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| Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: baseline report |
| Frequently asked questions – February 2020 |

## Why is the report important?

The *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: baseline report* is the first report of its kind to present the most up-to-date information on trends in the state's progress against key cancer goals outlined in the *Victorian cancer plan 2016-2020*, all in one place. It will be used to inform development of the Victorian cancer plan 2020–2024 and successive plans, to improve cancer outcomes.

## What is the main message of the report?

The state has met or is making progress toward several cancer-related Victorian cancer plan 2016-2020 goals. We are on target to save 10,000 Victorians by 2025. However, the baseline report also confirms that there are priority areas that require further attention in prevention and inequities of outcomes for people such as regional and Aboriginal Victorians.

## What is in the report?

The *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: baseline report* includes key measures in the areas of prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, life after cancer, and end of life. Progress against cancer is tracked over time from a 2014 baseline year and determined by the availability of data (most recent year to inform changes over time) and how the state’s progress compares to targets outlined in the *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: data dictionary.*

The body of the report includes standardised information for each measure, including a traffic light rating, information about the trend and where appropriate, commentary on the result and what may be affecting it, data source, and notes about the methodology used to capture the data presented graphically. This information is also summarised in chart form in the Summary of results section at the beginning of the report, where graphics show whether the trend is going in the desired direction and how the state's progress compares to any set targets from the 2014 baseline year.

## How is the information displayed and explained?

All the trend graphs for each measure were made using Microsoft Excel and/or R software – the latter used to create forest plots. The report shows whether trends are rising, falling, or static/unchanging and where appropriate explains why changes might have occurred. Where data are available, differences in the cancer burden are also illustrated by age, sex, Aboriginal Victorians, cultural diversity, socioeconomic status, Integrated Cancer Service region and local government areas – the latter presented geospatially. Datasets specific to each measure are presented below trend graphs. However, in circumstances where the dataset specific to a measure was too large, it was moved to Appendix 2 of the baseline report to assist with readability.

## Where do the data come from?

The data in the *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: baseline report* comes from a variety of sources listed in the *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation plan: data dictionary* with different collection techniques and reporting times, so time periods for the data may vary by section.

## How were the data selected?

Measures were selected based on scientific evidence and the availability of periodic or longitudinal state or local - data collection and analysis efforts. Criteria for selecting measures, (via extensive consultation with over 120 organisations and individuals input at metropolitan and regional forums, online submissions and fact-to-face meetings), included the relevance of what is being measured (e.g., impact on cancer, state policy implications); the scientific rigour underlying the measure (e.g., validity, reliability, and explicitness of evidence base); the feasibility of using the measure (e.g., availability of long-term data); and the usability by target audiences (e.g., ease of understanding and applicability).

Some of the measures related to decreasing smoking and harmful alcohol consumption, increasing healthier eating and active living and decreasing obesity were also selected to align with the measures of the *Victorian public health and wellbeing outcomes framework*. This means that some of the measures reported for other purposes may have slightly different targets associated with them. In consultation with a wide range of individuals and organisations across the Victorian cancer sector, other measures have been newly developed for reporting against, and the data are examined here for the first time. These differences mean that measuring progress is not straightforward. In addition, the short reporting period and, in some circumstances, changes in survey methodologies means there are limitations with trend analysis which are described where relevant. Where possible, 2014 was used as the starting point or baseline against which to measure how well the state is progressing toward the Victorian cancer plan 2016-2020 goals.

## What data are not in the report?

Results for 19 out of 97 measures were not included in this report due to data availability. In some cases, trend data on a statewide level is unavailable. In other cases, there is no reliable data at the time of report publication. Some measures such as quality of life, while important in assessing the cancer burden, are not included in this report because the data source for the measure is yet to be determined. As data become available, future editions of the report will include new such measures (e.g., population-level measures that describe the quality of life post active therapy and patient experience from the perspective of children and adolescents admitted to hospital due to cancer).

Appendix 1 of the baseline report provides an indicative workplan for the remaining 19 measures that require further work to develop and report.

## Where can I find state- and national-level cancer data?

The *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: baseline report* mainly presents data at the state level although where appropriate comparisons are made at a national or international level. For cancer data at the national level, go to either the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cancer Council Australia, Cancer Australia or the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare websites.

## Who can use the report?

The report can help the public to better understand the nature of cancer across the cancer continuum of prevention, early detection, treatment, wellbeing and support for people affected by cancer, and research. At a statewide level, researchers, clinicians, public health providers, statutory authorities, not-for-profits and other organisations such as screening services and Integrated Cancer Services can focus on the gaps and opportunities identified, and work to make future progress against preventing and treating cancer. Policymakers can use the report to evaluate our progress relative to our investment in cancer research discovery, program development, and service delivery. In addition, the information gained through the reporting against measures articulated in this report may support assessment of cancer outcomes at the national level.

## How often will the report be updated?

Through the *Improving Cancer Outcomes Act,* the Victorian Government is committed to preparing a cancer plan for Victoria every four years. As part of developing those plans, the Act requires a report on the status and burden of cancer in Victoria.

The Department of Health and Human Services will update the baseline report in the third year of each four-year cycle to inform the development of successive state cancer plans.

## What is the rationale for the report?

Through the *Improving Cancer Outcomes Act 2014* the Victorian Government is committed to preparing a cancer plan for Victoria every four years. Each plan must report on the status and burden of cancer in Victoria. The Victorian cancer plan 2016-2020 was the first plan to be developed under this new Act. Therefore, the rationale for this report is to inform the development of the next Victorian cancer plan 2020-2024.

## How can I get a copy of the report?

The *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: baseline report* is only available online from [Cancer care](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/health-strategies/cancer-care) <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/health-strategies/cancer-care>.

## Where can more information on cancer be found?

* Department of Health and Human Services https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/health-strategies/cancer-care
* Cancer Council Victoria https://[www.cancervic.org.au](http://www.cancervic.org.au); E: enquiries@cancervic.org.au; P:+61 3 9514 6100


## Where should I direct my questions or comments about the *Victorian cancer plan monitoring and evaluation framework: baseline report*?

Send your questions to Cancer Planning, email cancerplanning@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

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