



Australian Government

Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare



Strategic Directions

2011–2014

Who we are

The AIHW is a major national agency established under the AIHW Act (1987) as an independent statutory body to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare.



To support this role, we have built strong collaborative relationships with our stakeholders, including the Commonwealth government (notably the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Department of Health and Ageing, and the Department of Families, Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), the governments of the states and territories, and a range of non-government organisations.

We are committed to providing high quality, national data and analysis across the health, housing, and community services sectors, presented in meaningful and relevant ways and delivered in a timely manner. This work contributes in particular to the evidence base which underpins the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) reform agenda, and includes a focus on Indigenous health and welfare data through our work in reporting on key Closing the Gap targets set by COAG.

We are the custodian of major national data collections. Accurate statistical information, comprehensive data development and high-quality analyses support increased understanding of health and welfare issues. This evidence base is critical to good policy making and effective service delivery, with a direct impact on the lives of Australians. We value our close engagement with data providers to ensure the quality and integrity of our work. We aim to communicate our data, information and analytical products as widely as possible in accessible formats to key stakeholders and to the broader public.

Our mission

Authoritative
information and
statistics to promote
better health and
wellbeing

Our values

We embrace the APS values of being apolitical, accountable, sensitive and fair with the highest quality ethics and leadership.

In addition, we value:

- objectivity—ensuring our work is objective, impartial and reflects our mission
- responsiveness—meeting the changing needs of those who provide or use data and information which are collected by AIHW
- accessibility—making data and information as accessible as possible
- privacy—safeguarding the privacy of all individuals and groups about whom we collect data, or who provide data to us
- expertise—applying and developing highly specialised knowledge and standards, and
- innovation—developing original, relevant and valued new products, processes and services.

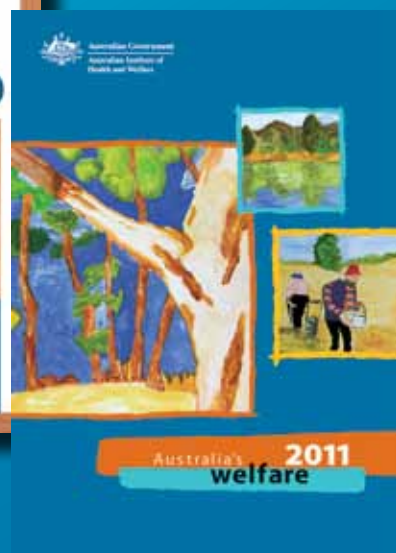


Strategic directions—guiding the AIHW forward

The AIHW's strategic directions for 2011 to 2014 have been developed in consultation with AIHW staff, the Board and key stakeholders. They serve as a guide to staff and our external stakeholders in understanding the AIHW's role both now and into the future.

During 2011–2014, we will:

- further strengthen our policy relevance
- improve the availability of information for the community and our stakeholders
- improve information quality, protecting privacy
- capitalise on the contemporary information environment
- cultivate and value a skilled, engaged and versatile workforce.



Further strengthen our policy relevance

AIHW's work informs and supports the development of policy and programs on Australia's health and welfare. Our collaborative approach with Commonwealth and state and territory governments and non-government organisations allows us to truly bring a whole-of-government approach to our work, and to inform policy discussions through the provision of relevant, timely, high quality information. The trend towards greater evidence-based decision making across government will result in policy makers requiring more comprehensive, timely and higher-quality health and welfare information.

To meet this need, we will:

- provide relevant, timely and high quality information useful for policy purposes and informed service delivery approaches
- respond to the continuing COAG focus to improve performance reporting across health and welfare services
- take a broad multi-dimensional view of the policy issues being studied, integrating data from multiple sources in order to provide a more complete picture
- build our analytical capability to provide some value-add to the reporting of statistics.

Improve the availability of information for the community and our stakeholders

We pride ourselves on providing sound and thorough statistics and high-quality, authoritative reports to meet the diverse needs of government, policy makers, commentators, academics and researchers, and the wider public. We publish our work in a variety of formats to meet these diverse needs, including increasingly using online communication tools in an innovative manner. The contemporary focus on citizen-centred government, for example through the Government 2.0 reforms, promotes greater public accessibility to government data and information.

To improve information for the community and our stakeholders, we will:

- meet priority data gaps around community-based services and primary health care
- further build upon the MyHospitals platform and use innovative online communications methods to deliver health and welfare information to the community
- continue to ensure information is conveyed in formats to meet the requirements of different audiences, and for different purposes
- assist the media to understand and report AIHW information in an accurate and timely manner.

Improve information quality, protecting privacy

Making quality information widely available and accessible while protecting confidentiality and privacy is a key objective for AIHW. We have a strong reputation for delivering statistical products in a manner that both protects privacy and supports analysis and research. This is underpinned by a strong information governance model, and a robust process to support ethics in health and welfare research. To ensure that the information we produce is used in the best way possible, we aim to provide clear explanations of the concepts which underpin data analyses and interpretations.

To achieve this, we will:

- play a leadership role in data integration work in health, housing and community services
- work closely with our stakeholders to identify areas where national consistency of data needs to be improved
- continue to promote national consistency of data, and improve the quality and timeliness of information through the collection, analysis and reporting stages, working closely with data suppliers and data users
- promote national standards in information provision and reporting, through the Institute's METeOR information standards repository
- ensure that we comply with relevant privacy legislation and frameworks while continuing to make data as accessible as possible.

Capitalise on the contemporary information environment

The contemporary information environment is dynamic and provides both challenges and opportunities for us. Our success as a leading data collection and reporting agency will be determined by our flexibility, responsiveness and capability to seize opportunities and minimise risk arising from this rapidly changing environment. In particular we will focus on information technology infrastructure which will support high quality and timely data collection, analysis and reporting.

To meet these challenges and opportunities, we will:

- develop ICT infrastructure which enables innovation in the collection, analysis and reporting of health and welfare data
- develop and refine end-to-end data management, with streamlined and efficient processes
- strive for continuous improvement and efficiency through automation of business processes, consistency of business practices and adoption of appropriate technologies
- work closely with partners engaged in development of the e-health infrastructure, to ensure optimal usage of e-health records for health information and statistical purposes.

Cultivate and value a skilled, engaged and versatile workforce

We rely on highly skilled and competent people to support all our strategic directions. We strive to provide a workplace that offers fulfilling and challenging work as well as promoting the professional and personal development needs of all individuals. We have experienced rapid growth in recent years, increasing the range and diversity of skills within the organisation. With this growth comes the challenge to make the most of the skills and opportunities that our staff bring to AIHW. As the prominence of our work grows, so too does the need for our people to be experts in their subject area, as well as being adaptable and responsive to the changing needs of our stakeholders.

Recognising that skilled, engaged and versatile people are critical to the achievement of our strategic directions, we will:

- support and develop the capabilities of our staff to meet our work requirements
- attract and retain skilled, adaptable and responsive people
- promote a culture where people work within and across teams to maximise expertise and produce results that benefit the Institute as a whole
- refine our organisational approaches to reflect the requirements of a dynamic mid-sized organisation which has the capacity to respond quickly and flexibly to meet emerging requirements.



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