

2006 Review of Government Service Provision across Australia
A snapshot of NSW human services performance

Aged Care

Positives

- **Higher than national average** of aged care assessments of people aged 70+ and indigenous people aged 50+
- NSW also reported the **second lowest average** number of complaints per 1000 residents at 5.6 (after Queensland); national average was 6.8 complaints.

Negatives

- **Lowest average provision** of residential aged care, CACP and EACH (community care) services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the eligible population. Overall, for every 1000 indigenous people aged 50 years and over, NSW reported 31.3 places while the national average was 49.4 places and Victoria reported 66.7 places. For CACP services, NSW reported 19.1 CACP places, the national CACP average was 26.2 places and by comparison Victoria provided 49.1 places to indigenous people.
- Despite recent reductions, NSW still had the **highest average number** of residents per room in residential aged care at 1.58 in July 2005; the national average was 1.41.
- **Lowest real expenditure** for Home and Community Care (HACC) Services per person aged over 70.
- NSW reported **the lowest proportion** of all states and territories of HACC clients under 70 years and consequently also the highest proportion of HACC clients aged 70 years and over.

Disability

Throughout this Chapter, NSW consistently stated that “the number of service users is under-reported ... due to low response rates” for the Minimum Data Set for disability services. In the NSW Government jurisdictional response, there was no mention of a commitment to improve these poor MDS response rates. Victoria too occasionally reported that figures were understated.

The total number of users of CSTDA services in NSW was 26, 846 and the number in Victoria was 44,581.

Positives

- The Productivity Commission has detailed a **range of improvements to data collection and reporting** which NCOSS supports; especially their intention to report on younger people with disability in residential aged care facilities from 2007. They will also report on respite services and community support services from 2007.

Negatives

- NSW reported the **second lowest** proportion 2.8% of potential population using accommodation support services in 2003-04 (after the Northern Territory). The national average was 4.1% and Victoria had 5.2%.
- Excluding ACT & NT, NSW reported the **lowest** proportion 17.6% of potential population using employment services in 2003-04. The national average was 19.6% and Victoria had 23.1%.
- NSW reported **lowest** proportion 2.8% of potential population using community access services in 2003-04. The national average was 6% and Victoria had 7.7%.
- NSW reported the **lowest by far** number of users of community accommodation and care services as a proportion of all accommodation support service users in 2003-04. NSW was 73.1%, the national average was 82.9% and Victoria was 89.9%.
- Overall, the proportion of people under 65 years born in a non-English speaking country had a disproportionately low usage of accommodation support services at 0.5% compared to the total population of 1.6% but NSW reported the **lowest** proportion of 0.2%.
- Similarly, NSW reported the **lowest by far** proportion of labour force and employment participation by people aged 15 – 64 years born in a non-English speaking country with profound or severe core activity restriction at 8.5%. The national average was 15.4% and Victoria was 20.6%.
- By all given financial measures for 2004-05, NSW was the **highest spending jurisdiction** on administration expenditure as a proportion of total expenditure by around 2%. Interestingly, this represents a reduction over previous years for NSW.

Housing

Positives

- **At national average** recurrent spending per public housing dwelling
- **Lower than national average** rent levels (compared to market rent) for public housing tenants
- **Highest** affordability levels for community housing tenants

Negatives

- **Equal lowest** level of tenant satisfaction with public housing services
- **Second highest** proportion of eligible people who spend more than 30% of their income on rent

SAAP

Positives

- **Only State or Territory** to contribute more than 50% of total recurrent SAAP program funding.
- **Below national average** client turn away rate.

Negatives

- **Lower than national average** proportion of SAAP clients were able to be subsequently placed in independent private rental or public housing, with one-third placed in other forms of non-independent housing (including other SAAP services).
- **Highest proportion of SAAP clients** who received 6 or more support periods in a year.

Corrective services

Positives

- **Much higher than national average** proportion of prisoners are serving in open, as opposed to secure, prisons.
- **Only state to operate periodic detention centres** as an alternative to full-time imprisonment.

Negatives

- Above national average imprisonment rate across all categories - men, women, indigenous, and non-indigenous.
- Below national average rate of employment for prisoners and offenders. Places available are not keeping up with growth in numbers.
- Below national average rate of education and training for prisoners and offenders. Places available are not keeping up with growth in numbers.
- Second highest overcrowding rate in prisons.

Child Protection and Out of Home Care

Positives

- **Highest** overall spending on child protection and out of home care (4th highest on real recurrent spending per child)
- **Highest** % of Aboriginal out of home care placements according with the Aboriginal Placement Principle
- **Highest** % of children in care aged under 12 who are placed in home based care
- **Above national average** placement stability for children exiting care within 12 months of entering

Negatives

- **Lower than national average** placement stability of children exiting care after more than 12 months in care
- **High proportion** of indigenous children on care and protection orders
- **Higher than national average** proportion of indigenous children in out of home care
- **Unable to distinguish** between the costs of residential and non residential care
- **Unable to provide** data on re-substantiation rates, a key indicator of the safety of children and the effectiveness of child protection work

School Education

Positives

- **Third highest spending** on primary school students (includes K-year 2 class size reduction spending)
- **Above national benchmark** for literacy achievement of year 3 and 5 students (note that literacy achievements of indigenous students had fallen below national average by year 7)
- **High numeracy scores** for year 3 students, with a drop in year 5 and then a marked drop in year 7 to below the national average
- **Higher than national average** results for year 6 science literacy
- **Highest completion rate** in year 12 for students of low socio-economic background (note the rate is still 13% below the completion rate for high socio-economic students)

Negatives

- **Biggest gaps in achievement** between students from metropolitan/provincial areas and those in remote areas against both the reading and numeracy benchmarks (particularly marked for year 7)
- **Below national average** completion rates for students of medium and high socio-economic backgrounds
- **Below national average** retention rate to year 12 (note indigenous students retention rate to year 12 is down to 30%)

Vocational education and training

Positives

- **Increase** (2001-2003) of number of graduates who completed VET qualifications

Negatives

- **Lower than national average** proportion of graduates who were in employment after completing a VET course
- **Lower than national average** proportion of graduates who were in employment after completing a VET course who are women, people with a disability, people with a language other than English and people from a remote region
- **Lower than national average** proportion of graduates who were not employed prior to commencing a VET course and who were employed after completing a VET course
- **Lower than national average** proportion of graduates who achieved their main reason for doing the VET course
- **Lower than national average** proportion of graduates who achieved their main reason for doing the VET course who are females, from rural and remote communities or who have a disability
- **Regular decline** (2001-03) in the number of VET qualifications completed by indigenous students

Children's Services

Positives

- The representation of children from regional and remote communities in children's services was **higher** than their representation in the community overall

Negatives

- **Lowest spender** on children's services per child for the 0-12 age group
- The number of children aged 0-5 using State funded and/or provided preschools **has fallen** every year from 2001 to the present
- The representation of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children from indigenous backgrounds and children with a disability, among children from special needs groups attending State funded/and or provided preschools was **lower** than their overall representation in the community

Health

Positives

- **Above national average** per person spending on health
- **Progressive decline** (1999-2003) in neonatal death rates (death of a live born infant within 28 days of birth)
- **Increase in real expenditure per person** on mental health from \$87.9 in 1999-2000 to \$101.9 in 2003-04 (However, this is the **third lowest expenditure per person** in comparison to other States and Territories and **lower** than the national average of \$106.80)
- **Lowest** suicide death rate per 100,000 people.

Negatives

- **Did not report** on elective surgery waiting times by clinical urgency category.
- **Significant increase** in re-admission per 100 people to hospitals from 2000-2003
- **Did not publish data** on Indigenous foetal, neonatal or perinatal deaths from 1999 to 2003
- **Lowest participation rates** of women in cervical screening programs, overall, across all age groups and showed a decline in the number of women participating, across all age groups, from 1999-2000 to 2003-2004.
- **Highest recurrent expenditure** for psychiatric hospitals and ambulatory care but **lowest spending** on non government community based mental health services
- **Massive decrease** (2000-2004) in consumer and carer participation in service provider decision-making