

7 Expenditure by the South Australian Department of Human Services

7.1 Introduction

South Australia's population in 1999-00 was 1.5 million, of which 0.2 million or 14.4% were aged 65 and over. This is higher than the national population average of 12.4% aged 65 and over.

The State public health system in South Australia consists of numerous health units, community health centres and other related organisations, all under the administration of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Most of the information presented in this report has come from the DHS's State-wide Division. Its responsibilities include planning and coordination for South Australia's eight largest public hospitals, and incorporate core public and environmental health functions.

South Australian expenditure estimates include expenditure on public health activities by non-health State government departments. South Australia has reported on this basis in both this and the previous public health expenditure report and is the only jurisdiction to do so.

The non-health State government departments that provided data for inclusion in the report are the Department of Education and the Environmental Protection Authority.

In addition to these State government departments, public health services are delivered by LGAs and NGOs in South Australia.

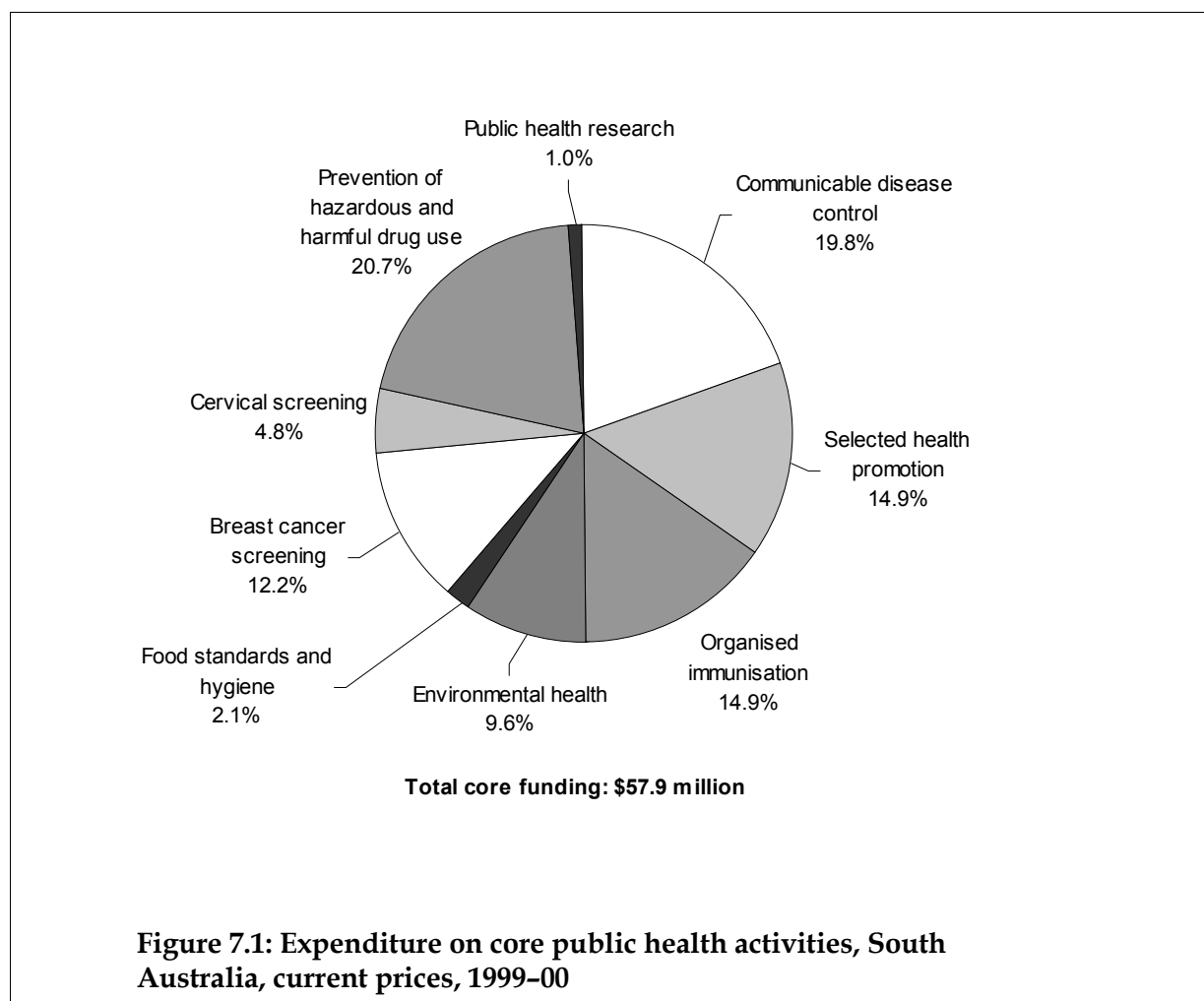
LGAs play particularly important roles in the areas of *Environmental health* (estimated at 60-70% of total expenditure), *Selected health promotion* and *Organised immunisation*.

7.2 Overview of results

Total core public health expenditure by the DHS in 1999-00 was \$57.9 million (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Expenditure on core public health activities, South Australia, current prices, 1999–00

| Category | Total expenditure (\$ million) | Proportion of total core public health expenditure (%) |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Communicable disease control | 11.5 | 19.8 |
| Selected health promotion | 8.6 | 14.9 |
| Organised immunisation | 8.6 | 14.9 |
| Environmental health | 5.5 | 9.6 |
| Food standards and hygiene | 1.2 | 2.1 |
| Breast cancer screening | 7.1 | 12.2 |
| Cervical screening | 2.8 | 4.8 |
| Prevention of hazardous and harmful drug use | 12.0 | 20.7 |
| Public health research | 0.6 | 1.0 |
| Total core public health | 57.9 | 100.0 |
| Public health related activities | 58.5 | .. |



7.2.1 Public health expenditure by categories

Communicable disease control

Total expenditure for *Communicable disease control* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$11.5 million (Table 7.2). This was 19.8% of total core public health expenditure.

Communicable disease control aims at reducing the transmission of communicable diseases and minimising the personal and social impact of these diseases. In South Australia, the Communicable Disease Control Branch within DHS conducts the majority of this work. The branch meets its responsibility through surveillance and investigation of communicable diseases, coordination of immunisation across the State, and programs focusing on HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) control.

HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and sexually transmitted infections

The major contributor of programs and funding in this area is HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Programs (HHARP), a unit of the Communicable Disease Control Branch.

HHARP provides funding to 21 government, non-government and community-based agencies undertaking HIV and hepatitis C programs, and works in partnership across government to support joint programs in mental health, prisons and school-based education. Program planning has been structured to provide responses across each of the priority target groups. The service mix includes:

- primary prevention services, such as those provided by the Drug and Alcohol Services Council's Clean Needle Program (refer to the *Needle and syringe programs* category below) and the AIDS Council of SA Gay Men's Health Unit
- community-based support and care, including those services provided by the People Living with HIV/AIDS, SA Positive Living Centre and the Hepatitis C Council of South Australia
- primary hepatitis C and HIV care, and specialist HIV and hepatitis C treatment (which is outside of the scope of this category)
- workforce training and capacity development, including provision for Vocational Education Training for undergraduate community services students, and in-service training for both HIV and hepatitis C program-funded workers and mainstream workers in health and community services.

Other significant expenditure in this category was incurred by Sexual Health Information and Education SA (Shine SA). This unit is funded by DHS and provides sexual health services, including counselling to at-risk populations, contributing to HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and STI prevention, integrated into professional education programs.

The Sexually Transmitted Diseases service at the Royal Adelaide Hospital is the other major contributor of services in this area. Costs include clinic time, data management, research, education and surveillance.

Needle and syringe programs

The Clean Needle Program in South Australia is coordinated by the Drug and Alcohol Services Council. This service provides sterile injecting equipment and prevention education resources to health units, community health and housing services, and community pharmacies through the public and pharmacy-based arms of the Clean Needle Program.

A review of the program was completed in December 1999. The recommendations, which are currently being implemented, include strategies to:

- extend the reach of the Clean Needle Program to isolated injecting drug users
- improve the quality of prevention education interventions
- increase the return rate of used needles and syringes
- reduce the number of publicly discarded needles and syringes
- alleviate health issues and concerns relating to injecting drug use.

Other communicable disease control

Expenditure in this sub-category primarily includes:

- the Disease Surveillance Unit of the Communicable Disease Control Branch, which is responsible for the surveillance and investigation of notifiable diseases in South Australia
- laboratory services provided by the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science, including the cost of providing reference facilities, screening, sub-typing and detection services
- contact investigations in the Tuberculosis Unit at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Table 7.2: Expenditure on *Communicable disease control*, South Australia, current prices, 1999–00 (\$ million)

| Sub-category | Expenditure |
|---|--------------------|
| HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and sexually transmitted infections | 7.3 |
| Needle and syringe programs | 0.9 |
| Other communicable disease control | 3.3 |
| Total | 11.5 |

Selected health promotion

Total expenditure for *Selected health promotion* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$8.6 million, or 14.9% of total core public health expenditure (Table 7.1).

Within South Australia, health promotion is coordinated by Health Promotion SA (part of DHS). This unit provides leadership and aims to develop a whole-of-government approach to health promotion in South Australia.

The programs undertaken by Health Promotion SA that fall within the *Selected health promotion* category include:

- injury prevention (covering farm safety and programs aimed at older people)
- physical activity
- Sunsmart
- mental health promotion
- public health nutrition
- health promoting schools programs.

The Injury Surveillance Unit in the Epidemiology Branch of DHS also provided a large contribution to expenditure in this area.

Expenditure on health promotion was also reported by the public hospitals and community health services.

Organised immunisation

Total expenditure for *Organised immunisation* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$8.6 million (Table 7.3). This was 14.9% of total core public health expenditure.

Organised childhood immunisation

The SA Immunisation Coordination Unit within the Communicable Disease Control Branch coordinates the purchase, distribution, packaging and reporting of vaccines for the State.

The service delivery aspect of immunisation for children is carried out by:

- major public hospitals
- Child and Youth Health
- community health services
- GPs
- LGAs.

Expenditure by GPs and LGAs is outside the scope of this chapter.

Organised pneumococcal and influenza immunisation

The majority of expenditure for this category was incurred by the SA Immunisation Coordination Unit in providing vaccines to at-risk populations.

The service delivery of immunisation in this category is predominantly carried out by GPs and local councils, and as such the cost is not reported.

All other organised immunisation

Expenditure in this category is related to:

- the staff influenza vaccination program
- the hepatitis B vaccination program for gay men.

Table 7.3: Expenditure on *Organised immunisation*, South Australia, current prices, 1999–00 (\$ million)

| Sub-category | Expenditure |
|---|--------------------|
| Organised childhood immunisation | 5.6 |
| Organised pneumococcal and influenza immunisation | 2.7 |
| All other organised immunisation | 0.4 |
| Total | 8.6 |

Environmental health

Total expenditure for *Environmental health* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$5.5 million, which represents 9.6% of total core public health expenditure (see Table 7.1).

The major provider of environmental health services in South Australia (outside of LGAs) is the Environmental Health Branch of DHS. The branch is responsible for:

- assessment, correction, control and prevention of environmental factors arising from a range of chemical, microbiological and physical agents that can adversely affect health
- enhancement of environmental factors that can improve health
- addressing acute and chronic hazards affecting food, water, soil and air, through processes including the development and implementation of strategies, standards, guidelines and legislation
- environmental surveillance and monitoring
- provision of advice to government agencies and the public.

Expenditure in this category relates to:

- the Port Pirie Environmental Health Centre, which is responsible for lead abatement issues arising from smelters located in the town. Costs involve health promotion, screening for blood lead levels in infants, and lead abatement activities in homes and the community
- environmental testing of shellfish growing areas and management of algal blooms
- monitoring of contaminated sites and water quality testing
- development of policy and legislation pertaining to the access and safe use of pharmaceuticals and other chemicals
- surveillance and management of radiation risks, including responsibility for protecting South Australians from the harmful effects of radiation by controlling activities related to radioactive substances and apparatus, which produce ionising or non-ionising radiation.

Food standards and hygiene

Total expenditure for *Food standards and hygiene* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$1.2 million, or 2.1% of total core public health expenditure.

In South Australia, the Food Standards and Food Legislation Units of the Food Section within the Environmental Health Branch of DHS are the major contributors to *Food standards and hygiene regulation*. Expenditure in this category relates to:

- surveillance of food products
- projects related to food
- planning, legislative review
- food poisoning investigations.

Due to the centralised structure of the Environmental Health Branch, costs associated with management and senior committees have been divided equally between the *Food standards and hygiene* and *Environmental health* categories.

Breast cancer screening

Total expenditure for *Breast cancer screening* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$7.1 million. This was 12.2% of total core public health expenditure.

BreastScreen SA, within DHS, aims to reduce mortality and morbidity attributable to breast cancer through a free government screening mammography service to asymptomatic women in the target group (women aged 50 to 69 years) on a State-wide basis. BreastScreen SA

provides the free government breast cancer screening program on behalf of the government in South Australia, as part of the national program.

In addition to the breast cancer screening program, costs were incurred on:

- maintenance of the cancer registry in the Epidemiology Unit
- breast cancer cytological screens through the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science.

Cervical screening

Total expenditure for *Cervical screening* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$2.8 million (4.8% of total core public health expenditure).

Cervical screening in South Australia is part of the National Cervical Screening Program, funded jointly under the PHOFA. The SA Cervical Screening Unit manages the program.

The program aims to achieve optimal reduction in incidence of, and morbidity and mortality attributed to, cervical disease, at an acceptable cost to the community. The program increases the proportion of women who are screened at appropriate intervals and promotes high-quality screening and follow-up services.

The majority of Pap smears in South Australia are carried out in the private sector by GPs (and thus are outside the scope of this chapter). Public hospitals and community health centres provide some screening, treatment and follow-up services (including colposcopy) and a small number of grants are provided by the State to Aboriginal communities where there are no clinical services. In addition, the State government funds public health laboratory services associated with cervical screening.

Prevention of hazardous and harmful drug use

Total expenditure for *Prevention of hazardous and harmful drug use* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$12.0 million (Table 7.4). This was 20.7% of total core public health expenditure.

The Drug and Alcohol Services Council is the major funder of programs aimed at reducing the overuse and abuse of alcohol and drugs of dependence, whereas tobacco control in South Australia is predominantly managed by Health Promotion SA.

Alcohol

The Alcohol Go Easy Project funded by the Drug and Alcohol Services Council focuses on alcohol minimisation, with collaborative projects within industry, sports, arts and recreational organisations. In 1999–00 better working relationships were developed with key industry groups and the Office of the Liquor and Gaming Commissioner, in order to develop greater awareness, consultation and participation in the project. Significant events occurring during the period included:

- Oakbank Racing Carnival
- New Years Eve Bus Service
- Adelaide Lesbian and Gay Festival
- Fringe Festival
- Adelaide Festival.

Tobacco

Health Promotion SA manages the majority of funding for tobacco awareness in the State. The Anti-Tobacco Ministerial Advisory Taskforce was formed two years ago to build the foundations for a smoke-free culture in South Australia and to advise on the funding of many initiatives.

The SA Tobacco Control State Strategy 1998–2003 states the goal to be to reduce the prevalence of smoking by 20% or more over five years, particularly among young people, and to reduce involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke.

To further the goal of reducing smoking prevalence, South Australia is working on three strategic directions:

1. encouraging people to stop smoking
2. reducing the uptake of smoking
3. promoting a smoke-free culture and environment.

Illicit and other drugs of dependence

A number of programs were run by the Drug and Alcohol Services Council aimed at illicit drug control and harm minimisation. Major programs include:

- Maintenance Pharmacotherapies Program – this unit prescribes and administers methadone, and provides assistance to clients to reduce or abstain from the use of illicit opiates and to improve their general health status and social functioning.
- Drug Assessment and Aid Panel – provides assessment and aid for adults diverted from courts on drug-related, simple possession offences.
- General Practitioner Program – aims to create an accessible, supportive and effective link between the Drug and Alcohol Services Council and GPs and to increase both the knowledge and skills of the GPs and the number of GPs registering as private methadone prescribers. Training in 1999–00 focused on managing adolescent drug use, brief intervention for cannabis dependence, management of opioid-dependent patients and responding to hepatitis C.

Smaller substance abuse programs were also run by a number of community health centres.

In addition to the programs funded by the Drug and Alcohol Services Council, the Pharmaceutical Services branch within DHS provides an oversight of the use of drugs of dependence within SA.

Mixed

Major programs funded by the Drug and Alcohol Services Council that could not be divided into the above sub-categories included:

- Metropolitan Community Services and Country Outreach Services – provides outpatient counselling, assessment and referral for people with alcohol and other drug problems
- Alcohol and Drug Information Service – ‘frontline’ or central contact point for anyone needing assistance and/or information related to alcohol and other drugs
- Resource production – development and production of public information, promotional, clinical and corporate materials
- Life Education SA Inc – provides community supported drug education programs to primary and secondary schools.

Other major areas of expenditure in this category include biochemical screens for drugs and alcohol by the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science laboratory and mobile assistance patrol operations coordinated by the Aboriginal Services Division of DHS.

Table 7.4: Expenditure on *Prevention of hazardous and harmful drug use, South Australia, current prices, 1999–00* (\$ million)

| Sub-category | Expenditure |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Alcohol | 0.3 |
| Tobacco | 4.0 |
| Illicit and other drugs of dependence | 3.5 |
| Mixed | 4.2 |
| Total | 12.0 |

Public health research

Total expenditure for *Public health research* by the DHS in 1999–00 was \$0.6 million (Table 7.5). This was 1.0% of total core public health expenditure.

The Commonwealth funds the majority of research undertaken in SA, in the form of NHMRC and other grants (refer to the Commonwealth chapter of this report). Expenditure reported by the State includes:

Public health research on *Alcohol*

The Drug and Alcohol Services Council provided funds to Flinders University to support a research project on the causes of liver damage and approaches to its prevention.

Public health research on *Illicit and other drugs of dependence*

A number of research projects were funded by DASC including:

- Methadone Prescribers – Trial of a New Funding Model
- Randomised Controlled Trial of Rapid Heroin Detoxification Under Anaesthetic for Induction into Oral Naltrexone Maintenance Therapy (treatment component 50% reported under ‘Public health related activities’)
- Benzodiazepine Withdrawal Trial: A Comparison of a Standard Taper and a Symptom-triggered Model (treatment component 50% reported under ‘Public health related activities’).

Public health research on *Mixed hazardous and harmful drug use*

The Drug and Alcohol Services Council provided a grant to the University of South Australia to enable a project on the Dynamic Modelling of Drug Use Populations.

Public health research not allocated to previous categories

Expenditure that was unable to be allocated includes research undertaken by the Epidemiology Branch in the areas of:

- health outcomes
- health statistics
- the cancer registry.

Table 7.5: Expenditure on *Public health research, South Australia, current prices, 1999–00* (\$'000)

| Research | Total |
|---|--------------|
| Prevention of hazardous and harmful drug use: | |
| Alcohol | 22.6 |
| Illicit and other drugs of dependence | 111.6 |
| Mixed | 10.3 |
| Research not allocated to previous categories | 441.1 |
| Total | 585.6 |

7.2.2 ‘Public health related’ expenditure

The following programs have been reported as ‘Public health related activities’ by South Australia:

- dental health services including the school dental screening program (\$33.3 million)
- drug and alcohol treatment and welfare related programs (\$17.6 million) – major programs include:
 - detoxification and rehabilitation services
 - Salvation Army Sobering-up Unit
 - Woolshed residential drug-free programs
 - Education and Development Unit
- young mothers program, well baby clinics and other maternal and child health (\$7.7 million)
- epidemiology programs, or components thereof, that were not considered to be core public health for the purposes of this project (\$1.4 million), including:
 - population health survey
 - smoking and diabetes
 - Centre for Population Studies
 - pregnancy outcome
 - clinical epidemiology
- anger management and sexual abuse programs (\$1 million)
- mobile bone densitometry unit.

7.3 Public health expenditure by non-health government departments

Total expenditure on core public health activities by non-health government departments in South Australia during 1999–00 was estimated at \$24.8 million (Table 7.6). Similar data were collected in 1998–99 and included in the previous report.

The inclusion of these data present a broader picture of the extent of the total investment in public health by the South Australian Government.

This information is presented separately because other jurisdictions have not collected expenditure from non-health government departments.

Table 7.6: Expenditure on core public health activities by other (non-health) government departments, South Australia, 1999-00 (\$'000)

| Public health category | Total |
|---|-----------------|
| Communicable disease control | |
| HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and sexually transmitted infections | 145.1 |
| Needle and syringe program | — |
| Other communicable disease control | — |
| Selected health promotion | 15,953.6 |
| Organised immunisation | |
| Organised childhood immunisation | 0.5 |
| Organised pneumococcal and influenza immunisation | |
| All other organised immunisation | — |
| Environmental health | 7,072.0 |
| Food standards and hygiene | 922.9 |
| Breast cancer screening | — |
| Cervical screening | — |
| Prevention of hazardous and harmful drug use | |
| Alcohol | 146.6 |
| Tobacco | — |
| Illicit and other drugs of dependence | 51.0 |
| Mixed | 497.4 |
| Public health research | — |
| Total core public health | 24,789.0 |

7.3.1 Department of Correctional Services

A number of public health programs were undertaken by the Department of Correctional Services, including:

- HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and STI program (\$0.1 million)
- minor expenditure on childhood immunisation
- methadone and alcohol program (\$0.2 million).

The expenditure is an estimate based on staff time, as data is not routinely collected in these categories. Public health expenditure of \$0.3 million was reported by the Department of Correctional Services.

7.3.2 Department of Education, Training and Employment

The Department of Education, Training and Employment funds health promotion programs; it has a strong commitment to support and enhance physical education and sport programs in schools (\$7.3 million). In addition, a drug strategy program funded by the department was also run in schools dealing with drug issues at the local level within a harm minimisation framework (\$0.5 million).

Total expenditure reported by the Department of Education, Training and Employment was \$7.8 million.

7.3.3 Department of Industry and Trade

The Department of Industry and Trade incurred minor public health expenditure in providing assistance to the health and food industries.

7.3.4 Department of the Premier and Cabinet

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet reported minor expenditure in *Selected health promotion*, relating to a Skate Healthy for Life competition.

7.3.5 Department of Primary Industries and Resources

This department plays a major role in the provision of public health in *Food standards and hygiene* and *Environmental health*. Their activities relate to:

- *Food standards and hygiene* (\$0.9 million)
 - Primary Production Processing Standard – includes advice to operators on food handling and safety, and aid in developing industry’s role in maintaining food quality.
 - Animal health surveillance and control – surveillance and control of specific animal diseases of public health importance where the affected animal products are
 - Management of compliance for the Primary Production Processing Standard through the enforcement of the Meat Hygiene Act and the accreditation of meat-processing facilities, and also by the testing of milk and dairy products.
- *Environmental health* (\$0.8 million)
 - Occupational health education, such as the farm chemical users course.
 - Regulatory control of agricultural and veterinary chemicals including monitoring of chemicals in foods and fibres. Although the primary rationale is not human health, health and injury risk to handlers is considerable.
 - Monitoring which includes environmental testing of shellfish growing areas and the management of algal blooms. Management of potential public health risks associated with widespread fish kills through the public health disaster management plan.

Total public health expenditure reported by the Department of Primary Industries and Resources was \$1.7 million.

7.3.6 Environment Protection Authority

The Environment Protection Authority contributes to public health in South Australia in the following areas:

- monitoring of air quality
- noise pollution control
- management/control of waste.

Public health expenditure reported by the Environment Protection Authority totalled \$0.8 million.

7.3.7 Office for Recreation and Sport

Total expenditure on core public health activities by this department was \$8.2 million in 1999–00. This includes the funding of recreation and sport programs with a health promotion message.

7.3.8 SA Water

In providing water and waste water services to South Australia, SA Water spends significantly on *Environmental health*, particularly in the areas of water quality testing, sampling and fluoridation. Public health expenditure incurred was \$5.1 million.

7.3.9 Work Cover Corporation

Work Cover reported minor expenditure for information sheets and guidelines in the areas of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and sexually transmitted infections, and alcohol awareness.