

# North Western Melbourne Chronic disease profile

More than  
**90%**  
of people  
over 70 years of  
age have two or  
more chronic  
conditions

Chronic health conditions have complex and multiple causes. They are generally long-term and persistent, and often lead to a gradual deterioration of health and loss of independence.

Many chronic conditions occur across the life cycle, although they become more prevalent with older age, with more than 90 per cent of people aged over 70 years having two or more chronic conditions (Harrison et al 2014).

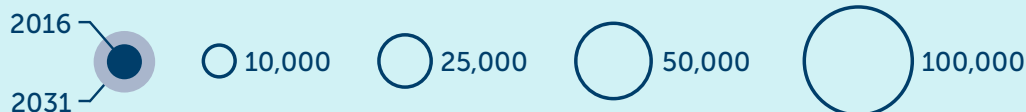
Higher prevalence is experienced by people living in communities with lower socioeconomic status.

Given the correlation between age and the prevalence of chronic disease, an understanding of the change in the age profile is important. There is forecast to be a 95% increase in the number of people aged greater than 70 years in the 15 years to 2031. Given this, a key challenge for the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) is to commission services targeted to the highest need areas.

**Projected growth in population of people 70 years of age and over in NWMPHN municipalities, 2016 to 2031**



#### Population numbers



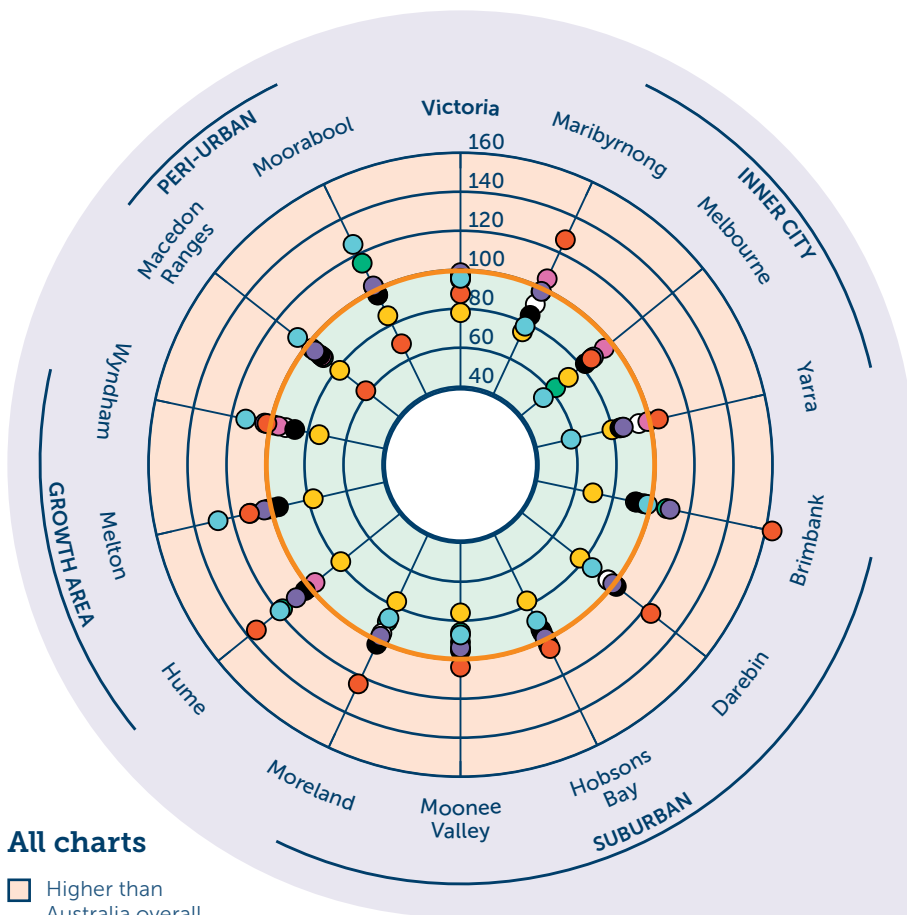
Sources: Australia Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data and Victoria in Future 2016.

Reference: Harrison C, Britt H, Miller G, et al, 2014. Examining different measures of multimorbidity, using a large prospective cross-sectional study in Australian general practice *BMJ Open* 2014;4:e004694. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2013-004694.

**The data on this page illustrates the broad patterns of chronic disease in the NWMPHN area**

The area has higher prevalence of key precursors of chronic disease in some of the growth and peri-urban locations including being overweight or obese, a smoker, and having low levels of exercise.

There are also higher rates of chronic health conditions, preventable hospitalisation and avoidable deaths in areas with lower socioeconomic status. For example, Brimbank has high prevalence of diabetes and high rates of death from diabetes.

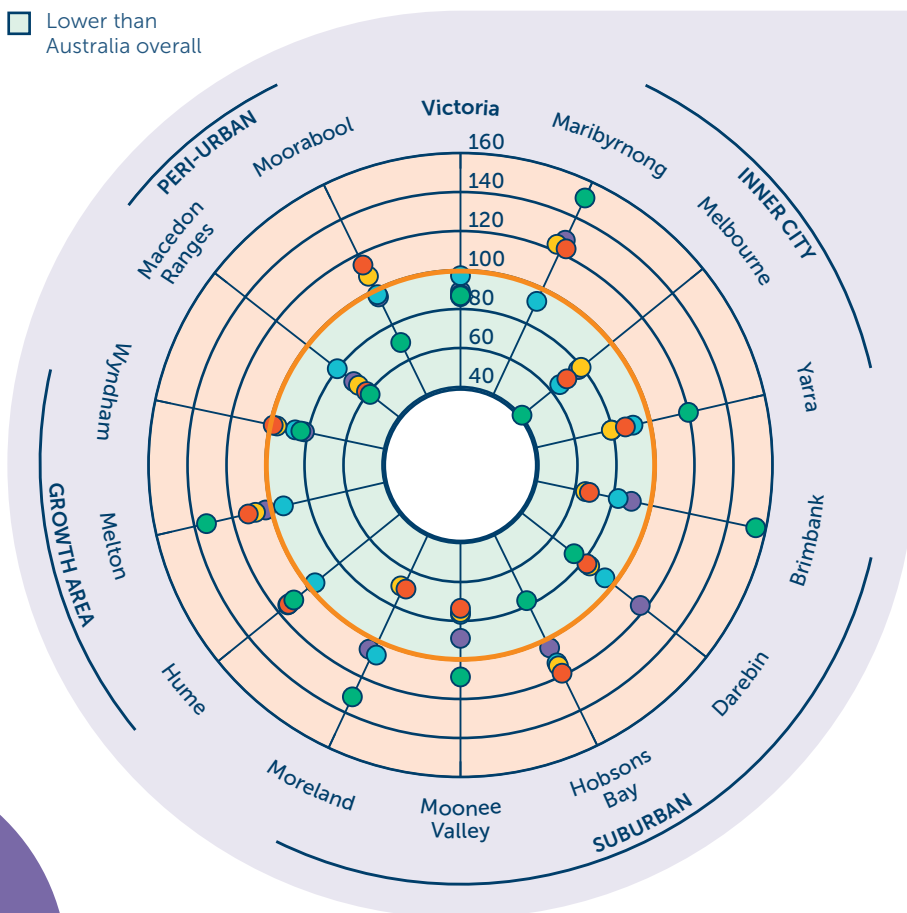


**All charts**

- Higher than Australia overall
- Australia (100)
- Lower than Australia overall

**Prevalence of determinants of chronic diseases and chronic health conditions, 2014-15**

- Diabetes
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Current smokers
- Obesity
- No or low exercise in previous week
- Musculo skeletal
- Arthritis
- Circulatory system



**Avoidable death rates (people 0-74 years of age), 2010 to 2014**

- Diabetes
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Respiratory
- Cancer
- Ischaemic heart disease

Several initiatives are being implemented to deliver services to those most at need. They include:

- Supporting general practice and other primary care providers to participate in the delivery of health assessments and care planning, in particular through the CareFirst program
- Regional collaborations to enhance the collective impact of programs – involving a range of stakeholders working collaboratively to improve health status
- The development of HealthPathways Melbourne – a web-based system that helps coordinate patient care and streamline referrals across the acute and primary care system.

Data source for charts: Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), 2017.

More information on chronic disease can be found at [nwmpnhn.org.au/priority-area-topic/chronic-conditions/](http://nwmpnhn.org.au/priority-area-topic/chronic-conditions/)

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