

NCIS FACT SHEET

Drug-related deaths in Australia in 2015

57 deaths

per week
on average

2,952

drug-related deaths
in 2015

18.3%

of all reportable
deaths in 2015

Cases are considered drug-related where the death was due to external causes, and where drugs made a contribution to death.

Drug-related deaths occurred in a higher proportion of males than females. The majority of deaths for both sexes occurred in those aged 25 - 54 years.

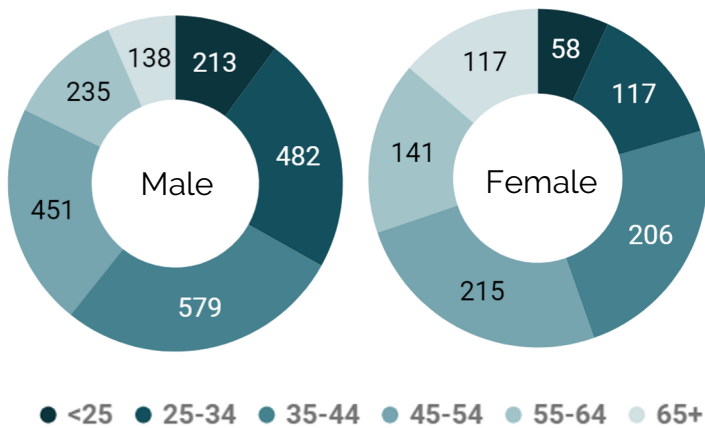


Figure 1. Frequency of drug-related deaths by age group and sex, 2015

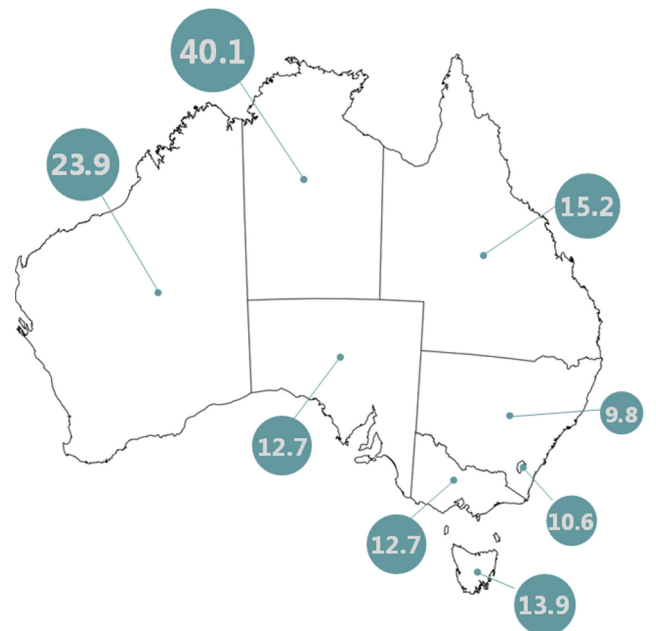


Figure 2. Rates of drug-related deaths per 100,000 by jurisdiction of investigation, 2015

The national rate of drug-related deaths was 13.7 deaths per 100,000 population (Figure 2). The Northern Territory had the highest rate at 40.1 deaths per 100,000.

46.9%

of all drug-related deaths occurred in people aged between 25 and 44 years

Figure 3 shows drug-related deaths by contribution to death. Opioids were the most frequently identified drug class involved in drug-related deaths.

Primary contribution relates to cases where drug toxicity was the primary cause of death. **Secondary** contribution relates to cases where drugs contributed to a death caused by another form of injury (such as drowning or a vehicle incident).

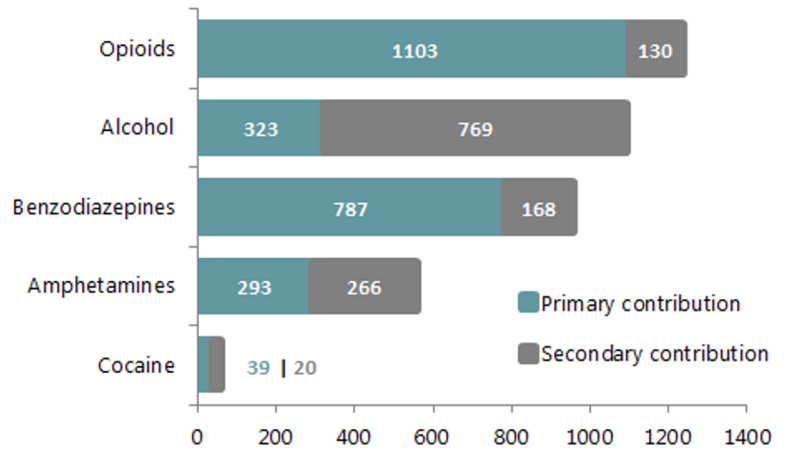
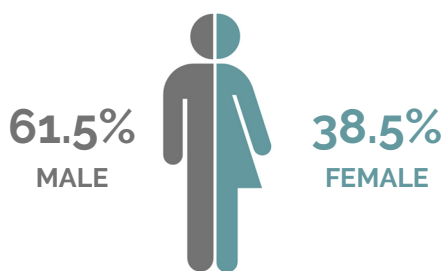
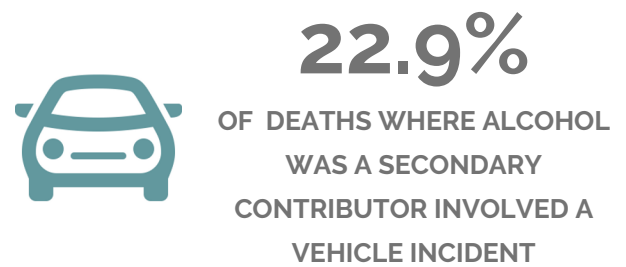
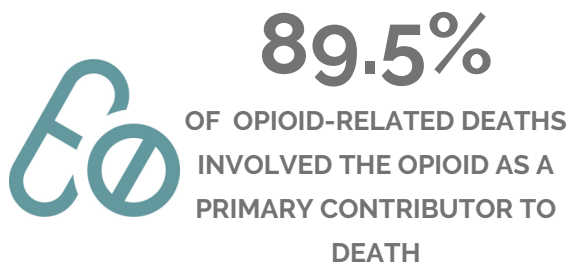
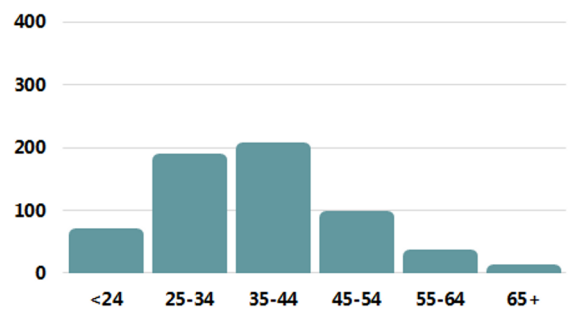


Figure 3. Frequency of drug-related deaths by drug type and contribution, 2015

Note: multiple drugs can contribute to a single death. As a result, the total number of deaths for the listed drug classes will exceed the total number of drug-related deaths.



BENZODIAZEPINE DEATHS BY SEX



AMPHETAMINE DEATHS BY AGE

The data presented in this fact sheet was obtained from the National Coronial Information System (NCIS) in October 2017. The dataset extracted contained every fatality reported to an Australian coroner between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2015 that was coded as involving a pharmaceutical substance for human use, and where the coronial investigation had concluded and the case was closed on the NCIS. Population data was sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Visit the NCIS website for information on [data sources and limitations](#). To request a comprehensive data report, contact the NCIS or visit www.ncis.org.au.

Unless otherwise stated, this content is provided under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](#), with the exception of logos, images or branding. Attribution must be provided to the NCIS.

Refer to the NCIS website for more fact sheets