



Admissions into aged care

Australia's aged care system offers a range of services to support people's varying personal and health circumstances. This fact sheet presents highlights from the GEN topic Admissions into aged care.

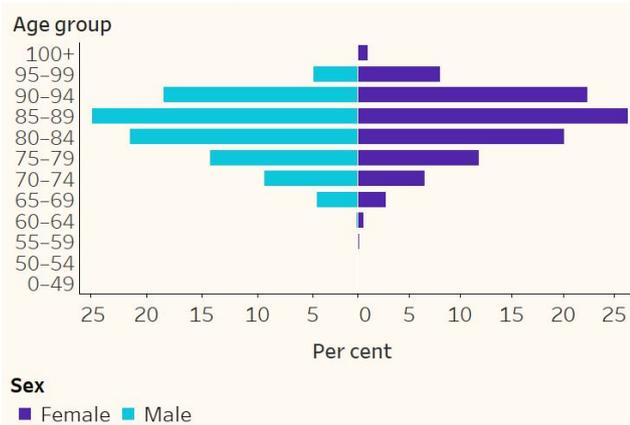
Aged care admissions refer to the number of entries into an aged care service over a specified period, rather than the number of people who entered the service. People are counted as an 'admission' to aged care when they start using a service, and are counted again if they return (excluding short periods of leave). A person's first admission to an aged care service is counted only once, although they will have multiple first admissions should they use a range of aged care services. Data on this fact sheet relate to admissions to residential care, home care and transition care.

In 2020–21, there were around 250,000 admissions to aged care services in Australia (over 67,000 to permanent residential care, over 82,000 to respite residential care, over 77,000 to home care, and over 23,000 to transition care).

Aged care admissions by age and sex

Although the majority of aged care admissions are for older people, admissions for younger people also occur. In 2020–21, over 3,200 admissions to aged care services were for people aged under 65 (representing 1.3% of total admissions). More women than men are entering aged care; nearly 3 in 5 (59%) admissions to aged care services were for women. Higher proportions of women entered permanent residential care at an older age compared with men (Figure 1).

Figure 1: First admissions into permanent residential care, by age and sex, 2020–21

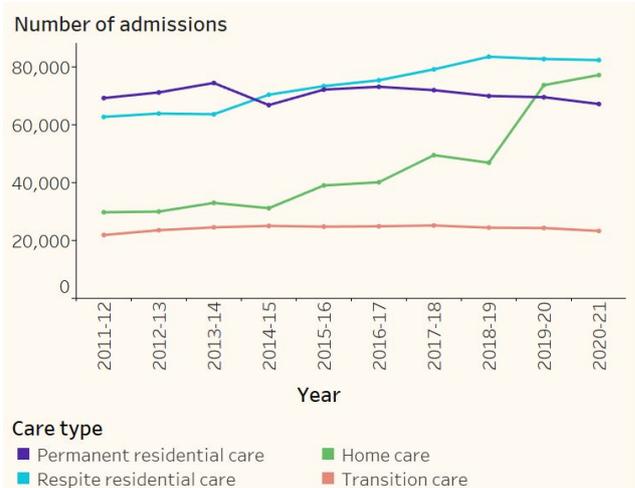


Aged care admissions over time

More people in Australia are now entering aged care services than 10 years ago, which partly reflects the growing older population.

Since 2011–12, the number of annual admissions to aged care services has increased by 36% (from just over 183,500 to almost 250,000 admissions). The number of admissions to permanent residential care has decreased by 3.0%, whereas admissions to respite residential care increased by 31%. The largest increase in admissions was to home care, which saw a 159% increase in admissions over the decade (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Total admissions to aged care services, by care type, 2011–12 to 2020–21



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians admissions to aged care

Indigenous Australians are eligible to receive aged care services at an earlier age than non-Indigenous people. In 2020–21, Indigenous Australians accounted for 1.5% of admissions to aged care services.

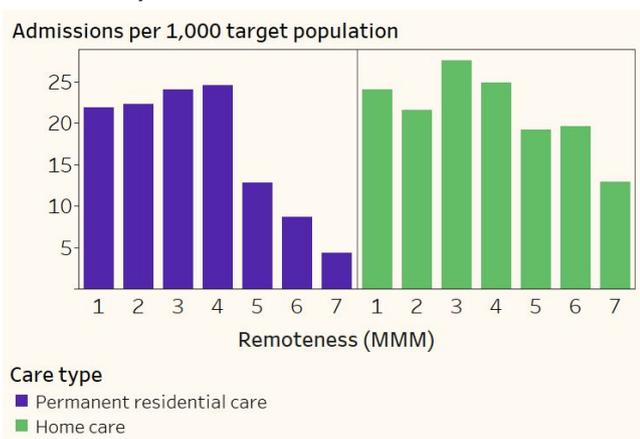
Admissions to aged care for Indigenous Australians more commonly occurred at younger ages than for non-Indigenous Australians. 1 in 5 (20%) admissions to permanent residential care were for Indigenous Australians aged under 65, compared with 1.2% for non-Indigenous Australians.

Remoteness

The proportion of admissions to aged care services for people in the target population varies between remoteness areas. The location of services may mean that people living in remote areas need to move to more populated areas to access higher-level aged care services.

The Modified Monash Model (MMM) is one of several classifications for defining whether a location is a city, rural, remote or very remote. The model measures remoteness and population size on a scale of Modified Monash (MM) category MM 1 (metropolitan areas) to MM 7 (very remote communities). In 2020–21, across most aged care services, with the exception of transition care, rates of admissions were highest in large and medium rural towns (MM 3 and MM 4). The rate of admissions to permanent residential aged care was highest in more densely populated areas (MM 1–4) and declined with increasing remoteness (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Total admissions to permanent residential care and home care per 1,000 target population, by remoteness, 2020–21



Note: Only the total admissions for people aged 70 and over and a target population of all people aged 70 and over was used for these calculations to align with Australian Government planning ratios.

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Admissions for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Many older Australians, including those living in residential aged care, were born overseas, speak a variety of languages, may not speak English fluently or have different religious or cultural practices. These characteristics can influence how people access and engage with aged care services and the support they require.

Across all aged care services in 2020–21, close to 1 in 4 (23%) admissions were for people born in non-English-speaking countries. The greatest proportion of admissions for people who preferred to speak a language other than English was to home care (17%).

COVID-19 and aged care admissions

Australia has faced significant challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 can be more serious for people who are vulnerable, including older Australians.

The number of people entering aged care services is likely to have been impacted by COVID-19. In some cases, people may have chosen not to enter care due to the risks of virus transmission, choosing instead to seek assistance from formal community care services or to receive additional informal support from family, friends or neighbours.

For further information related to older Australians and COVID-19, including access to advice and support resources, see the Australian Government's My Aged Care website.

Where can I find out more?

GEN Topic: Admissions into aged care

<<https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Topics/Admissions-into-aged-care>>

My Aged Care

Information for older Australians on Coronavirus (COVID-19). <<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/news-and-updates/information-older-australians-coronavirus-covid-19>>

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Information and data on aged care in Australia

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