

Obstetric and Perinatal Mortality & Morbidity

Perinatal Data Collection Unit

Births in Victoria

Highlights of the decade

- Between 1983 and 1992 the total number of births (live and still) increased from 60628 to 66305. However, the births per 1000 mean resident population remained stable.
- The proportion of women giving birth under 30 declined; the proportion aged 30 years and over increased.
- Mothers born in Asia or the Middle East increased from 6.5 per cent to 10.3 per cent, while those born in the United Kingdom, Eire and Europe decreased from 15.5 per cent to 9.8 per cent.
- Spontaneous onset of labour increased from 50.2 per cent to 57.2 per cent.
- Forceps deliveries decreased from 16.7 per cent to 11.9 per cent, with a corresponding increase in caesarean section deliveries from 14.7 per cent to 17.7 per cent.
- The proportion of mothers staying six days or more in hospital following delivery has decreased from 73.9 per cent to 42.6 per cent.
- The increase in singleton births was 8.2 per cent, the increase in twin births was 23.0 per cent and the increase in triplet births was 26.1 per cent.
- The proportion of Aboriginal mothers under 20 years was greater than that of non-Aboriginal mothers.
- Aboriginal mothers now have fewer forceps deliveries and caesarean sections
- Planned homebirths represent 0.2 per cent of all births and remained stable.
- In 1992 the number of perineal lacerations and episiotomies reported to the PDCU was higher in large hospitals than small hospitals.
- The survival of infants of birthweight under 1500g has improved over the decade.
- Analysis by hospital type showed an increase in caesarean deliveries in all categories and a decrease in forceps deliveries.
- At least 32 research projects and collaborative studies have been undertaken using perinatal data.

Infant Factors

3.1 Sex of infants

Table 3.1: Sex of infants all births 1983 -1992

Sex	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Number										
Male	31223	31053	31379	31420	31710	32584	32973	34375	33633	33993
Female	29392	29679	29796	29827	29845	31052	31249	32479	31593	32298
Indeterminate	13	6	11	6	12	22	21	22	22	14
All births	60628	60738	61186	61253	61567	63658	64243	66876	65248	66305
Per cent										
Male	51.5	51.1	51.3	51.3	51.5	51.2	51.3	51.4	51.5	51.3
Female	48.5	48.9	48.7	48.7	48.5	48.8	48.6	48.6	48.4	48.7
Indeterminate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All births	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

3.2 Resuscitation

Overall, 82 per cent of all infants born in Victoria do not have any form of resuscitation. In the analysis there appears to be no increase in endotracheal intubation in the ten-year period. Also, there is little change in the use of narcotic antagonists.

3.3 Birthweight distribution

With the exception of infants 4500g and over where the proportion has increased by approximately 2.0 per cent, all other weight categories show no change (Table 3.2). However, since 1987 there has been increasing ascertainment of infants weighing less than 500g.

Table 3.2: Infant's birthweight all births 1983-1992

Birthweight(g)	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Number										
less than 500	*	*	*	15	71	76	92	62	84	153
500-999	322	334	329	297	292	324	325	336	311	328
1000-1499	360	348	335	353	332	409	366	413	361	365
1500-1999	654	695	662	711	659	750	799	793	776	775
2000-2499	2101	2031	2061	2211	2172	2214	2279	2398	2397	2385
2500-2999	9137	9128	9293	9183	9434	9750	10111	10126	10011	10130
3000-3499	22690	22548	23015	22825	22791	23827	23764	24719	24111	24189
3500-3999	18424	18810	18845	18713	19056	19200	19276	20537	19778	20225
4000-4499	5872	5798	5628	5882	5728	6003	6080	6277	6223	6548
4500-4999	864	849	854	903	865	916	964	979	938	1029
5000 and over	94	110	93	104	99	92	86	104	113	122
Unknown	110	87	71	56	68	97	101	132	145	56
All births	60628	60738	61186	61253	61567	63658	64243	66876	65248	66305
Per cent										
less than 500	*	*	*	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
500-999	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
1000-1499	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
1500-1999	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
2000-2499	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.6
2500-2999	15.1	15.0	15.2	15.0	15.3	15.3	15.7	15.1	15.3	15.3
3000-3499	37.4	37.1	37.6	37.3	37.0	37.4	37.0	37.0	37.0	36.5
3500-3999	30.4	31.0	30.8	30.6	31.0	30.2	30.0	30.7	30.3	30.5
4000-4499	9.7	9.5	9.2	9.6	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5	9.9
4500-4999	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.6
5000 and over	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Unknown	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1

All births	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
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* Between 1983 and 1986 infants weighing less than 500g were not included.

3.4 Apgar score (at 5 minutes)

The proportion of infants with Apgar scores of less than 7 has been stable over the study period (**Table 3.3**).

Table 3.3: Infant's Apgar score at 5 minutes livebirths - 1983-1992

Apgar Score	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Number										
0	44	39	31	22	26	26	6	19	33	27
1	86	66	73	55	58	63	66	68	76	67
2	61	54	57	58	56	40	44	56	55	45
3	96	81	68	64	58	80	59	70	41	52
4	113	106	118	87	101	102	103	92	81	98
5	241	242	212	252	184	195	237	193	199	188
6	501	448	422	409	396	470	458	450	434	383
7	1044	961	973	966	908	1010	1014	1081	940	954
8	3766	2993	3101	3046	3065	3163	3278	3272	3150	3201
9	18330	20202	21207	21332	22646	24292	26407	29600	29942	31473
10	35729	34933	34389	34432	33502	33572	31910	31362	29682	29251
Unknown	156	186	130	121	109	109	125	111	85	117
All births	60167	60311	60781	60844	61109	63122	63707	66374	64718	65856
Per cent										
0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
5	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
6	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6
7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.4
8	6.3	5.0	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.1	4.9	4.9	4.9
9	30.5	33.5	34.9	35.1	37.1	38.5	41.5	44.6	46.3	47.8
10	59.4	57.9	56.6	56.6	54.8	53.2	50.1	47.3	45.9	44.4
Unknown	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
All births	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

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