

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF
HEALTH AND WELFARE**

**Annual report
1998–99**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

AIHW cat. no. AUS 15

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ISSN 1321-4985

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Published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Printed by Pirie Printers



The Hon. Dr Michael Wooldridge, MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the annual report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare for the year to 30 June 1999.

Section 4(2)(a) of the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* defines the Institute as a body corporate subject to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (CAC Act).

In accordance with the requirements of Section 9 of the CAC Act, the report was endorsed on 15 September 1999 at a meeting of directors responsible for the preparation and content of the report of operations, in accordance with Finance Minister's Orders.

Yours sincerely

Professor Janice Reid
Chairperson of the Board

21 September 1999

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Foreword

From the Chairperson

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare



The 1998–99 AIHW annual report is prepared to meet the requirements of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*. Among other things, the new Act places increased responsibility on the Boards of statutory authorities such as the Institute.

I was pleased to be reappointed as Chairperson of the AIHW Board for a second three-year term. I am committed to the idea and success of the Institute, to its future, its standing and its pre-eminence. I take great pride in my association with an exceptional group of staff and Board colleagues. It was my pleasure to welcome some new appointees to the Board this year who will work with continuing Board members to provide guidance to the Institute.

1998–99 has been a significant year for the AIHW. The Government's administrative arrangements, which transferred responsibilities for a range of community services from the Health portfolio, raised the question of the most productive and cooperative arrangements for the use of the Institute given the new Ministerial and Departmental arrangements. A series of discussions held with representatives of the Department of Health and Aged Care, the Department of Family and Community Services and the Institute resulted in a mutually satisfactory outcome. I am confident that the Institute in its current form can continue to serve the interests of both portfolios. The Board has endorsed a practical set of business rules to support this decision.

The Board has been particularly pleased to oversight the process of development of the Institute's new Corporate Plan to guide its work program activities from 1999 to 2002. I am impressed with the collaborative way in which the Plan was developed, and grateful to the many organisations of importance to the Institute that made valuable contributions to the final version of the Plan. Key directions identified in the Plan are an increasing focus on adding value to our analysis (the publication of thematic reports is an example of this) and working even more closely with partners to expand our business relationships.

The Institute has achieved the maturity which comes with experience and the confidence of others in the quality and relevance of its publications, and in its advisory capacity. The Institute has the capacity to add value to statistical information, to integrate, analyse, link and focus on themes, trends, impacts, outcomes, needs, risks and comparisons. Its focus is shaped by the needs of Commonwealth, State, and community agencies, by the Institute's mission and by the capacity of its staff to frame policy-relevant questions, and to provide information which is rigorous and challenging. I am delighted that the Institute is building on its core domain of data management and timely provision of key data sets and analyses to that of the integration of existing information to make it meaningful and accessible to a broad readership (such as provided recently by *Australia's Children* and *Health in Rural and Remote Australia*). There is much to be gained by focusing on major

social issues, and the relationships between them and providing to the nation food for thought, debate and understanding.

This publication, as well as meeting formal reporting requirements, provides details of the broad range of work the Institute does in the health and welfare field, making it a valued resource for those of us with an interest in this area.

Professor Janice Reid, AM

AIHW mission

The mission of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is:

To improve the health and wellbeing of Australians, we inform community discussion and decision making through national leadership in developing and providing health and welfare statistics and information.

AIHW values

We follow these values:

Objectivity

- Being objective, impartial and open in our analysis and presentation.

Independence

- Ensuring that our work always accords with our mission.

Quality

- Following high statistical and ethical standards in all our work.

Respect

- Ensuring the confidentiality of information provided to us.
- Respecting the privacy and sensitivity of individuals and groups.
- Recognising the efforts and expertise of our partners and data providers.

Accessibility

- Making our work relevant and accessible to all Australians, in a timely manner.

Client focus

- Learning the varied needs and views of our clients, to ensure the relevance of our work.

People

- Respecting and promoting the creativity, expertise and wellbeing of those we work with.

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