

Glossary

AACR: Australasian Association of Cancer Registries

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACT: Australian Capital Territory—a land-locked Territory of Australia situated within the State of New South Wales on the eastern seaboard, with a population of 308,011 (1997). Its capital city is Canberra, which is also Australia's capital city.

AIHW: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

AS Rate: age-standardised rate

Cancer (malignant neoplasm): a term used to describe one of several diseases which result when the process of cell division, by which tissues normally grow and renew themselves, becomes uncontrolled and leads to the development of malignant cells. These cancer cells multiply in an uncoordinated way, independently of normal growth control mechanisms, to form a tumour. This tumour may expand locally by invasion or systemically by metastasis via the lymphatic or vascular systems. If left untreated most malignant tumours will eventually result in death. (*See What is cancer? page 1.*)

Cancer death: a death for which the underlying cause is indicated as cancer. Persons with cancer who die of other causes are not counted in the death statistics in this publication.

CI: confidence interval

CNS: central nervous system

Epidemiology: the quantitative study of the distribution and determinants of health-related states and events in populations, and the application of this study to the control of health problems.

IACR: International Association of Cancer Registries

ICD-9: International Classification of Disease—a coding system used to identify the primary site of the malignancy. This publication uses the ninth revision of the ICD classification.

Incidence: *see new cancer case*

MIR: mortality to incidence ratio

Mortality: *see cancer death*

NCSC: National Cancer Statistics Clearing House

New cancer case: a person who has a new cancer diagnosed for the first time. One person may have more than one cancer and therefore may be counted twice in incidence statistics if it is decided that the two cancers are not of the same origin. This decision is based on a series of principles set out in more detail in a publication by Jensen et al. (1991).

NHL: non-Hodgkin's lymphoma

NMSC: non-melanocytic skin cancers

NSW: New South Wales—a State of Australia on the eastern seaboard which has the largest capital city in Australia, Sydney, and a population of 6,272,784 (1997).

NT: Northern Territory—a Territory in the north of Australia, with a population of 186,907 (1997) and Darwin as its capital city.

PSA: prostate-specific antigen

PYLL: person-years of life lost

Qld: Queensland—a State in the north-east of Australia, with a population of 3,397,071 (1997) and Brisbane as its capital city.

SA: South Australia—a State in the southern part of Australia, with a population of 1,479,680 (1997) and Adelaide as its capital city.

SNOMED: Systematised Nomenclature of Medicine

Tas: Tasmania—an island State in the south-east of Australia, with a population of 473,478 (1997) and Hobart as its capital city.

Vic: Victoria—a State in the south-east of Australia, with a population of 4,605,210 (1997) and Melbourne as its capital city.

WA: Western Australia—the largest State in Australia, located in the west, with a population of 1,797,870 (1997) and Perth as its capital city.

WHO: World Health Organization

Data sources

National Cancer Statistics Clearing House Database

Cancer is a notifiable disease in all States and Territories. The data are collected by cancer registries and include clinical and demographic information about people with newly diagnosed cancer. This information is obtained from hospitals, pathologists, radiation oncologists, cancer treatment centres and nursing homes.

The AIHW is responsible for the national collection of cancer incidence statistics through the National Cancer Statistics Clearing House. National statistics are available for all years from 1982 to 1997.

National Mortality Database

Registration of deaths in Australia is the responsibility of the State and Territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Information on the cause of death is supplied by the medical practitioner certifying the death or by a coroner. Other information about the deceased is supplied by a relative or other person acquainted with the deceased or by an official institution where the death occurred. Registration of death is a legal requirement in Australia, and compliance is virtually complete.

The Registrars provide deaths data to the ABS for coding and compilation into national statistics. The AIHW also holds these data without unique identifiers in a national mortality database.

International Data

The international incidence and mortality data were sourced from the national/regional institutions collecting cancer statistics, either by personal correspondence or in electronic format from the Internet. Bulgaria provided unpublished 1997 data, New Zealand provided 1996 incidence and 1997 mortality data, the Czech Republic 1997 and Japan (Osaka prefecture) 1996 data. England & Wales supplied provisional 1996 incidence and 1998 mortality data. The Dutch and Finnish incidence and mortality estimates are for 1996 and were extracted from the EUCAN database which is a product of the European Network of Cancer Registries. The most comprehensive collection of cancer incidence statistics in the United States is available from the National Cancer Institute on CD-ROM (SEER— Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results) and in this publication the 1997 data were used. The 1997 cancer mortality data for the United States were extracted from the World Health Organization's Mortality Database.

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Related publications

A list of related publications from State and Territory cancer registries follows.

New South Wales

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Supramaniam R, Smith D, Coates M & Armstrong B 1999. Survival from cancer in New South Wales in 1980 to 1995. Sydney: NSW Cancer Council.

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- Smith D 1998. Colorectal cancer in NSW: Increasing incidence, falling mortality. *Cancer Information Update* no. 5. Sydney: NSW Cancer Council.
- Coory M & Armstrong B 1998. Cancer incidence and projections for Area and Rural Health Services in New South Wales. Sydney: NSW Cancer Council.
- Coates M, Smith D & Mon M 1998. Brain cancer in NSW. Incidence and mortality increasing over two decades. *Cancer Information Update* no. 4. Sydney: NSW Cancer Council, January.
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