

North Western Melbourne Aboriginal health

More than
10,000
Aboriginal people
live in the North
Western Melbourne
PHN area

The North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) region has a rich and diverse Aboriginal cultural heritage, and we pay our respects to the Traditional Owners, the people of the Kulin Nations. There is evidence of Aboriginal people living in the area for an estimated 31,000 to 40,000 years before European settlement.

At the time of settlement it is believed that there were about 20,000 Aboriginal people living in southern and central Victoria.

The 2016 Census estimates that there were more than 10,000 Aboriginal people residing within the NWMPHN area. The municipalities of Hume, Wyndham and Melton have the highest populations of Aboriginal people, comprising 30 per cent of the total region.

Distribution of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander population in the NWMPHN region

Legend

Macedon Ranges
53.1%

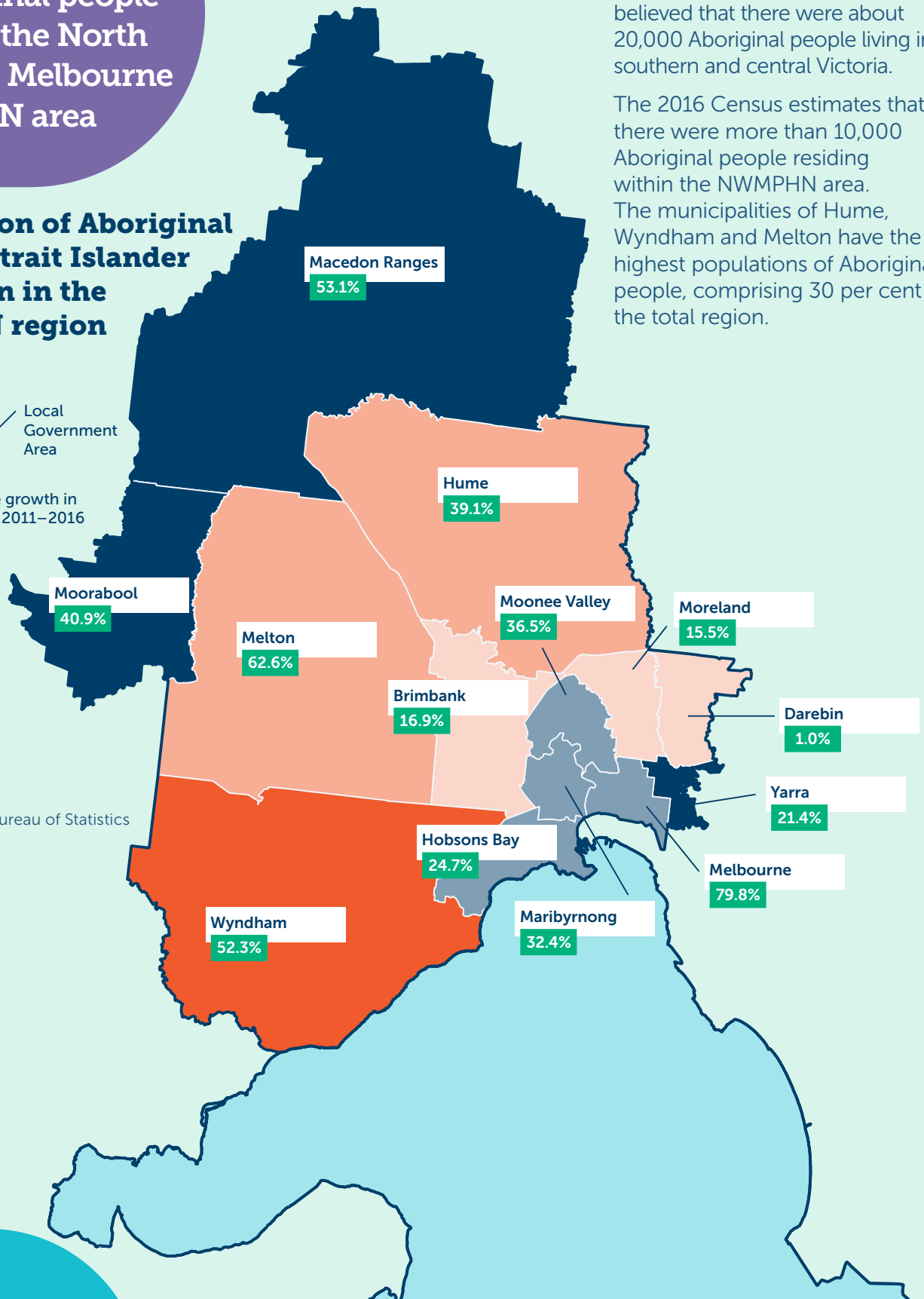
Local Government Area

Percentage growth in population 2011–2016

2016 population

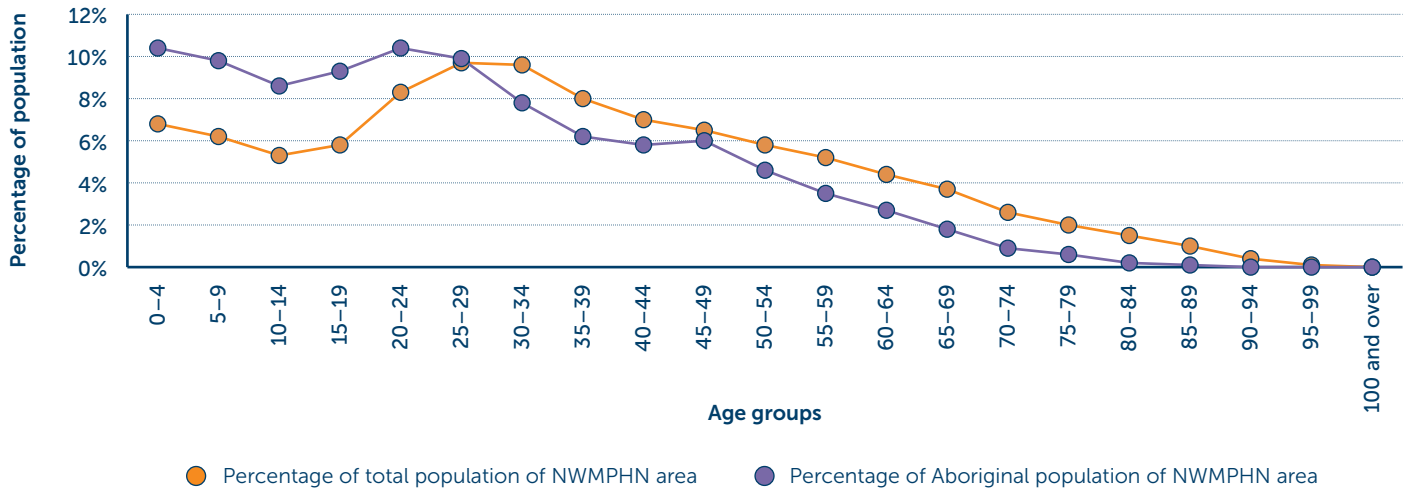
- 0–400
- 400–800
- 800–1,200
- 1,200–1,600
- 1,600–2,000

Source: Australia Bureau of Statistics
2016 Census data.



The Aboriginal community in the NWMPHN area also has a younger age profile than the non-Aboriginal population, with 49% aged under 25 years compared with 32% in the general population.

Percentage of 2016 population by age group – Aboriginal people compared with total population



Data source: ABS Census 2016.

Korin Korin Balit-Djak is the Victorian Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan for 2017–2027. It outlines how the key health indicators that impact on Aboriginal Victorians’ health, wellbeing and safety reflect the legacy of trans-generational trauma and systemic racism.

Aboriginal people experience a range of health issues and challenges, and at the population level there is a significant gap between the health status of Victoria’s Aboriginal population and the non-Aboriginal population. The gap in health outcomes can be traced from birth through to a range of poor chronic disease and mental health outcomes. Although there have been some improvements, many areas have seen no significant change and some are getting worse.

Key markers include:

- A lower proportion of Aboriginal Victorians self-rate their health as good compared with non-Aboriginal Victorians.
- The perinatal mortality rate of babies of Aboriginal mothers in Victoria is approximately twice that of babies of non-Aboriginal mothers.
- Almost twice as many babies of Victorian Aboriginal mothers are born with a low birthweight.
- Victorian Aboriginal women are 45 times more likely to experience family violence than non-Aboriginal women.
- Tobacco use by Aboriginal people in Victoria aged over 18 years is more than three times the rate of non-Aboriginal people.
- Aboriginal young people demonstrate higher rates of risky alcohol and drug use compared with non-Aboriginal young people.
- Aboriginal people are three times more likely than non-Aboriginal people to have diabetes.
- Poor diet is a leading cause of the disease burden for all Victorians, with dietary risk factors more pronounced for Aboriginal Victorians. For example, 41 per cent of energy intake for Aboriginal adults in Victoria comes from unhealthy foods and drinks.

More information on Aboriginal health can be found at nwmpnh.org.au/priority-area-topic/aboriginal-health/

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