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## Hospital separations due to injury and poisoning, Australia 2007-08

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#### Latest edition

This report is the sixth in a series on hospitalisations due to injury and poisoning in Australia, and covers the financial year 2007-08. A total of 394,505 injury cases required hospitalisation in the 12 months (230,676 males and 163,823 females). Overall rates of injury were higher among people aged 65 and over, and lower in children aged 0-14. The leading causes of hospitalised injury were unintentional falls (37% of cases), followed by transport accidents (14%).

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## Summary

This report, covering injuries resulting in admission to Australian hospitals in the financial year 2007-08, is the sixth in the series which started in 2001-02 (Berry & Harrison 2006).

The focus of the report is analysis of community injury (that is, injuries typically sustained in the home, workplace, street, etc.). The report also includes short sections on work and sports related injury, complications of surgical and medical care and residual injury such as adverse effects not elsewhere classified.

Trends are also covered in this report, as in the 2005-06 report (Kreisfeld & Harrison 2010).

An estimated 394,505 community injury cases required hospitalisation during the twelve-month period 2007-08 (230,676 males and 163,823 females).

A total of 1,601,483 patient days were attributed to hospitalised community injury equating to a mean length of stay of 3.8 days per hospitalised case.

The leading cause of hospitalised injury was an unintentional fall, accounting for 37% of all community injury cases. Unlike for most other types of community injury, females outnumbered males (56% to 44%) and rates were highest for older Australians.

The second most common cause of hospitalised injury was transport accidents (14% or 53,587 cases). Males had higher rates of transport injury hospitalisations than females across all age groups, with the highest rates among those aged 10-29.

For very young children aged 0-4, the most common specific causes of injury were falls (40%), smoke, fire, heat and hot substances (8%) and poisoning by drugs (7%). Falls were also the most common cause of injury for older children aged 5-14 (44%), followed by transport accidents (18%). The most common causes of injury for young adults aged 15-24 were transport accidents (20%), falls (14%), assault (12%) and intentional self-harm (10%). A similar pattern was seen in adults aged 25-44 where transport accidents accounted for 17% of hospitalisations, falls for 15%, and assault and intentional self-harm for 11% each. For older adults (45-64), unintentional falls were prominent, accounting for 32% of hospitalisations, followed by transport accidents (14%) and intentional self-harm (7%). For those aged 65 and over, more than three-quarters of hospitalisations were the result of falls (76%).

More than a quarter of all hospitalised injury cases occurred at home. A higher percentage of females than males were injured at home (36% vs. 19%) or in a residential institution (9% vs. 2%). Males were more likely than females to have been injured on a street or highway, as well as in sports and athletics areas, trade and construction areas, and farms.

Rates of community injury increased with geographical remoteness. The lowest rate of 1,660 per 100,000 was found for *Major cities* while the highest rate was found for *Very remote* regions (4,068 per 100,000 population).

There has been an upward trend in the age-standardised rates of hospitalised community injury from 1,724 cases per 100,000 population in 1999-00 to 1,827 cases per 100,000 in 2007-08. This trend was observed for both males and females.

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