# A Social Health Atlas of Australia: Volume 8, Northern Territory <br> 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 40 and (in particular) page 42 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 pages 96 and 98.

Ch 3: ABS Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage, 1996
The legend on Map 3.29 (page 79) should be:
Below 800 most disadvantaged
800 to 899
900 to 999
1000 to 1099
1100 and above

## Ch 4: Disability support pensioners, page 88-91

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 82
Correlations, page 335-336
Table 9.1 and associated text, page 351
Ch 8: Correlations, page 335-336
Correlation matrices affected by Disability Support Pension data.

## Ch 9: Summary, page 351

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 the atlas series 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. One of the additions is the presentation of data by the new Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA). Also included is a cluster analysis, providing profiles at the Statistical Local Area (SLA) level of the socioeconomic status, health status and health senvice 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 few correlations of significance at the SLA level in Darwin between the measures of socioeconomic disadvantage and the health status variables. This is in part due to the small numbers of cases at the SLA level. The strongest of the associations were correlations of meaningful significance between high rates of people with a handicap and unskilled and semi-skilled workers (0.56) and the Indigenous population (0.51) (Table 8.1).

There were more correlations of significance at the SLA level in the non-metropolitan areas of Northern Territory than was the case in Darwin. The strongest of these were with a number of the measures of health status and, to a lesser extent, with many of the variables for use of health services. The strongest correlations with the measures of socioeconomic disadvantage were with the variables for people reporting their health as fair or poor, the PCS, the handicap status of the population, deaths of males and females aged 15 to 64 years and years of potential life lost (the summary measure of premature death). There were positive, although weaker, correlations with many of the variables for admissions to hospital.

For the Indigenous population, there were correlations of substantial significance at the SLA level with these same variables: for people reporting their health as fair or poor, the PCS, the handicap status of the population, deaths of males and females aged 15 to 64 years and years of potential life lost (the summary measure of premature death). There were positive,
although generally weaker, correlations with many of the variables for admissions to hospital: an exception was the correlation of substantial significance with high rates of admission for infectious and parasitic diseases (0.76).

## Changes in socioeconomic status

Marked variations were recorded between 1986 and 1996 for a majority of the socioeconomic status variables mapped for the Northem Territory (Table 9.1). For Danwin, the largest increases were for the population aged 65 years and over (an increase of 77.3 per cent over this ten year period); low income families (49.1 per cent); dwellings without a motor vehicle (37.4 per cent); the occupational grouping of managers and administrators, and professionals ( 34.0 per cent); Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (33.1 per cent); and single parent families (32.3 per cent). The largest decreases recorded over this ten year period were for the variables for people bom overseas in predominantly non-English speaking countries and resident in Australia for less than five years (down by 35.4 per cent) and unemployment among 15 to 19 year olds (down by 22.7 per cent).

Variations of this order were also recorded in the nonmetropolitan areas of the Northem Territory. The major differences from the changes noted for Danwin were the larger increases for the occupations of managers and administrators and professionals and the number of single parent families; smaller increases in the population of people aged 65 years; and larger decreases for people who reported poor proficiency in English.
Substantial variations were recorded in income support payments to residents of Darwin for all of the payment types analysed. The number of recipients for each of the payment types increased substantially, with the number of disability support pensioners increasing by 67.9 per cent (Table 9.1). Similar, although smaller, increases were recorded in the non-metropolitan areas of the Northern Territory for recipients of the Age and Disability Support Pensions, while larger increases were recorded for people receiving unemployment benefits and dependent children in families receiving income support.

## Changes in death rates

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

In Darwin, the largest decreases were recorded for deaths of people aged from 15 to 64 years from diseases of the circulatory system (down by 32.8 per cent), accidents, poisonings and violence (down by 13.9 per cent) and respiratory system diseases (down by 13.7 per cent). All causes mortality was 19.1 per cent lower over this period, marginally more so for females (20.6 per cent) than for males ( 16.9 per cent).
There were also reductions in rates of premature death in the non-metropolitan areas of the Northem Territory for all but lung cancer, for which there was a marled increase ( 54.5 per cent). The reductions were all greater than those recorded for Darwin.

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 Darwin 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 Darwin, as there is no reliable way to do this. The data in Chapter 3 have been
mapped by postcode area 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 75 years of age, their rates are lower in the older age groups. Rates for females follow a pattem of a decline in the 70 to 74 year age group, then increasing over the next age group before declining. As can be seen from Figure 4.1, rates for males increase with each age group.

Figure 4.1: Age pensioners, Northern Territory, 1996


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

Male rates are marginally higher in each age group under 40 years for those receiving the Disability Support Pension, with substantially higher rates at older ages (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, Northern Territory, 1996


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

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## 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 $^{1}$ | All Capitals |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1996 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 5.1 | 3.9 | 5.6 | 3.1 | 2.2 | 3.9 |
| 1989 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 2.1 | 1.2 | 2.6 |
| Includes Queanbeyan (C) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

${ }^{1}$ Includes Queanbeyan (C)
Source: See Data sources, Appendix 1.3

## Darwin

## Postcodes (aggregates of suburbs)

In 1989, there were 1,081 people in receipt of a Disability Support Pension in Darwin, 2.1 per cent of the eligible population (females aged from 15 to 59 years and males aged from 15 to 64 years). By 1996 the number had almost doubled to 1,815 people and the proportion had increased to 3.1 per cent. Despite the increase, the proportion in Darwin remained well below the All capitals average of 3.9 per cent (Table 4.4).
The highest proportion of disability support pensioners (3.6 per cent) was recorded in the southern postcode area of Palmerston (Map 4.3). Palmerston also recorded the lowest IRSD score in Darwin as well as having high proportions for many of the indicators of socioeconomic disadvantage, such as housing authority rented dwellings, low income families and early school leavers.
Darwin: South West and Darwin: North West had 3.5 per cent and 3.2 per cent of their eligible population in receipt of a Disability Support Pension, respectively. The lowest proportion was recorded in Darwin: North East (2.1 per cent).

None of the postcode areas in Darwin had more than 700 disability support pensioners. The highest numbers were recorded in Darwin: North West (668 people) and Darwin: South West (530). Darwin: North East had 312 disability support pensioners and Palmerston had 305.

The correlation analysis was not undertaken as there were too few areas.

Map 4.3
Disability support pensioners*, Darwin, 1996
as a percentage of males aged 15 to 64 years and females aged 15 to 59 years in each postcode area*


Per cent disability support pensioners*
$3.5 \%$ or more
3.0 to $3.4 \%$
2.5 to $2.9 \%$
2.0 to $2.4 \%$
fewer than 2.0\%
"Includes the Disability Support Pension paid by the Department of Family and Community Services and the Service Pension (Permanently
Incapacitated) paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs
\#SLAs have been grouped to approximate postcode areas

## State/Territory comparison

In 1996, the proportions of people in receipt of the Disability Support Pension (see previous text page for details of those included) were generally higher in the non-metropolitan areas than in the capital cities, with the exception of South Australia, Western Australia and Northern Territory. The average for the Rest of State/Territory areas was 5.0 per cent, with similar proportions recorded in Queensland ( 4.6 per cent), Victoria ( 4.9 per cent) and South Australia ( 5.0 per cent). The highest proportion was in Tasmania ( 6.2 per cent) and the lowest in the Northem Territory ( 2.7 per cent). Comparisons between 1989 and 1996 show an increase in the proportions across all States and Territories, with the largest increases evident in Tasmania, South Australia and New South Wales.

Table 4.5: Disability support pensioners, State/Territory
Per cent

|  | NSW | Vic | QId | SA | WA | Tas | NT | ACT |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Total $^{\mathbf{1}}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $\mathbf{1 9 9 6}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Capital city | 3.8 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 5.1 | 3.9 | 5.6 | 3.1 | $2.2^{2}$ |
| Other major urban centres ${ }^{3}$ | 6.1 | 4.7 | 3.9 | .. | .. | . | . .9 |  |
| Rest of State/Territory | 5.7 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 5.0 | 3.7 | 6.2 | 2.7 | .. |
| Whole of State/Tenitory | 4.5 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 5.1 | 3.8 | 6.0 | 2.8 | 2.1 |
| 1989 |  |  |  |  |  | 5.0 |  |  |
| Rest of State/Territory | 3.9 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.7 | 2.2 | -4 |

${ }^{1}$ Total for Whole of State/Territory includes 'Other Territories' (J ervis Bay, Christmas Island and Cocos Islands)
${ }^{2}$ Includes Queanbeyan (C)
${ }^{3}$ Includes Newcastle and Wollongong (NSW); Geelong (Vic); and Gold Coast-Tweed Heads and Townsville-Thuringowa (QId)
${ }^{4}$ Data unreliable: included with ACT total
Source: See Data sources, Appendix 1.3

## Rest of Territory

In 1989, 1,228 people in the non-metropolitan areas of the Northem Territory were receiving a Disability Support Pension ( 2.2 per cent of the population aged from 15 to 64 years for males and 15 to 59 years for females). By 1996, both the number and proportion had increased to 1,859 people and 2.7 per cent respectively. Despite the increase, the Northem Territory had the lowest proportion of any Rest of State/Territory area.

SLAs with the highest proportions of disability support pensioners were in Tennant Creek ( 4.9 per cent), Coomalie ( 4.8 per cent) and Alice Springs ( 3.6 per cent). Gulf, with 3.0 per cent, was the only SLA mapped in the second highest range (Map 4.4)
SLAs with proportions in the middle range mapped were the town of Katherine ( 2.9 per cent) in the north of the Territory, and Petermann ( 2.7 per cent) and Sandover-Balance ( 2.5 per cent) in the south.

SLAs with between 2.0 and 2.5 per cent of the eligible population in receipt of a Disability Support Pension formed a contiguous area in the centre of the Northem Territory. This area included Tanami ( 2.4 per cent), Tableland, Daly and Elsey Balance (each with 2.3 per cent), Tennant Creek Balance ( 2.2 per cent), Victoria and West Amhem (both 2.1 per cent) and Cox-Finniss ( 2.0 per cent).

All of the SLAs with fewer than 2.0 per cent of their eligible population receiving a Disability Support Pension were in the northem area of the Teritory. The lowest proportions were recorded in J abiru ( 0.6 per cent) and South Alligator ( 0.8 per cent), and represented just six and eight pensioners, respectively. The SLAs of Nhulunbuy, Groote Eylandt, Litchfield [Part A], East Amhem Balance and Bathurst Melville also had proportions below 2.0 per cent.

Overall, the number of people in receipt of a Disability Support Pension in the non-metropolitan areas of the Northem Territory was low. The highest numbers were in Alice Springs (629 people, with the highest number in the suburb of Larapinta (199 people)), Litchfield [Part B] (204) and Katherine (199 people). Most SLAs had fewer than 100 disability support pensioners.
There was no consistent evidence in the correlation analysis of an association at the SLA level between high disability support pensioners and socioeconomic status.

Map 4.4
Disability support pensioners*, Northern Territory, 1996
as a percentage of males aged 15 to 64 years and females aged 15 to 59 years in each Statistical Local Area

Per cent disability support pensioners*
$3.5 \%$ or more
3.0 to $3.4 \%$
2.5 to $2.9 \%$
2.0 to $2.4 \%$
fewer than 2.0\%
*Includes the Disability Support Pension paid by the Department of Family and
Community Services and the Service
Pension (Permanently Incapacitated) paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs


Source: See Data sources, Appendix 1.3
Details of map boundaries are in Appendix 1.2
Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia


Access to services is of particular importance to people with a disability and is reflected in the graph adjacent. The proportion of the eligible population receiving a Disability Support Pension is highest in the People Accessible category ( 3.0 per cent) and Remote areas ( 3.1 per cent) and lowest in the Very Remote areas ( 2.3 per cent), with a slightly higher proportion of 2.6 per cent in the Moderately Accessible areas.

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Note: Amended figures are in column/row V18
Table 8.2: Correlation matrix for SLAs in non-metropolitan areas of Northem Territory ...cont


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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.
Care should be taken when interpreting the health status and health service utilisation data for the non-metropolitan areas of the Northem Territory, due to the small number of cases and sparsely populated areas.

## 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: 198589 and 1992-95) datasets are seven years later. The data for hospital admissions (see Differences in data treatment between editions, Chapter 6) and services and facilities are not discussed in this chapter because of difficulties in comparing the available series over time.
Readers should note that some variables are not discussed below because the data were available only for the latest period
Changes in socioeconomic status variables
Marked variations were recorded between 1986 and 1996 for a majority of the socioeconomic status variables mapped for the Northem Territory (Table 9.1). For Darwin, the largest increases were for the population aged 65 years and over (an increase of 77.3 per cent over this ten year period); low income families (49.1 per cent); dwellings without a motor vehicle (37.4 per cent); the
occupational grouping of managers and administrators, and professionals ( 34.0 per cent); Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (33.1 per cent); and single parent families (32.3 per cent). The largest decreases recorded over this ten year period were for the variables for people born overseas in predominantly non-English speaking countries and resident in Australia for less than five years (down by 35.4 per cent) and unemployment among 15 to 19 year olds (down by 22.7 per cent).

Variations of this order were also recorded in the nonmetropolitan areas of the Northem Territory. The major differences from the changes noted for Darwin were the larger increases for the occupations of managers and administrators and professionals and the number of single parent families; smaller increases in the population of people aged 65 years; and larger decreases for people who reported poor proficiency in English.
Substantial variations were recorded in income support payments to residents of Darwin for all of the payment types analysed. The number of recipients for each of the payment types increased substantially, with the number of disability support pensioners increasing by 67.9 per cent (Table 9.1). Similar, although smaller, increases were recorded in the non-metropolitan areas of the Northem Territory for recipients of the Age and Disability Support Pensions, while larger increases were recorded for people receiving unemployment benefits and dependent children in families receiving income support.

Table 9.1: Changes in demographic and socioeconomic status variables, by Section of Territory, Northern Territory

| Variable | Darwin | Rest of Territory | Whole Territory |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1986 to 1996 |  |  |  |
| 0 to 4 year olds | 5.9 | 17.0 | 12.1 |
| 65 years \& over | 77.3 | 59.0 | 66.7 |
| Single parent families | 32.3 | 40.5 | 36.6 |
| Low income families | 49.1 | 36.1 | 40.0 |
| Unemployed people | -6.7 | -22.3 | -15.1 |
| Unemployed people aged 15 to 19 years | -22.7 | -29.5 | -26.3 |
| Female labour force participation (20 to 54 years) | 3.2 | 2.9 | 2.4 |
| Early school leavers | -2.0 | 15.6 | 8.0 |
| Unskilled \& semi-skilled workers | 4.9 | 27.6 | 18.5 |
| Managers \& administrators, \& Professionals | 34.0 | 51.3 | 41.8 |
| Aboriginal \& Torres Strait Islander people | 33.1 | 33.2 | 33.2 |
| People ${ }^{1}$ born overseas \& resident for less than five years | -35.4 | -32.1 | -34.5 |
| People ${ }^{1}$ bom overseas \& resident for 5 years or more | 23.3 | 14.0 | 20.6 |
| People ${ }^{1}$ born overseas: speaks English not well/not at all | -8.8 | -96.7 | -9.8 |
| Housing authority rented dwellings | -10.9 | 16.0 | -1.4 |
| Dwellings without a motor vehicle | 37.4 | 36.6 | 36.9 |
| 1989 to 1996 |  |  |  |
| Age pensioners | 31.3 | 12.1 | 20.3 |
| Disability support pensioners | 67.9 | 51.4 | 59.1 |
| Female sole parent pensioners | 23.6 | 23.6 | 23.6 |
| Unemployment beneficiaries | 51.9 | 142.7 | 108.9 |
| Dependent children of selected pensioners \& beneficiaries | 43.9 | 51.4 | 48.7 |

${ }^{1}$ Includes people who were born in a predominantly non-English speaking country.

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