a workplace that is free from discrimination and recognises and uses the diversity of the Australian community it serves
- has the highest ethical standards
- is openly accountable for its actions within the framework of Ministerial responsibility to the Government, the Parliament and the Australian public
- is responsive to the Government in providing frank, honest, comprehensive, accurate and timely advice and in implementing the Government's policies and programs
- delivers services fairly, effectively, impartially and courteously to the Australian public and is sensitive to the diversity of the Australian public
- has leadership of the highest quality
- establishes workplace relations that value communication, consultation, cooperation and input from employees on matters that affect their workplace
- provides a fair, flexible, safe and rewarding workplace
- focuses on achieving results and managing performance
- promotes equity in employment
- provides a reasonable opportunity to all eligible members of the community to apply for APS employment;
- is a career-based service to enhance the effectiveness and cohesion of Australia's democratic system of government
- provides a fair system of review of decisions taken in respect of employees.