

Poor mental health is a major risk factor for poor physical health, and vice versa

Integrating physical and mental health care will significantly improve all aspects of society and contribute directly to a prosperous, productive and healthy nation.

Australia needs a
healthier future for
all. We can, and we
must, do better.

Technical note

A background paper is available on our website vu.edu.au/ahpc

Preferred citation

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The Australian Health Policy Collaboration at Victoria University works with and supports a collaborative network of organisations and leading chronic disease experts, bringing together Australia's leading thinkers to translate rigorous research into good policy. The national collaboration has developed health targets and indicators for 2025 that together, will reduce preventable chronic diseases and reduce the health impacts of chronic conditions.

Australia's Health Tracker and *Getting Australia's Health on Track* are the policy focussed reports compiled by the national collaboration.

Australia's Mental and Physical Health Tracker is the latest report card as part in the Australia's Health Tracker series.

Australia's Mental and Physical Health Tracker brings attention to the issues of higher risk factors and incidence of preventable chronic diseases for Australians with mental health conditions.

More than 50 organisations continue to support a systemic and sustained approach to the prevention and management of chronic diseases in Australia.

Collaborating Organisations

Alliance for Research in Exercise, Nutrition and Activity (ARENA)
Australia and New Zealand Obesity Society
Australian Centre for Health Research
Australian Dental Association
Australian Disease Management Association
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
Australian Health Care Reform Alliance
Australian Health Promotion Association
Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet
Australian Institute for Musculoskeletal Science
Australian Psychological Society
Australian Women's Health Network
Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute
Better Health Plan for the West
Brimbank City Council
Cabrin Institute
Cancer Council Australia
Catholic Health Australia
Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney
Chronic Illness Alliance
Caring & Living As Neighbours
Cohealth
Confederation of Australian Sport
CRANaplus
Deakin University
Diabetes Australia
Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
George Institute for Global Health
Health West Partnership
Inner North West Primary Care Partnership
Jean Hailes for Women's Health
Kidney Health Australia
Lowitja Institute
Mental Health Australia
Musculoskeletal Australia
National Heart Foundation
National Rural Health Alliance
National Stroke Foundation
NCD FREE
Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies
Networking Health Victoria
Obesity Australia
Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis
People's Health Movement OZ
Public Health Association of Australia
Royal Flying Doctor Service
School of Medicine, University of Notre Dame
School of Psychology and Public Health, La Trobe University
Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health
Social Determinants of Health Alliance
South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
Suicide Prevention Australia
The Telethon Kids Institute
Victoria University
Victorian Health Promotion Foundation
YMCA

2018

AUSTRALIA'S MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH TRACKER

A brief report card on Australia's performance in tackling the higher risk factors and incidence of preventable chronic physical disease amongst Australians with mental health conditions



AUSTRALIA'S MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH TRACKER 2018

This report card looks at the health of adult Australians by mental health status in relation to other health risk factors and co-morbid chronic diseases.

Australia's Health Trackers will be updated regularly and will track progress towards a healthier Australia by 2025.

Mental health is a significant and growing issue in Australia, affecting individuals, families and the economy. Too often, the burden of mental illness affects physical health, and poor mental health affects access to care for other health conditions.

There are more than four million Australians living with mental health conditions, including anxiety, depression and more rarely, psychotic disorders.

People with mental health conditions are much more likely to smoke, engage in risky drinking, and do less physical activity than other Australians.

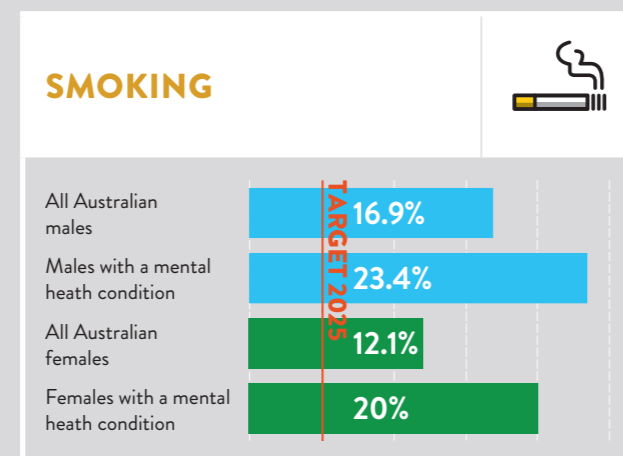
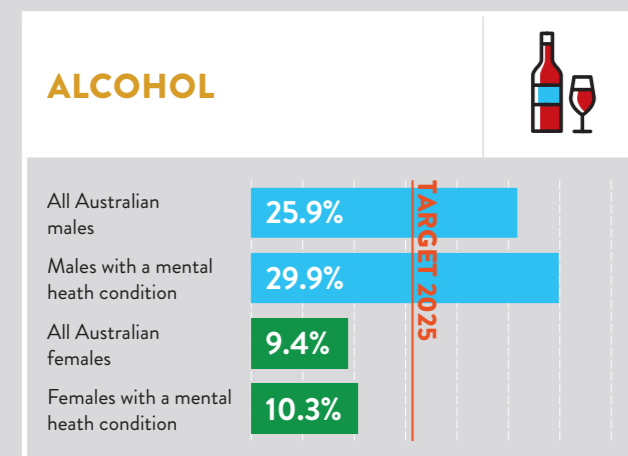
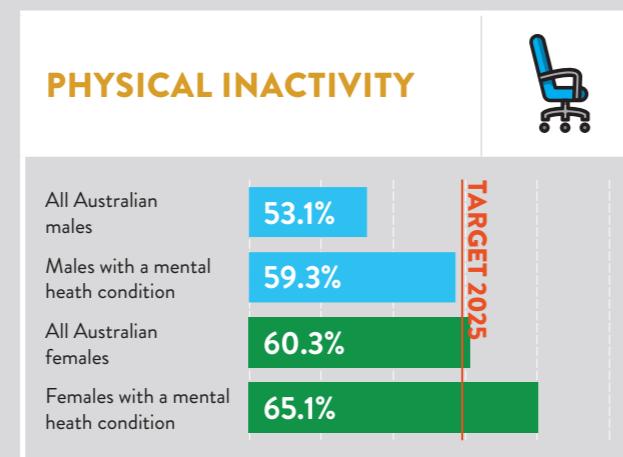
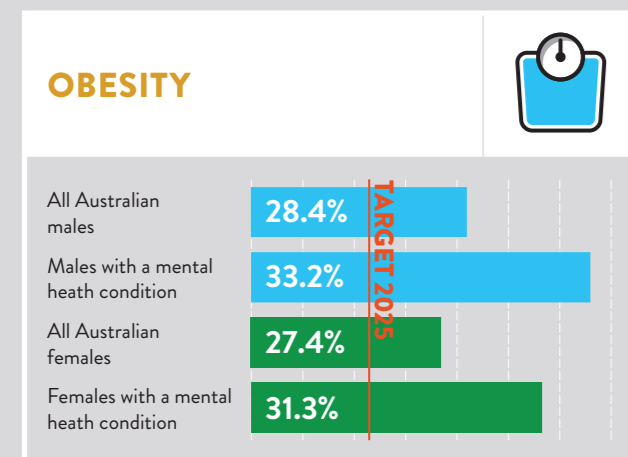
While one in two Australians live with a chronic condition, three in four people with mental health conditions live with a second, third or fourth chronic disease.

We have known for a long time that people with mental health conditions are more likely to have physical health issues, and less likely to have those issues addressed. We need to ensure that people being treated for mental health conditions have their physical health regularly assessed.

People with chronic health conditions such as heart conditions, arthritis, back pain, diabetes, asthma and cancer should also be assessed regularly for mental health issues to target prevention and early intervention.

The combined effects of poor physical health and mental health conditions affect welfare and education, health services and costs, productivity, employment, and social participation.

Improving the physical health of people living with mental health conditions, and conversely, the mental health of people living with physical health conditions, must become a priority to improve the health of all Australians.



4 MILLION

Australians have a mental health condition

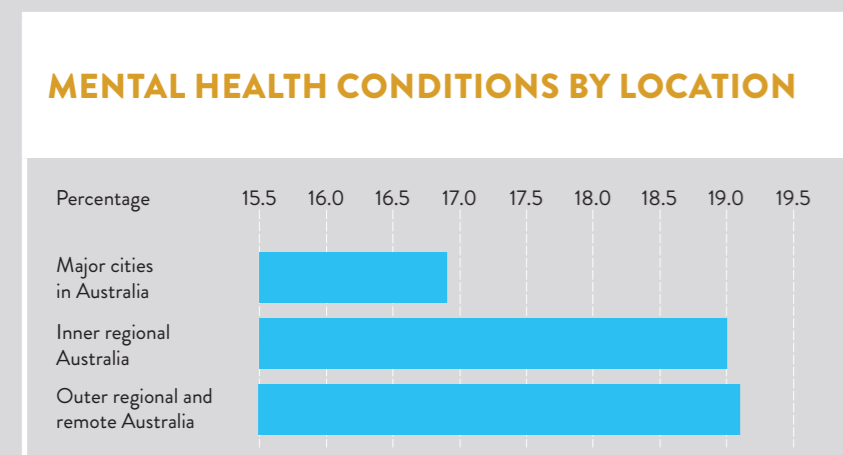
1 in 2

Australians have a chronic disease

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS are a leading cause of illness and disability in Australia

More than 2.4 MILLION

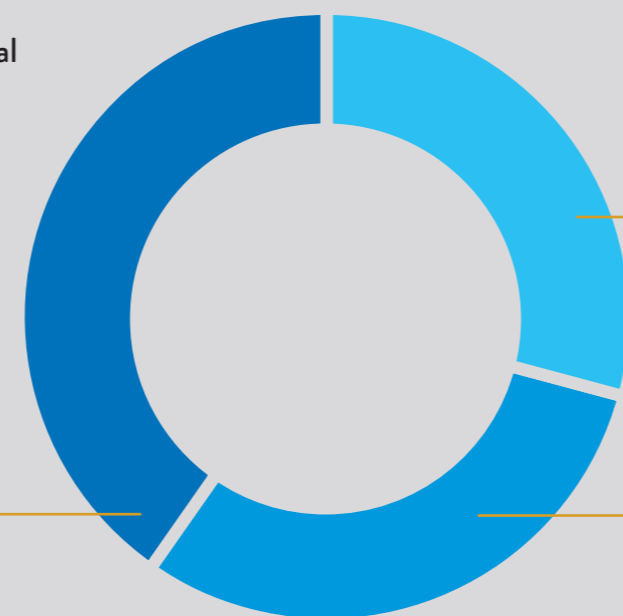
Australians have both a mental and physical health condition



Where you live can influence your risks for poor mental health

Australians with a mental health condition are likely to have another chronic condition

A mental health condition and no other chronic condition **40.2%**



A mental health condition and one other chronic condition **29.3%**

A mental health condition and two or more other chronic conditions **30.5%**

