

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

**Question: E12 -235**

**OUTCOME 0:** Whole of Portfolio

**Topic:** National Health Priority Areas

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Number of pages:** 3

**Senator:** Senator Di Natale

**Question:**

What is the mortality rate, MBS and PBS expenditure for each of the national health priority areas?

**Answer:**

**Mortality Rate**

Data on mortality rates are not split into National Health Priority Areas (NHPA). However, there are data available that incorporates the NHPA. The available mortality rate data<sup>1</sup>, relevant to each NHPA, are as follows:

**Diseases of the circulatory system (under NHPA: Cardiovascular Health)**

In 2010, diseases of the circulatory system accounted for 45,499 registered deaths at a rate of 173.9 per 100,000 people (31.7 per cent of all registered deaths). Of these, ischaemic heart diseases and cerebrovascular disease combined made up 72.3 per cent of deaths due to diseases of the circulatory system.

- Ischaemic heart diseases accounted for 21,708 deaths, at a rate of 83.4 per 100,000 people (angina, heart attacks and blocked arteries of the heart), and cerebrovascular disease accounted for 11,204 deaths, at a rate of 42.5 per 100,000 people (haemorrhages, strokes, infarctions and blocked arteries of the brain).

**Neoplasms (under NHPA: Cancer Control)**

Cancer accounted for 43,298 deaths in 2010, at a rate of 176.1 per 100,000 people (30.2 per cent of all deaths).

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<sup>1</sup> Source: *Australian Bureau of Statistics – Cause of Death, Australia, 2010* (Cat. 3303.0). Data refers to deaths registered during 2010 calendar year

- Cancers of the digestive organs accounted for 11,856 deaths (rate 48.3 per 100,000 people).
- Pancreatic cancer accounted for 2,434 deaths (rate 9.9 per 100,000 people).
- Colon cancer accounted for 2,145 deaths (rate 8.7 per 100,000 people).
- Cancers of the respiratory system and chest accounted for 8,449 deaths (rate 34.7 per 100,000 people) and lung cancer accounted for 8,095 deaths (rate 33.3 per 100,000 people).

The leading cause of death for males was prostate cancer, which accounted for 3,235 deaths (rate 12.8 per 100,000 people), and the leading cause of death for females was breast cancer, accounting for 2,840 deaths (rate 11.6 per 100,000 people).

#### Diseases of the respiratory system (NHPA: Asthma)

Diseases of the respiratory system, which impact on the ability to breathe, accounted for 11,949 registered deaths in 2010, at a rate of 46.6 per 100,000 people (8.3 per cent of all registered deaths).

- Chronic lower respiratory diseases (includes asthma, bronchitis and emphysema) accounted for 6,122 deaths (rate 24.3 per 100,000 people).
- Pneumonia (includes influenza and pneumonia) accounted for 2,364 deaths (rate 8.8 per 100,000 people).
- Pneumonitis (inhalation of solids and liquids) accounted for 1,266 deaths (rate 4.8 per 100,000 people).
- Swine flu (Influenza A - H1N1) accounted for 19 deaths (rate not published).
- Data on the mortality rate for asthma cannot be disambiguated.

#### Mental and behavioural disorders (NHPA: Mental Health)

Mental and behavioural disorders accounted for 7,030 registered deaths in 2010, at a rate of 26.1 per 100,000 people, (4.9 per cent of all registered deaths).

- Dementia accounted for 6,297 deaths (rate 23.1 per 100,000 people). Dementia constitutes 89.6 per cent of mental and behavioural disorders.

#### Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases (NHPA: Diabetes mellitus and Obesity)

Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases accounted for 4.0 per cent of all registered deaths.

- Diabetes accounted for 3,945 registered deaths in 2010, at a rate of 15.6 per 100,000 people (2.7 per cent of all deaths).
- Obesity accounted for 221 registered deaths in 2010, at a rate of 0.9 per 100,000 people.

#### Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue (NHPA: Arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions)

Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue accounted for 1,180 registered deaths in 2010, at a rate of 4.6 per 100,000 people.

- Pyogenic arthritis accounted for 66 deaths (rate 0.3 per 100,000 people).

- Other rheumatoid arthritis accounted for 174 deaths (rate 0.7 per 100,000 people).
- Other arthritis accounted for 23 deaths (rate 0.1 per 100,000 people).

#### Injury and other external causes (NHPA: Injury Prevention and Control)

External causes may include, for example suicide, transport accidents, falls, and poisoning. These accounted for 8,918 registered deaths in 2010, at a rate of 37.8 per 100,000 people.

- Intentional harm (suicide) accounted for 2,359 deaths (rate 10.5 per 100,000 people).
- Transport accidents accounted for 1,484 deaths (rate 6.5 per 100,000 people).
- Accidental falls accounted for 1,648 deaths (rate 6.2 per 100,000 people).
- Accidental poisoning accounted for 864 deaths (rate 3.9 per 100,000 people).
- Assault accounted for 217 deaths (rate 1.0 per 100,000 people).

#### Expenditure on the MBS and PBS

##### Expenditure on the Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS)

Data on MBS expenditure against individual NHPA is not available for a number of reasons. For example, patients who present to a general practitioner (GP) may be seen under a general consultancy item (e.g. Item 23). This means that MBS cost cannot be associated with an individual NHPA, even though the patient may be seen for a NHPA condition. In 2008-09, MBS benefits paid to GPs totalled \$3.9 billion, while Item 23 accounted for \$2.7 billion or 69 per cent of all claims in this grouping.

A similar problem also occurs with identifying NHPA costs related to pathology and diagnostic imaging, which accounted for around \$3.9 billion of total MBS expenditure for 2008-09. The majority of pathology testing would be for general disease screening, which may identify or monitor a patient with or without a NHPA condition(s).

##### Expenditure on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)

There are no PBS expenditure data for Injury Prevention and Control and Obesity.

The expenditure data for the remaining NHPA in the 2010-11 financial year are listed below:<sup>2</sup>

2010-11 PBS expenditure data for National Health Priority Areas	
Cardiovascular health	\$2,284,409,655
Cancer control	\$1,007,980,897
Asthma	\$303,073,355
Diabetes mellitus	\$392,890,084
Mental health	\$766,665,177
Arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions	\$258,192,369
Obesity	\$N/A
Injury prevention and control	\$N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,013,211,537</b>

<sup>2</sup> Source: unpublished Department of Health and Ageing PBS Data.