



High blood pressure

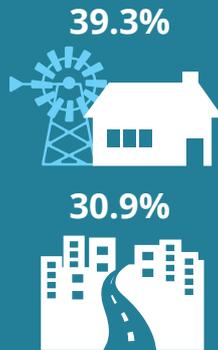
Quick facts

Based on survey data from 2014–15:

- 1 in 3 (33.7%) Australian adults had high blood pressure—almost 1 in 4 (23.0%) had uncontrolled high blood pressure.



- 4 in 10 (39.3%) adults from regional PHN areas had high blood pressure, compared with 3 in 10 (30.9%) adults in metropolitan PHN areas.



Box 1 Defining high blood pressure

The World Health Organization defines high blood pressure as including any of the following:

- systolic blood pressure greater than or equal to 140 mmHg
- diastolic blood pressure greater than or equal to 90 mmHg
- receiving medication for high blood pressure.

This fact sheet covers local-level results for the proportion of Australian adults (aged 18 years and over) who had high blood pressure and uncontrolled high blood pressure. Results are presented by Primary Health Network (PHN) areas

Please note, the results presented are crude rates, which reflect the actual level of high blood pressure in the community. However, caution is needed when making comparisons across PHN areas as the rates presented do not account for differences in the age of the populations.

What is high blood pressure?

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is defined in this fact sheet by the World Health Organization definition (see Box 1 for more information).

Uncontrolled high blood pressure as defined here refers to all people with measured high blood pressure, regardless of whether they are taking medication. It is presented for context in this fact sheet.

High blood pressure is an important and treatable cause of disease and death. It is a major risk factor for chronic diseases including stroke, coronary heart disease, heart failure and chronic kidney disease.

The modifiable risk factors for high blood pressure include poor diet (particularly high salt intake), obesity, excessive alcohol consumption and insufficient physical activity. Lifestyle changes and medication can help to control high blood pressure.

Based on survey data from 2014–15, 33.7% of Australian adults had high blood pressure. There were 23.0% of Australian adults who had uncontrolled high blood pressure.

Variation across metropolitan and regional PHN areas

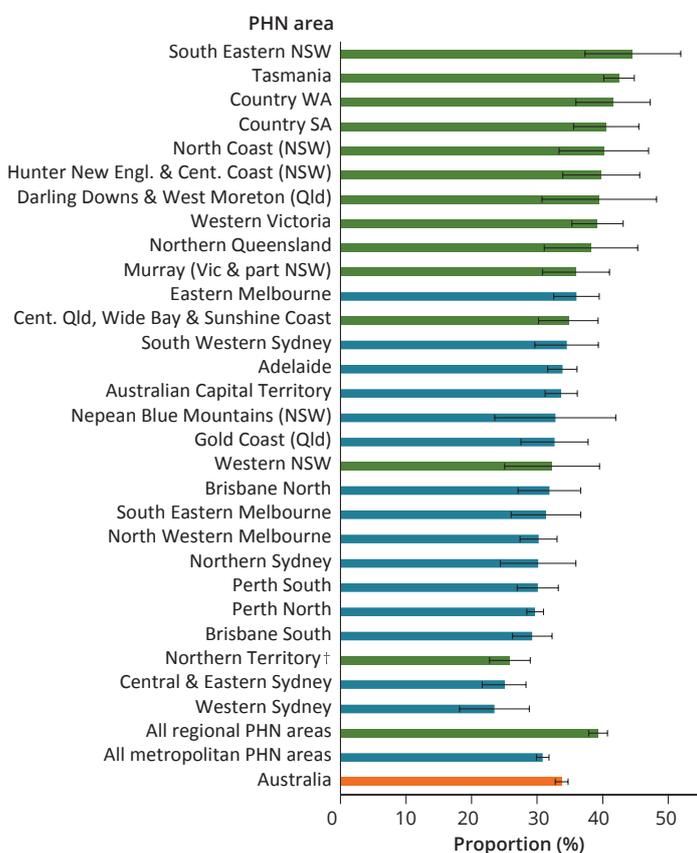
In 2014–15, the proportion of adults with high blood pressure across all regional PHN areas was 39.3%, compared with 30.9% for all metropolitan PHN areas.

The five PHN areas with the highest proportion of adults with high blood pressure were all in regional locations (Figure 1).

Conversely, the five PHN areas with the lowest proportion of adults with high blood pressure were all in metropolitan locations, with the exception of the Northern Territory. This was also seen in the proportion of adults with uncontrolled high blood pressure (Figure 2).

Rates in individual PHNs reflect the age profile of the population in the community, as age is a strong risk factor for high blood pressure. For example, the proportion of adults aged 45 and over in Western Sydney and Central and Eastern Sydney was around 45% compared to South Eastern NSW and Tasmania where the proportion of adults aged 45 and over was closer to 60%. Please see the *Health risk factors in 2014–15* Excel download for more information.

Figure 1: Proportion of adults with high blood pressure, by metropolitan and regional Primary Health Network area, 2014–15



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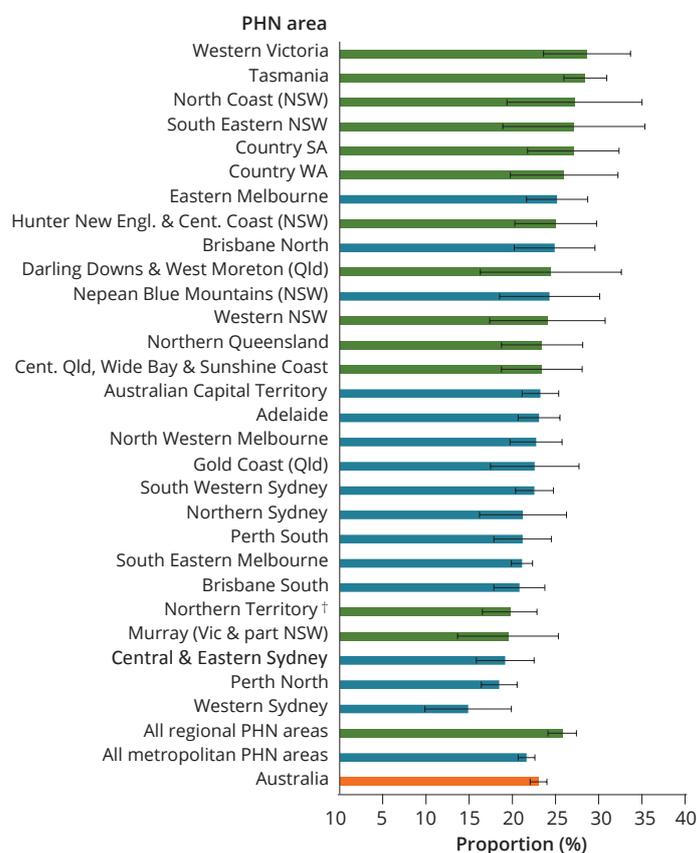
- Regional Primary Health Network areas
- Metropolitan Primary Health Network areas

Source: ABS, National Health Survey 2014–15: Customised report, 2017.

↔ 95% confidence interval.

† Data for the Northern Territory should be interpreted with caution, as 28% of the population live in very remote areas and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and are therefore excluded from the survey.

Figure 2: Proportion of adults with uncontrolled high blood pressure, by metropolitan and regional Primary Health Network area, 2014–15



Uncontrolled high blood pressure

- Regional Primary Health Network areas
- Metropolitan Primary Health Network areas

Source: ABS, National Health Survey 2014–15: Customised report, 2017.

↔ 95% confidence interval.

† Data for the Northern Territory should be interpreted with caution, as 28% of the population live in very remote areas and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and are therefore excluded from the survey.

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