



Updated evidence relating to the mental health and wellbeing of the Australian population, the 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, has found that one in five of Australian adults had a mental disorder in the previous 12 months and that almost half the total Australian population would experience a mental disorder at some time in their lives.

### Statistics from the 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing<sup>1</sup>

Almost half the total population (45.5%) experience a mental health disorder at some point in the lifetime.

One in five, or 20% of the Australian population aged 16-85 years, experienced mental disorders in the previous 12 months [of their survey]. This is equivalent to 3.2 million Australians.

One in 16 (6.2%) had affective (mood) disorders; one in seven (14.4%) had anxiety disorders; and one in 20 (5.1%) had substance use disorders.

Based on these prevalence rates, it is estimated that nearly one million Australians have affective disorders; over 2.3 million had anxiety disorders and over 800,000 had substance use disorders in the previous 12 months.

The prevalence of mental disorders declines with age:

from 1 in 4 young people (16-24) to 1 in 20 (75-85 years).

Only one third of people (34.9%) with a mental health disorder used health services for their mental health problem – and two thirds of people with a mental health disorder did not report using services for their mental health disorder.

### Further Statistics

Depression and anxiety are the most prevalent mental disorders experienced by Australians. Depression alone is predicted to be one of the world's largest health problems by 2020.<sup>2</sup>

Around one million Australian adults and 100,000 young people live with depression each year. On average, one in five people will experience depression in their lives; one in four females and one in six males.<sup>3</sup>

Among young Australians aged 12-25 years, depression is the most common mental health problem. Around one-in-ten young Australians will

experience an anxiety disorder in any given 12-month period.<sup>4</sup>

At least one third of young people have had an episode of mental illness by the age of 25 years.<sup>5</sup>

Mental disorders and suicide account for 14.2 % of Australia's total health burden – which equates to 374,541 years of healthy life lost (DALYs).<sup>6</sup>

Estimates suggest that up to 75 % of people presenting with alcohol and drug problems also have additional mental health problems.<sup>7</sup>

Reports indicate that up to 85% of homeless people have a mental illness.

<sup>1</sup> *National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007

<sup>2</sup> *The Global Burden of Disease: A Comprehensive Assessment of Mortality and Disability, Injuries, and Risk Factors in 1990 and Projected to 2020*, World Bank, Harvard School of Public Health, Geneva, 1996

<sup>3</sup> *Beyondblue National Initiative*, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Orygen Youth Health.

<http://www.oyh.org.au>

<sup>5</sup> Making Sense of Orygen Youth Health [http://www.orygen.org.au/docs/INFO/MS%200YH2\(1\)](http://www.orygen.org.au/docs/INFO/MS%200YH2(1))

<sup>6</sup> *Time for Service*, MHCA 2006

<sup>7</sup> *Drug Use in the Family*, ANCD Report, 2007

