



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

The aged care target population includes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population aged 50 years or older, compared with 65 years or older for non-Indigenous Australians. This is in recognition that health conditions associated with ageing affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at an earlier age.¹

The 2016 census revealed that the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 65 years and over was considerably smaller than for non-Indigenous people (4.8% compared to 16%). Despite having a much younger age profile than non-Indigenous people, a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reported a need for assistance in 2016 (6.7% compared with 5.3% of the non-Indigenous population).² When the age differences between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous populations were taken into account, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were almost twice as likely to need assistance with core activities (8.5% compared with 4.7% of the non-Indigenous population).³

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who reported a need for assistance increased from 5.4% in 2011 to 6.7% in 2016. This may be influenced by a range of factors including changes in propensity to identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin between Censuses.⁴

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face unique issues in terms of accessing aged care services. In a report entitled *Assuring Equity of Access and Quality Outcomes for Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: What Needs to be Done* by the Australian Association of Gerontology and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing Advisory Group the following needs were identified:

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need access to aged care services at a younger age
2. Despite their higher need, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are underrepresented in aged care programs
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people often face barriers to access including lack of culturally appropriate care and lack of service availability and choice
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can and do access mainstream services, and targeted services are also provided through the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program

¹ Assuring Equity of Access and Quality Outcomes for Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: What Needs to be Done by the Australian Association of Gerontology and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing Advisory Group

² <http://abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20Population%20Data%20Summary~10>

³ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Core%20Activity%20Need%20for%20Assistance~27>

⁴ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Core%20Activity%20Need%20for%20Assistance~27>

- The Australian National Audit Office Report and the Tune Review have made recommendations for reform and/or expansion of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program.⁵

Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in NMR as identified in 2016 Census

Age	Hume	Moreland	Nillumbik	Yarra	Banyule	Darebin	Whittlesea
Under 50 years	1246	679	179	305	563	934	1413
Over 50 Years	213	136	49	59	151	213	213
Total	1459	815	228	364	714	1147	1626

Source: ABS Census 2016

Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in NMR disclosing they need assistance with daily activities

Age	Hume	Moreland	Nillumbik	Yarra	Banyule	Darebin	Whittlesea
Under 50 years	78	33	0	13	13	54	75
Over 50 years	38	14	5	18	19	34	33
Total	116	47	5	31	32	88	108

Source: ABS Census 2016

Note: Core Needs for Assistance Data from the ABS census relates to measures the number of people with a profound or severe disability. People with a profound or severe disability are defined as those people needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long-term health condition (lasting six months or more) or old age.

This document is created by Lisa Tribuzio, Diversity Advisor from the North Metro Sector Development team. Diversity Advisors are funded by both the Victorian State Government and the Commonwealth and support HACC-PYP and CHSP funded organisations to undertake diversity planning. For any questions regarding this document, email lisat@hwpcp.org.au

© July 2018

⁵ Assuring Equity of Access and Quality Outcomes for Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: What Needs to be Done by the Australian Association of Gerontology and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing Advisory Group