

## People with long-term health conditions

Long-term health conditions are conditions that are diagnosed by a healthcare professional, persist for six months or longer and include health conditions that may recur from time to time, or are controlled by medication, or are in remission.<sup>2</sup>

Thirty seven percent (37%) of SESLHD's population have one or more long-term health conditions.<sup>1</sup>

For people aged 65 years and above, the most common long-term health condition is arthritis, affecting 25% of this age group.<sup>2</sup>

For people aged under 64 years, asthma is the most common long-term condition, affecting 6% of this age group.<sup>2</sup>

For young people aged 12-25 years, mental health conditions are the most prevalent, affecting 17% of this age group.<sup>2</sup>

For females, the most commonly experienced long-term health condition is arthritis (8%).

For men, the most commonly experienced long-term health condition is asthma (6%).

The top five countries of birth for people in SESLHD who speak a language other than English and have the highest absolute number of long term health conditions are:

China, Greece, Italy, Egypt, and Lebanon<sup>2</sup>.



Long-term health conditions are the leading causes of illness, disability and death, comprising almost two-thirds of the burden of disease in Australia.<sup>3</sup>

- **Health Disparity:** Long-term health conditions are responsible for more than two-thirds (70%) of the gap in disease burden between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.<sup>4</sup>
- **Rising multi-morbidities:** As the life expectancy of the population increases, so does the proportion of people living with chronic conditions. In SESLHD, the rate of multi-morbidity rises with age and reaches 30% among people aged 45 to 64 years, 65% among those aged 65 to 84 and 82% among SESLHD residents aged 85+<sup>1</sup>. With this complexity, there is an increased need to effectively manage information between different providers, coordinate and manage care, and reduce care fragmentation.<sup>5</sup>
- **Diabetes:** A total of 32,320 SESLHD residents are reported to have diabetes (excluding gestational diabetes). Diabetes is a long term health condition with one of the highest hospitalisation rates in SESLHD.<sup>6</sup> The largest absolute number of people with diabetes reside in Sutherland (n=8,898) followed by Bayside (n=7,719) and Georges River (n=6,700)<sup>2</sup>. Bayside is the LGA with the largest proportion of its population (4%) living with diabetes. The top 10 countries of birth for people with diabetes in SESLHD who speak a language other than English are: China, Greece, Lebanon, Philippines, Egypt, Italy, North Macedonia and India, Hong Kong and Indonesia.<sup>2</sup>
- **COVID and long term health conditions:** COVID has disrupted our health systems, impacting vulnerable population groups. People with long term health conditions including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are at increased risk of developing more serious illness both due to and because of COVID-19.<sup>7</sup> In addition, with the returning high rates of hospitalisation, it is also likely that these people might have compromised access to the acute care setting.<sup>6</sup>

1. South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, 'Journey to Excellence Strategy 2018-2021.'
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, 'Health: Census of population and housing: Census dictionary.'
3. Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council 2017, 'National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions.'
4. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2016, 'Australian Burden of Disease Study: impact and causes of illness and death in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2011 – summary report.'
5. O'Callaghan, C., Osborne, J., Barr, M., Conway, D., Harris-Roxas, B. 2022, 'Implementation of the Integrated Care for People with Chronic Conditions (ICPCC) program in SESLHD.'
6. NSW Health 2023, 'NSW Combined Admitted Patient Epidemiology Data and ABS population estimates (SAPHaRI).'
7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022, 'Chronic Conditions and Multimorbidity.'