



## FACTSHEET

### Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people

#### How many older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are there?

At the 2006 Census, there were about 60,000 Indigenous Australians aged 50 years and over, accounting for about 12% of the total Indigenous population. By comparison, 31% of the non-Indigenous population fell into this age group.

The number of older Indigenous people is growing and estimated to be 76,300 in 2011.

#### Do they have specific health care and support needs?

Older Indigenous people have poorer health and higher rates of disability than other Australians in the same age group. For example, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were reported at the Census to be almost 3 times as likely as non-Indigenous people to need help with self-care, mobility or communication tasks.

Because many live in remote areas, providing appropriate and accessible services presents a major challenge. This is particularly the case for those with a diagnosis of dementia, which is an emerging problem for this population group, especially in the 50–79 year age range.

#### Where do they live?

About 26% of people in this population group live in remote or very remote areas, whereas 2% of older non-Indigenous people live outside the main population centres.

#### How are these needs being met?

To complement mainstream residential and community aged care packages, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program has developed a mix of services, many in rural and remote areas, to suit changing community needs. Older Indigenous Australians are eligible to use these services from age 50 (compared with 65 for other Australians), and they do so at higher rates and younger ages than non-Indigenous people.

#### More information

*Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people* describes the age and geographic distribution of the older Indigenous population, its particular requirements in terms of aged care and support, and the pattern of usage of these services.

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### Permanent aged care residents with an ACFI (Aged Care Funding Instrument) assessment who had dementia, by age and Indigenous status<sup>(a)</sup>, 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009

(a) Does not include 1,740 residents with an unknown Indigenous status.

