

VIOLENCE RESOURCE KIT

FAST FACTS

 AUSTRALIA

244 people died
as a result of assault in 2016 ⁽¹⁾

21,660 people were
admitted to hospital due to
an assault in 2015-16 ⁽²⁾

 WESTERN AUSTRALIA

There were **141 deaths** and
20,140 hospitalisations
due to violence between
2011 and 2015. ⁽³⁾



Males accounted
for **61%** of all
hospitalisations due
to violence between
2011 and 2015. ⁽³⁾



ALCOHOL
CONTRIBUTED TO
44.4% OF FATALITIES
due to interpersonal
violence between 2000
and 2007. ⁽⁴⁾

Injury is defined as the intentional or unintentional harm to a person resulting from contact with an object, substance or another person, either through excessive energy or the sudden absence of vital elements, such as oxygen. ⁽⁵⁾

VIOLENCE OVERVIEW

Research indicates that two in five people in Australia have experienced at least one incidence of violence since the age of 15.⁽⁶⁾ The World Health Organization defines violence as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation”.⁽⁷⁾ Interpersonal violence is commonly broken down into family violence and community violence. Family violence encompasses domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse, whilst community violence is when a violent act is committed towards an acquaintance or stranger.⁽⁷⁾

This resource kit provides an overview of violence in Western Australia (WA) for health professionals and people working in violence prevention.

INCIDENCE OF VIOLENCE IN WA

According to the WA Police Force Incident Management System, there are a range of violence incidents reported and recorded by WA Police every year.⁽⁸⁾ The system indicates that in the 2016/17 financial year there were: 19,352 family assault, 12,050 non-family assault, 11,122 breaches of Violence Restraint Orders, 6,552 threatening behaviours and 5,654 sexual offences recorded by WA Police.⁽⁸⁾



If you, or someone you care about is in danger and you think immediate action is needed, call the police immediately on 000.

Alternatively, if there is no immediate danger, contact a 24 hour support service, such as the Crisis Care Helpline (9223 1111), Women's Domestic Violence Helpline (9223 1188), Men's Domestic Violence Helpline (9223 1199) or 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732).

Partner:



Department of
Health



VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVES

Deliberately causing physical harm to another person is illegal in Australia. Police Orders and Violence Restraining Orders, along with a number of policies regarding the availability and harmful use of alcohol, guns and other weapons are currently in place to reduce the incidence of violence in the community. Other initiatives working towards reducing the rate of violence in WA include community awareness campaigns and educational programs which aim to change social norms that foster violence.

Effective strategies to reduce the prevalence of violence in WA include interventions that;

- address risk factors while also being tailored to high-risk populations.
- are developed in partnership with the target groups.
- empower individuals and communities to engage in the interventions.⁽¹²⁾

PREVALENCE OF INJURIES DUE TO VIOLENCE IN WA

Violence contributed to 3.6% of injury hospitalisations in WA between 2011 and 2015.⁽³⁾ People aged 25 – 44 had the highest incident rate of any age group, contributing to over 50% of all hospitalisations due to violence.⁽³⁾ Table 1 provides an overview of hospitalisations due to violence across WA's Health Regions. Rates of violence hospitalisations were higher in regional areas of WA in 2011-2015, with the Kimberley experiencing more than 10 times the WA State violence hospitalisation rate, followed by the Pilbara (2.50) and Midwest (2.23).⁽⁹⁾

REGION	NUMBER OF HOSPITALISATIONS	SRR*
East Metropolitan	3,334	0.77
Goldfields	728	1.68
Great Southern	283	0.84
Kimberley	3,104	10.86
Midwest	937	2.23
North Metropolitan	3,010	0.62
Pilbara	1,353	2.50
South Metropolitan	3,015	0.70
South West	700	0.68
Wheatbelt	470	1.08

TABLE 1. Number and standardised rate ratio of violence hospitalisations across WA (2011-2015).⁽⁹⁾

*Standardised rate ratio (SRR) is the regions' rate relative to the WA rate.

VIOLENCE COSTS IN WA

In 2012, the total lifetime cost of violence injury hospitalisations and fatalities in WA was estimated to be \$251 million, or \$78,983 per violence incident, due to health care costs, long-term care needs, loss of paid productivity, and quality of life lost.⁽¹⁰⁾ However, the financial impact from violence is largely unknown due to underreporting of violence in Australia.⁽¹¹⁾ Underreporting can be caused by a number of contributing factors including:

- the victim not recognising that the violent act is criminal;
- fear that reporting the violence will result in more extreme violence;
- the victim believing that they can deal with the violence themselves; or
- the victim not believing the violence justifies police time.⁽¹¹⁾



WHAT POPULATIONS ARE AT HEIGHTENED RISK OF INJURIES DUE TO VIOLENCE?

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

Hospitalisations due to violence are more prevalent among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with 45.8% of violence hospitalisations in WA being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples between 2011 and 2015.⁽³⁾ The higher violence rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has been attributed to long-term factors related to colonisation and the dispossession of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land; including poor overall health outcomes, high unemployment, poor housing conditions, financial stress, inter-generational trauma and low levels of education.⁽¹³⁾

MALES

Hospitalisation data in WA indicates that males are hospitalised more frequently due to violence, contributing to 61% of hospitalisations in WA between 2011 and 2015.⁽³⁾ When analysing the type of violent act experienced, males are more likely to experience physical violence, while females are more likely to experience sexual violence.⁽¹⁴⁾ Despite males experiencing a higher injury hospitalisation rate⁽³⁾, females accounted for three out of five victims of reported violent acts to police in WA in 2016.⁽¹⁵⁾

LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Individuals from the most disadvantaged areas of WA (based on the Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage) experienced interpersonal violence at six times more than individuals living in the least socioeconomically disadvantaged areas.⁽⁴⁾ Economic and social disadvantage have been associated with high rates of violence due to increased levels of social marginalisation, unemployment, limited access to educational opportunities and income inequity.⁽¹¹⁾ Additionally, financial insecurity can contribute to greater reliance on others, including partners, family and friends, making individuals vulnerable to social and emotional power.⁽¹⁶⁾

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse due to their dependence on family and carers to provide support, for example reducing the level of care provided to the individual with the disability is a form of abuse.⁽¹²⁾ Research suggests that the higher prevalence of violence among people with disabilities is due to a range of contributing factors including: lower employment rates, higher rates of personal support required for daily living, reduced physical and emotional defences, and discrimination.⁽¹⁷⁾



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