

Residential aged care in Australia 2004–05

A statistical overview

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AGED CARE STATISTICS SERIES

Number 22

Residential aged care in Australia 2004–05

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Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

AIHW cat. no. AGE 45

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This publication is part of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Aged Care Statistics Series. A complete list of the Institute's publications is available from the Business Promotion and Media Unit, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO 570, Canberra ACT 2601, or via the Institute's website at <www.aihw.gov.au>.

ISSN 1329-5705
ISBN 1 74024 573 3

Suggested citation

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2006. Residential aged care in Australia 2004–05: a statistical overview. AIHW cat. no. AGE 45. Canberra: AIHW (Aged Care Statistics Series no. 22).

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Published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Printed by Elect Printing, Canberra

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Preface

This report presents statistics on the Australian residential aged care system over the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005. It is the eighth such report in the Aged Care Statistics Series produced by the Ageing and Aged Care Unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, under an agreement with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

The first report in the series for the 1997-98 financial year followed a series of changes to the structure of aged care services under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, whereby the former nursing home and hostel sectors were unified. This allowed providers to offer both high and low care and allowed residents to age in place. Prior to this, data on residential aged care had been published initially by the then Australian Government Department of Health and Family Services and subsequently by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare through separate publications for nursing homes and hostels.

In the 2004 Budget, the Australian Government announced a number of further changes to the residential aged care system. These changes are being implemented progressively over 4 years and have implications for data reporting from 2004-05 on. These changes include:

- An increase in the target for the provision of operational aged care places and packages from 100 operational places and packages for every 1,000 people aged 70 years or over to 108 operational places and packages. Twenty of these are targeted to care provided through Community Aged Care Packages and the Extended Aged Care at Home packages.
- The announcement of indicative numbers of new aged care places 3 years in advance.
- The introduction of new residential care supplements in 2006 to direct assistance to people with higher care needs by supporting the provision of care to people with dementia exhibiting challenging behaviours and people requiring complex palliative nursing care.
- The reduction in the number of categories in the Resident Classification Scale funding tool from eight to three.
- There will no longer need to be an ACAT assessment as the care needs of a resident remaining in the same service increase.

These changes will be gradually reflected in future reports in this series as the data permit.

Acknowledgments

This report was compiled by Peter Braun. Contributions from a number of colleagues are gratefully acknowledged.

Technical support and advice from within the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare was given by Rod Hall of the Data and Information Technology Unit.

Penny Allbon, Diane Gibson and Ann Peut of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare provided critical comments and other valuable assistance with the compilation of the report.

Thanks are due to colleagues in the Ageing and Aged Care Division of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. In particular, members of the Management Information and Data Analysis Section (MIDAS) team headed by Dr David Martin have contributed in various ways.

Thank you to Cecilia Burke and Ann Parkinson for arranging publication of the report.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACAT	Aged Care Assessment Team
ACAP	Aged Care Assessment Program
ACCMIS	Aged and Community Care Management Information System
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia
CACP	Community Aged Care Package
CHIPS	Commonwealth Hostel Information Payment System (the previous payment system for hostels)
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing (Australian Government)
DVA	Department of Veterans' Affairs (Australian Government)
EACH	Extended Aged Care at Home
NHPS	Nursing Home Payment System (the previous payment system for nursing homes)
RCS	Resident Classification Scale
SPARC	System for the Payment of Aged Residential Care (the current payment system for residential care)