

AIHW CAT. NO. AUS 28

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF
HEALTH AND WELFARE**

Annual report 2001–02

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The Institute is Australia's national health and welfare statistics and information agency, and is part of the Commonwealth Health and Ageing portfolio.

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Senator the Hon. Kay Patterson
Minister for Health and Ageing
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 2002.

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 3 October 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



Dr Sandra Hacker
Chairperson of the Board

3 October 2002

For health and welfare
statistics and information

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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.

Values

We are committed to the following values:

Objectivity

- ▶ Being objective, impartial and open in our methods, 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 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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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE AIHW CHAIR

Apart from production of its Annual Report to Parliament, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has a legislative requirement under the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* to produce, every 2 years, two reports:

- ▶ a *health report*, providing statistics and related information concerning the health of the people of Australia and an outline of the development of health-related information and statistics by the AIHW (section 31(3))
- ▶ a *welfare report*, providing statistics and related information concerning the provision of welfare services to the Australian people and an outline of the development of welfare-related information and statistics by the AIHW (section 31(3A)).

The timing of production of the reports is prescribed in the legislation. Thus, during every second reporting year, the AIHW produces editions of both *Australia's Health* and *Australia's Welfare*—2001–02 was such a year.

The reports draw together the vast amount of information produced by the AIHW in the health and welfare sectors, as well as information from other organisations.

Both reports are considered by Ministers, administrators, academics and students, service providers, clients and interested citizens as definitive works in their field. I am personally aware of the use by my colleagues in the health sector of the *Australia's Health* reports, and of their widespread use in the university sector as a valued resource.

Media coverage of the launch of both publications was extensive. It was particularly pleasing that coverage of the reports was intelligent and informative, a tribute both to the reliability of the accuracy of their content, and the excellent work in producing and releasing the reports.

Australia's Welfare 2001

It was my privilege, for the first time as Chair of the AIHW Board, to participate in the launch by Senator Amanda Vanstone, Minister for Family and Community Services, of *Australia's Welfare 2001* on 13 December 2001. It is the fifth biennial report on welfare services by the AIHW. The publication draws together national information and data in the fields of welfare services expenditure, housing assistance, children's services, aged care services and disability services. The 2001 report contained special chapters on de-institutionalisation and measurement frameworks for welfare services.



Minister for Family and Community Services, Senator Amanda Vanstone (third from right), shares a copy of *Australia's Welfare 2001* with AIHW Board Chair Dr Sandra Hacker. Also present (left to right): AIHW staff Ms Ros Madden, Dr Ching Choi, Dr Richard Madden and Dr Diane Gibson.

Australia's Health 2002

Australia's Health 2002 was launched by the Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon. Kay Patterson, on 27 June 2002. That report provides a comprehensive picture of the health of Australians and the provision of health services. *Australia's Health 2002* is the eighth biennial health report produced by the AIHW. The report provides a wealth of material to allow an informed view of the multitude of pressures acting on Australia's health system, and is a quality base for commentary and policy analysis.



Happy *Australia's Health 2002* chapter coordinators gather around Health Minister Kay Patterson and AIHW Health Division Head Ching Choi. From left: Ching Choi, Paul Magnus, Paul Jelfs, Senator Patterson, Jenny Hargreaves, Mark Cooper-Stanbury and Stan Bennett. (Not pictured: John Harding)

Institute publications

Although production of both *Australia's Health* and *Australia's Welfare* within one reporting year represents a significant effort on the part of AIHW staff, they are by no means the only publications produced. During the reporting period, the AIHW produced 71 publications averaging 95 pages each.

The AIHW puts all its work in the public domain, and is committed to making it accessible to all Australians in a timely manner. Publications are available free of charge on the AIHW web site at www.aihw.gov.au, as well as being available for purchase through AusInfo shops or through the web site. To honour its commitment to meeting the needs of people with a disability, the AIHW makes specific arrangements with individuals who have difficulty accessing the published format.

Timeliness is a constant concern, as most AIHW data is provided by other bodies. I place on record the AIHW's appreciation of the efforts of large numbers of people across the health and welfare system who make AIHW publications possible, often against tight timeframes.

Australian Hospital Statistics 2000–01

Australian Hospital Statistics 2000–01 was released on 28 June, the day following the release of *Australia's Health 2002* and within one year of the reference period. This achievement represents significant effort on the part of staff both from the Hospitals and Mental Health Services Unit as well as from the Data and Information Technology Unit and the Media and Publishing Unit. The cooperation of State and Territory health departments in providing the data promptly is also essential to timely production of this important report. The 2000–01 publication includes data on waiting times and key national performance indicators, transforming the report to a national report on Australia's hospitals, both public and private.

Unmet Disability Needs Study

The Institute's Disability Services Unit was contracted to undertake work within a stringent timeline to provide information for the new Commonwealth-State/Territory Disability Agreement commencing in July 2002.

The final report on the study of the effectiveness of the disability unmet needs funding and remaining shortfall was completed on time and submitted to the National Disability Administrators on 10 May, having begun in December 2001.

The report was released for publication by Disability Ministers on 28 June 2002. It is available, along with all other publications, on the AIHW web site.

Australian Centre for Asthma Monitoring

Asthma has recently loomed large on the national health agenda. Although mortality rates are falling, the prevalence of the disease has been increasing. It is the major reason for hospitalisation among children and imposes a substantial social and economic burden on the community. To increase its capacity to respond to the need for data and analysis in relation to asthma, the AIHW has recently established a new collaborating unit, the Australian Centre for Asthma Monitoring, at the Institute of Respiratory Medicine in Sydney. The Centre will collect and analyse data from a range of nation-wide sources, to give a comprehensive picture of the status of asthma in Australia.

The AIHW in context

In March 2002, I joined senior AIHW staff in updating our Corporate Plan.

After consultation with present and past Board members, I encouraged the AIHW to display fearless curiosity in its work; to use its skills to do the job well, but to have a demonstrable capacity to be critically aware, and to remember that reciprocity with our many partners is essential. The AIHW must have analytical integrity in everything it does. And it must understand its audience, so that it speaks to the right constituencies at the right time in the right way.

I am confident that the AIHW is performing well, and I am grateful to my fellow Board members, management and all staff and collaborators for their efforts to ensure that Australia has world-class health and welfare information.



Dr Sandra Hacker
Board Chair