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OF HEALTH & WELFARE



AUSTRALIA'S WELFARE 2003

AUSTRALIA'S WELFARE₂₀₀₃

AUSTRALIA'S WELFARE²⁰⁰³

The sixth biennial welfare report of the
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare



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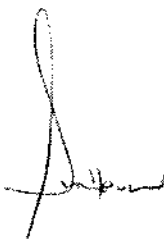
The Hon Tony Abbott MP
Minister for Health and Ageing
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

On behalf of the Board of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare I am pleased to present to you *Australia's Welfare 2003*, as required under Subsection 31 (1A) of the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*.

I commend this report to you as a significant contribution to national information on welfare services and assistance and to the development and evaluation of welfare policies and programs in Australia.

Yours sincerely



Dr Sandra Hacker
Chairperson of the Board

14 November 2003

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Preface

This sixth edition of *Australia's Welfare* meets the requirement placed on the Institute by its legislation to provide a comprehensive report every two years on Australia's welfare services and assistance.

Australia has a comprehensive network of support for people with welfare needs. Services are provided by governments, non-government organisations, private providers and by family members and volunteers. Formal services are funded by the Australian, state and territory governments, user charges and the resources of non-government organisations. Informal services depend on the willingness and capacity of many individual Australians to forego other paid and unpaid activities.

Making sense of this complex mosaic is essential if one is to understand the many interdependencies that underpin Australia's welfare system. A change in one program can have a ripple effect on many others. In addition any decrease in the supply of informal care can place great pressure on governments to increase formal services.

Australia's Welfare aims to provide this guide to the Australian welfare system. It includes indicators to assist in forming an overall view, and endeavours to describe the interactions between different welfare sectors. It draws on the wealth of information available from the Institute and other bodies, and contains many references to other sources.

My thanks go to the numerous people who have worked diligently and skilfully to produce this edition. I trust that their efforts have produced a readable and reliable reference for all classes of reader, and that *Australia's Welfare 2003* makes a major contribution to debate about social policy in Australia over the next two years.

Richard Madden
Director
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Symbols

N	number
m	million
b	billion
\$	Australian dollars, unless another country is specified
%	per cent
nec	not elsewhere classified
'000	thousands
n.p.	when used in a table, means not published by the data source
n.a.	when used in a table, means not available
nfd	not further defined
. .	when used in a table, means not applicable
—	when used in a table, means nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)
*	when used in front of a numerical value in a table, means the value is subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes and/or the relative standard error of the value is 25% to 50%
**	when used in front of a numerical value in a table, means the value is subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes and/or the relative standard error is more than 50%