

# ***A Social Health Atlas of Australia: Volume 9, Australian Capital Territory***

## **Errata 9 August 2000**

Details of the following errors have been posted to the PHIDU web site, and the affected pages replaced in the PDF documents on the web site at <http://www.publichealth.gov.au>

### **Contents: Executive summary, page v**

Percentages incorrect for Early school leavers, Unskilled and semi-skilled workers and Disability Support Pensioners.

### **Ch 3: Unemployed people, 1996**

Users of the data on page 28 should be aware of the following additional information.

The 1996 Census unemployment figures are based on self-report information in the Census. As it is unclear how Indigenous people would record their involvement in CDEP schemes, it may be more appropriate to use the information provided for unemployment beneficiaries on page 58.

### **Ch 4: Disability support pensioners, page 54-55**

The data shown include details of the wife pension, thus inflating the proportions (although not the spatial patterns) shown in the tables and maps.

This data also affects:

- Executive summary, page v
- Rates for females shown in Figure 4.2, page 50
- Correlations, page 209-210
- Table 9.1 and associated text, page 219

### **Ch 8: Correlations, page 209-210**

Correlation matrices affected by Disability Support Pension data.

### **Ch 9: Summary, page 219**

Table 9.1 and associated text for Early school leavers, Unskilled and semi-skilled workers and Disability Support Pensioners.

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## Executive summary: Amended text/figures are highlighted

The information in this atlas adds to a convincing body of evidence built up over a number of years in Australia on the striking disparities in health that exist between groups in the population. People of low socioeconomic status (those who are relatively socially or economically deprived) experience worse health than those of higher socioeconomic status for almost every major cause of mortality and morbidity. The challenge for policy makers, health practitioners and governments is to find ways to address these health inequities.

The primary aims of the first edition of *A Social Health Atlas of Australia* were to illustrate the spatial distribution of the socioeconomically disadvantaged population, and to compare this with patterns of distribution of major causes of illness and death and use of health services. The maps and correlation analysis highlighted associations between social and economic factors in relation to health and illness.

A number of new variables have been included in this second edition, together with new data on many of the variables from the first edition. Also included is a cluster analysis, providing profiles at the small area level of the socioeconomic status, health status and health service utilisation of the population.

The extent of change (between the editions) in the patterns of distribution in death rates by socioeconomic status is also highlighted.

### Findings

#### Correlation analysis

There were correlations of significance at the postcode level in **Canberra-Queanbeyan** between the measures of socioeconomic status and a number of the health status variables. The strongest of these were generally with the variables for people reporting their health as fair or poor (as opposed to those reporting their health as being excellent, very good, or good); the Physical Component Summary (PCS, a measure of physical health); and premature death from, in particular, the combined causes of accidents, poisonings and violence (**Table 8.2**). Similarly, strong associations were also evident in the correlation analysis with the health service use variables of admissions for psychosis, accidents, poisonings and violence, Caesarean section and hysterectomy.

#### Changes in socioeconomic status

Marked variations were recorded between 1986 and 1996 for a majority of the socioeconomic status variables mapped for the Australian Capital Territory (**Table 9.1**). For **Canberra-Queanbeyan**, the largest increases were for the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (an increase of 140.1 per cent over this ten year period); unemployed people (92.3 per cent); low income families (75.2 per cent); people aged 65 years and over (66.0 per cent); dwellings without a motor vehicle (53.5 per cent); and single parent families (50.8 per cent). The only decreases recorded over this ten year period were for the variables for unskilled and semi-skilled workers (down by 12.7 per cent) and early school leavers (down by 7.9 per cent).

Variations of this order were also recorded in **Canberra** and the Australian Capital Territory.

Substantial variations were recorded in the level of income support payments to residents of **Canberra-Queanbeyan** for all of the payment types analysed (**Table 9.1**). The number of recipients for each of the payment types increased substantially, with the number of unemployment beneficiaries (an increase of 167.0 per cent) and disability support pensioners (101.3 per cent) more than doubling. Similar, although slightly larger increases were recorded in both **Canberra** and the Australian Capital Territory for all of these payments.

#### Changes in death rates

Death rates in the Australian Capital Territory have declined over the years 1985 to 1989 and 1992 to 1995 for the majority of causes studied.

In **Canberra-Queanbeyan**, the largest decreases were recorded for deaths of people aged from 15 to 64 years from circulatory system diseases (down by 52.2 per cent), respiratory system diseases (down by 40.3 per cent) and accidents, poisonings and violence (down by 36.0 per cent). All causes mortality was 36.4 per cent lower over this period, marginally more so for males than for females.

There were also reductions for every category in **Table 9.2** for **Canberra** and the Australian Capital Territory as a whole.

#### Summary of findings by socioeconomic status of area of residence

Comparisons are made of differences in the health status and health service use of the population by socioeconomic status. In the absence of any direct measure of socioeconomic status in the health status data, the socioeconomic status of the SLA of usual residence in the health status records is used. In this analysis socioeconomic status is measured by the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD, see page 14). The SLAs in **Canberra-Queanbeyan** have been grouped into five groups (quintiles) based on the IRSD score, with Quintile 1 comprising the twenty per cent of SLAs with the highest IRSD scores, and Quintile 5 comprising the twenty per cent of SLAs with the lowest IRSD scores.

#### Health status

Although there is some variability across the quintiles, the pattern is generally for the highest socioeconomic status SLAs (those in Quintile 1) to have the most advantageous (ie. in the majority of cases the lowest) rates and, generally, for the most disadvantaged SLAs (those in Quintile 5) to have the highest rates (**Figure 9.2**). The most notable exception is the Physical Component Summary (PCS), for which low scores indicate poorer health. Despite the narrow range of these scores, there is a clear gradient across the quintiles of socioeconomic disadvantage of area. Unlike the other capital cities, there is little variation in the Total Fertility Rate, and what there is shows a decline with increasing disadvantage.

## Chapter 4: The amended data in this chapter has not been highlighted as the majority of figures (other than for 1989) have been amended

The data are collected by the postcode of the postal address of the recipient of the income support payment. See *Area mapped* for a discussion of why data in **Canberra** was not converted to SLA.

In some instances, the number of people in receipt of a pension or benefit in a postcode exceeds the population in that postcode: this is particularly a problem with the Age Pension data. This is the case even when the pensioner/beneficiary data are compared with the population data by five year age group, separately for males and females. As a result, the calculation of the proportion of the population in receipt of a particular pension or benefit type can produce percentages of greater than 100 per cent. Other percentages of less than 100 per cent may also be overstated.

### Area mapped

No attempt was made to estimate the number of income recipients in each SLA within the postcodes, in **Canberra**, as

there is no reliable way to do this. The data in Chapter 3, has been mapped by postcode to enable comparisons to be made of the distribution of the variables with those in this chapter.

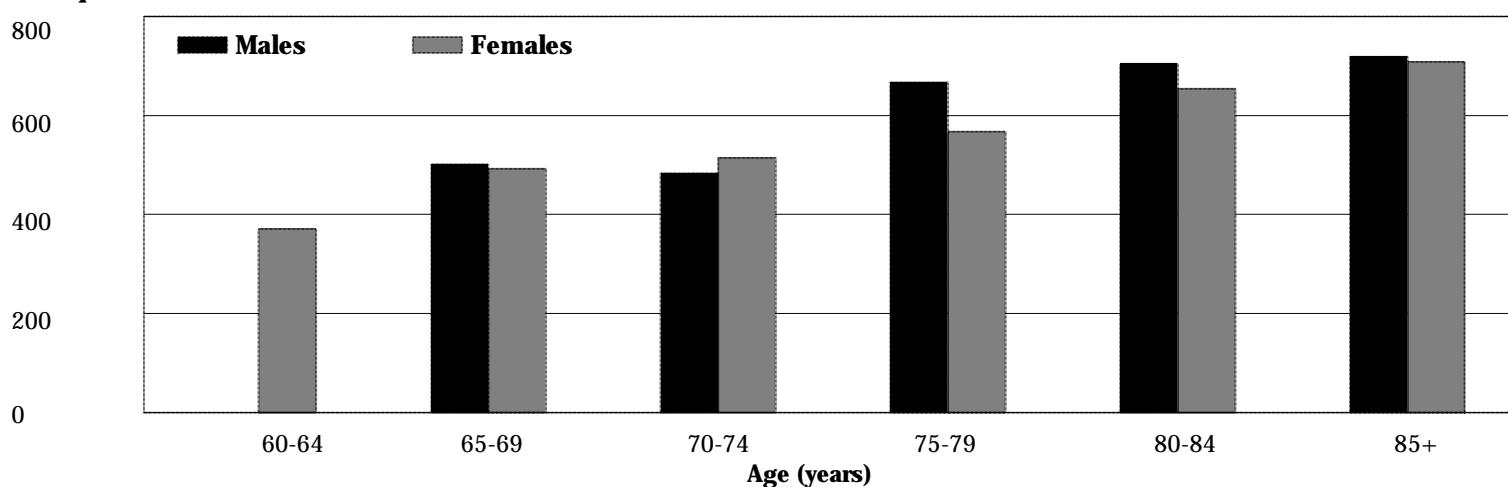
### Details of age and sex of recipients

The age and sex profiles of recipients of the Age and Disability Support Pensions and unemployment benefits and the age profiles of female sole parent pensioners are shown in the following charts.

Females can receive the Age Pension from age 60 years and males from age 65 years (**Figure 4.1**). Although the numbers of females receiving this pension are higher from 65 years of age, their rates are lower in all age groups, except for those aged 70 to 74 years. Rates for males follow a pattern of a decline in the 70 to 74 year age group before increasing over the next three age groups, while female rates grow steadily across the ages.

**Figure 4.1: Age pensioners, Australian Capital Territory, 1996**

Rate per 1,000



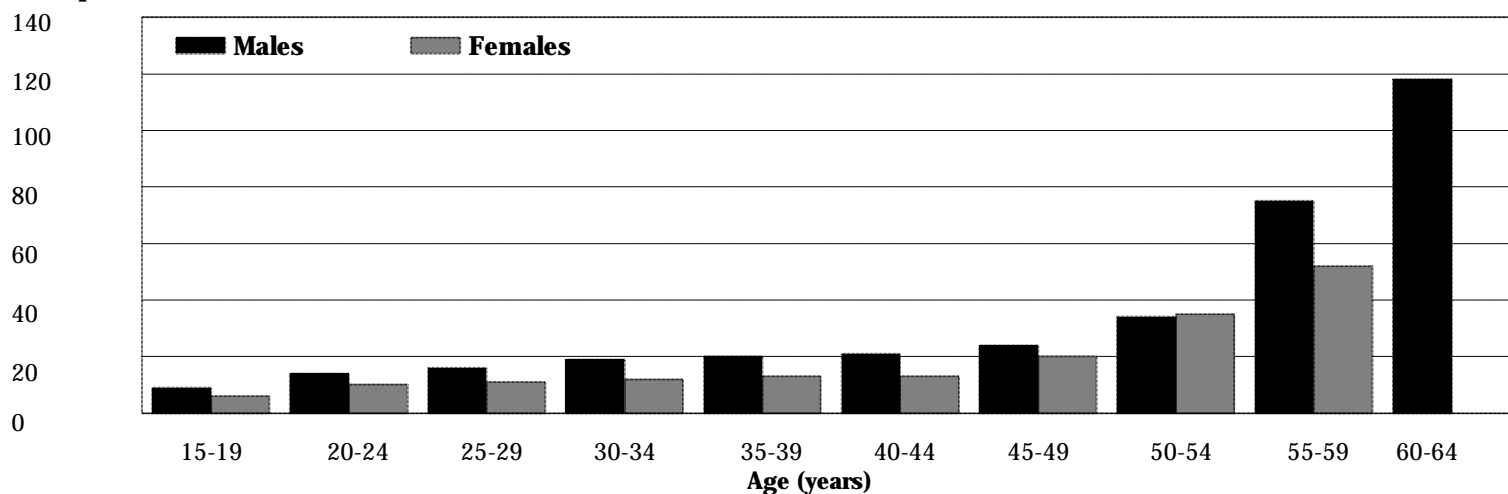
Source: Calculated on data supplied by DFACS (Age Pension) and DVA (Service Pension (Age))

Male rates are higher in each age group for those receiving the Disability Support Pension, with the exception of those aged from 50 to 54 years (**Figure 4.2**). From age 60 years, females eligible

for this pension are transferred to the Age Pension. The rates for both males and females grow steadily across the ages, most markedly from around 50 years of age.

**Figure 4.2: Disability support pensioners, Australian Capital Territory, 1996**

Rate per 1,000



Source: Calculated on data supplied by DFACS (Disability Support Pension) and DVA (Service Pension (Permanently Incapacitated))

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# Disability support pensioners, 30 June 1996

## Capital city comparison

People eligible for a Disability Support Pension, paid by the Department of Family and Community Services (DFACS), must be aged 16 years or over and have not reached age-pensionable age; be permanently blind or have a physical, intellectual or psychiatric impairment level of 20 per cent or more and a continuing inability to work. Details of males under 65 years of age and females under 60 years of age receiving the DVA service pension (permanently incapacitated) have been combined with the Disability Support Pension data: details on people above these ages were included in the data for age pensioners.

The proportion of the population in the capital cities in receipt of the Disability Support Pension has increased considerably since 1989, rising from 2.6 per cent in 1989 to 3.9 per cent in 1996. High levels of unemployment have impacted significantly on the increase in the number of disability support pensioners (Centrelink 1997). This increase was evident in all capital cities, with the largest increases recorded in **Hobart, Adelaide, Sydney** and **Brisbane**. In both 1989 and 1996, **Hobart** and **Adelaide** had the largest proportions of disability support pensioners, while **Canberra** and **Darwin** had the lowest.

**Table 4.4: Disability support pensioners, capital cities**  
*Per cent*

	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Darwin	Canberra <sup>1</sup>	All Capitals
<b>1996</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>1989</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>2.6</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes Queanbeyan (C)

Source: See Data sources, Appendix 1.3

## Canberra-Queanbeyan

In 1996, 5,004 people in **Canberra-Queanbeyan** were receiving a Disability Support Pension, 2.2 per cent of the population aged from 15 years and less than 60 years for females and less than 65 years for males. These figures were a notable increase on those recorded in 1989, when there were 2,486 disability support pensioners, 1.2 per cent of the eligible population. Despite this considerable increase, **Canberra-Queanbeyan** maintained its status as having the lowest proportions of people in receipt of a Disability Support Pension of all Australian capital cities.

In 1996, there were 684 disability support pensioners in Queanbeyan, 3.7 per cent of the eligible population.

### Postcodes

The highest proportions of people in receipt of a Disability Support Pension were in the central and eastern-most postcode areas of **Canberra (Map 4.2)**. Woden Central recorded the highest proportion of 4.1 per cent, followed by Canberra Central (3.6 per cent), Canberra North (3.2 per cent) and Canberra South (3.1 per cent).

Several postcode areas had proportions just below the **Canberra-Queanbeyan** average for this variable. They were Kambah (2.1 per cent), Weston Creek and Belconnen South (both with 2.0 per cent), Woden North, Woden South, Tuggeranong North West, Belconnen West and Belconnen (Balance) (all with 1.9 per cent) and Belconnen North (1.7 per cent).

The lowest proportions were recorded in the northern-most area of Gungahlin-Hall (0.8 per cent) and the southern-most area of Tuggeranong South (1.2 per cent). The adjacent postcode areas of Tuggeranong South East (1.5 per cent) and Tuggeranong North East (1.3 per cent) had slightly higher proportions.

The largest numbers of people in receipt of a Disability Support Pension in 1996 were recorded in Canberra North (541 people),

Belconnen West (531 people) and Canberra Central (514 people).

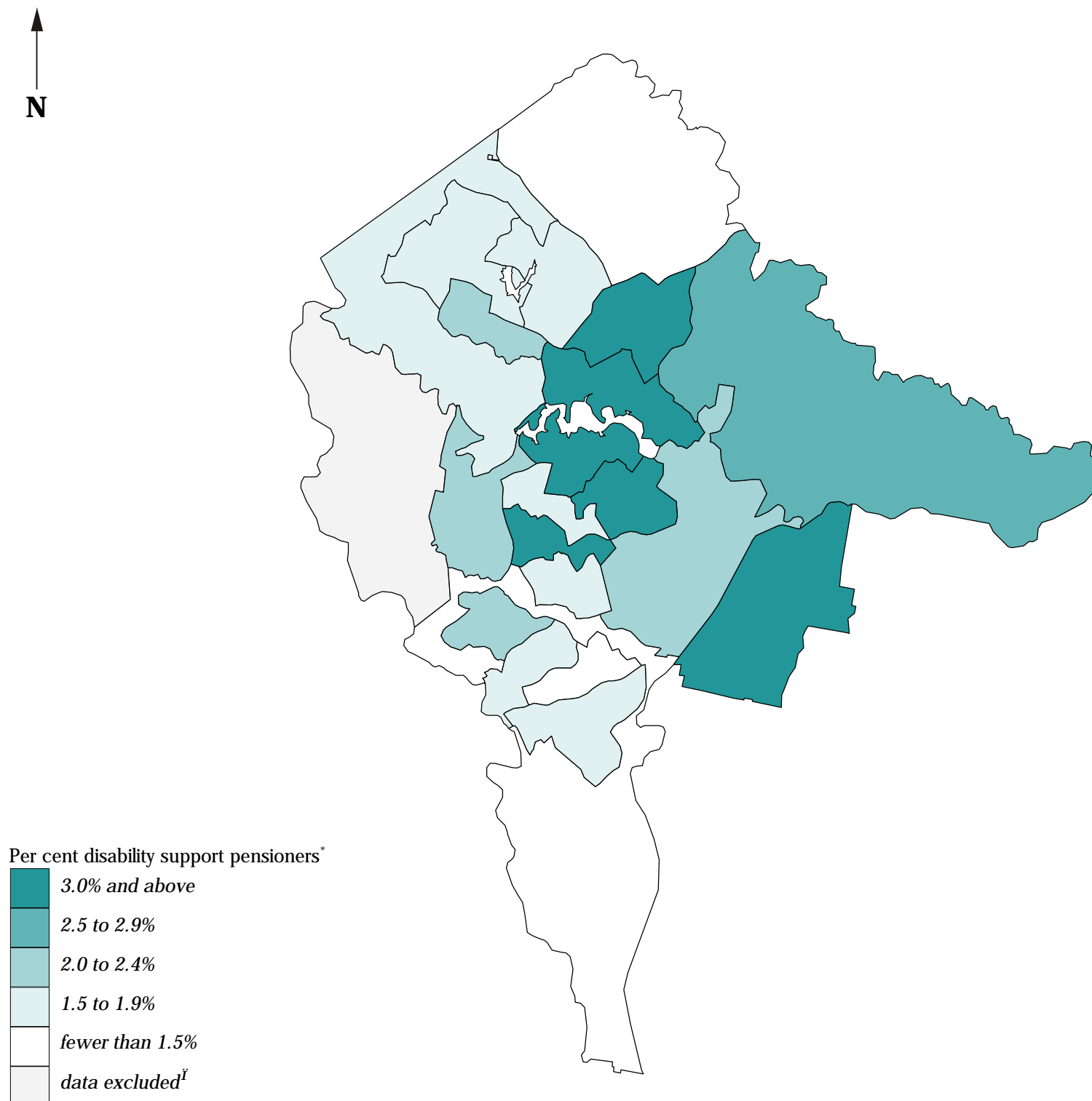
Correlations of statistical significance were recorded with the variables for private dwellings without a vehicle (0.71), low income families (0.59), public rental housing (0.56) and people aged 65 years and over (0.53). There was an inverse correlation of meaningful significance with the variable for children aged from 0 to 4 years of age (-0.59) and a weaker inverse correlation with the variable for high income families (-0.43). These results, together with the inverse correlation with the IRSD (-0.48), indicate an association at the SLA level between high rates of disability support pensioners and socioeconomic disadvantage.

In 1996, there were seven people in receipt of a Disability Support Pension in the ACT-Balance Statistical Subdivision, 2.9 per cent of the eligible population.

## Map 4.2

### Disability support pensioners\*, Canberra-Queanbeyan, 1996

as a percentage of males aged 15 to 64 years and females aged 15 to 59 years in each area<sup>#</sup>



\*Includes the Age Pension paid by the Department of Family and Community Services and the Service Pension (Age) paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs

<sup>#</sup>SLAs have been grouped to approximate postcode areas

<sup>‡</sup>Data have been excluded when the population of the area is less than 100

Source: See Data sources, Appendix 1.3

Details of map boundaries are in Appendix 1.2  
National Social Health Atlas Project, 1999







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**9 Summary:** *The variables highlighted in table 9.1 have been amended: references to these variables in the text have also been changed but have not been highlighted*

## Introduction

This chapter presents details of the major changes noted in the data between this and the first edition, as well as summary measures of health differentials by socioeconomic status of area of residence for the health status and health service utilisation data mapped in Chapters 5 and 6.

## Change between editions

The reference period for the data in the first and this second edition varies according to the dataset. In general, the Census data in this edition are ten years on from the first edition (Chapter 3: 1986 Census and 1996 Census); and the income support (Chapter 4: 1989 and 1996) and health status (Chapter 5: 1985-89 and 1992-95) datasets are seven years later. The data for services and facilities are not discussed in this chapter because of difficulties in comparing the available series over time. Nor are the data for hospital admissions, as these data were not included in the first edition (see *Differences in data treatment between editions*, Chapter 6).

## Changes in socioeconomic status variables

Marked variations were recorded between 1986 and 1996 for a majority of the socioeconomic status variables mapped for the Australian Capital Territory (**Table 9.1**).

For **Canberra-Queanbeyan**, the largest increases were for the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (an increase of 140.1 per cent over this ten year period); unemployed people (92.3 per cent); low income families (75.2 per cent); people aged 65 years and over (66.0 per cent); dwellings without a motor vehicle (53.5 per cent); and single parent families (50.8 per cent). The only decreases recorded over this ten year period were for the variables for unskilled and semi-skilled workers (down by 12.7 per cent) and early school leavers (down by 7.9 per cent).

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**Table 9.1: Changes in demographic and socioeconomic status variables, by selection of Territory, Australian Capital Territory**  
*Per cent change*

Variable	Canberra-Queanbeyan	Canberra	Australian Capital Territory
<b>1986 to 1996</b>			
0 to 4 year olds	6.3	5.1	4.7
65 years & over	66.0	67.1	66.8
Single parent families	50.8	49.8	49.3
Low income families	75.2	75.0	74.4
Unemployed people	92.3	92.8	91.7
Unemployed people aged 15 to 19 years	46.5	49.9	49.5
Female labour force participation (20 to 54 years)	5.4	5.2	5.3
Early school leavers	-7.9	-7.5	-7.7
Unskilled & semi-skilled workers	-12.7	-10.5	-10.8
Managers & administrators, & Professionals	44.3	42.9	42.6
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people	140.1	174.2	137.6
People <sup>1</sup> born overseas & resident for less than five years	1.9	3.2	3.2
People <sup>1</sup> born overseas & resident for 5 years or more	26.7	28.0	27.9
People <sup>1</sup> born overseas: speaks English not well/not at all	9.8	12.9	12.9
Housing authority rented dwellings	13.8	14.1	13.3
Dwellings without a motor vehicle	53.5	56.6	56.2
<b>1989 to 1996</b>			
Age pensioners	18.0	19.8	18.2
Disability support pensioners	101.3	109.2	106.2
Female sole parent pensioners	41.5	41.6	41.8
Unemployment beneficiaries	167.0	176.5	173.1
Dependent children of selected pensioners & beneficiaries	75.1	75.3	75.2

<sup>1</sup>Includes people who were born in a predominantly non-English speaking country

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