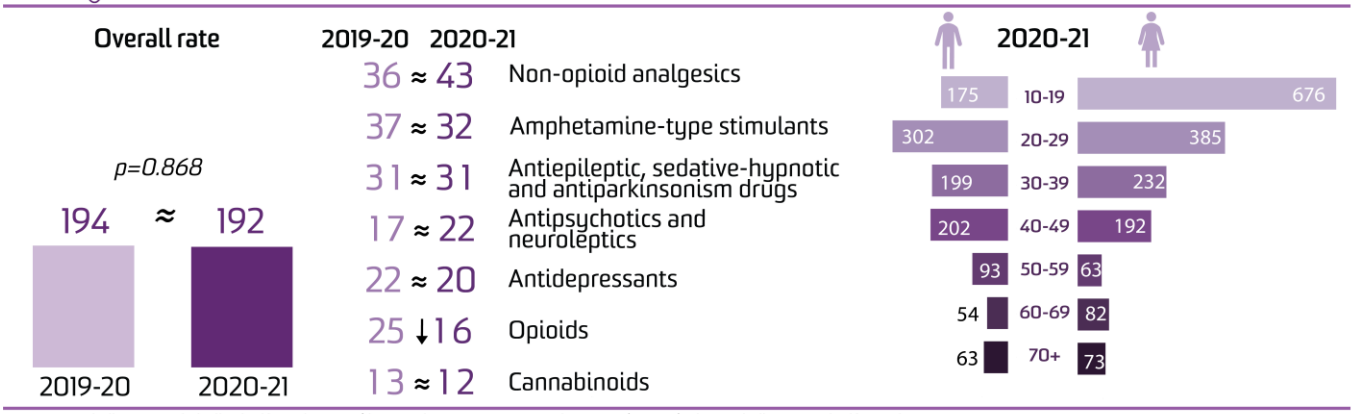
TRENDS IN DRUG-RELATED HOSPITALISATIONS IN AUSTRALIA, 1999-2021

Agata Chrzanowska, Nicola Man, Jane Akhurst, Rachel Sutherland,
Louisa Degenhardt and Amy Peacock

NIDIP National Illicit Drug Indicators Project

Australian Capital Territory

Drug-related hospitalisations per 100,000 people (excluding alcohol and tobacco)



Note: Arrows indicate a statistically significant increase/decrease between 2019-20 and 2020-21 (p<0.05); sign "≈" indicates no significant change.

There were 875 hospitalisations with a drug-related principal diagnosis in the Australian Capital Territory in 2020-21.

This is equivalent to 192 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, which was similar to the rate in 2019-20 (194 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) (Table A19) and higher than the rate in 1999-00 (125 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) (Figure 1).

Sex

The rate of hospitalisations was higher among females than males in 2020-21 (234 versus 150 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, respectively).

Age

In 2020-21, the rate of hospitalisations was highest among the 10-19 age group, followed by the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups (426, 346, and 215 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, respectively). Among males, the rate of drug-related hospitalisations was highest in the 20-29 age group, and among females in the 10-19 age group.

Remoteness Area of Usual Residence

Over 99.8% of the population in the Australian Capital Territory resided in major city areas and the remaining resided in inner regional areas. For this reason, data on hospitalisations by remoteness area are not presented.

External Cause of Drug Poisoning

Two-thirds (69%) of drug-related hospitalisations in the Australian Capital Territory were due to drug poisoning. Furthermore, 77% of drug poisoning-related hospitalisations were intentional (105 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) and 16% were unintentional (21 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) (Figure 2).

Drug Type

In 2020-21, the rate of hospitalisations was highest where there was a principal diagnosis indicating non-opioid analgesics (43 hospitalisations per 100,000 people (Figure 3).

Compared to 2019-20, there was a significant decrease in the rate of hospitalisations involving opioids in 2020-21 (p=0.004) (Table A19).

UNSW NDARC National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre
UNSW SYDNEY
NDRI national drug research institute
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UTAS

Figure 1. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by sex, the Australian Capital Territory, 1999-00 to 2020-21.

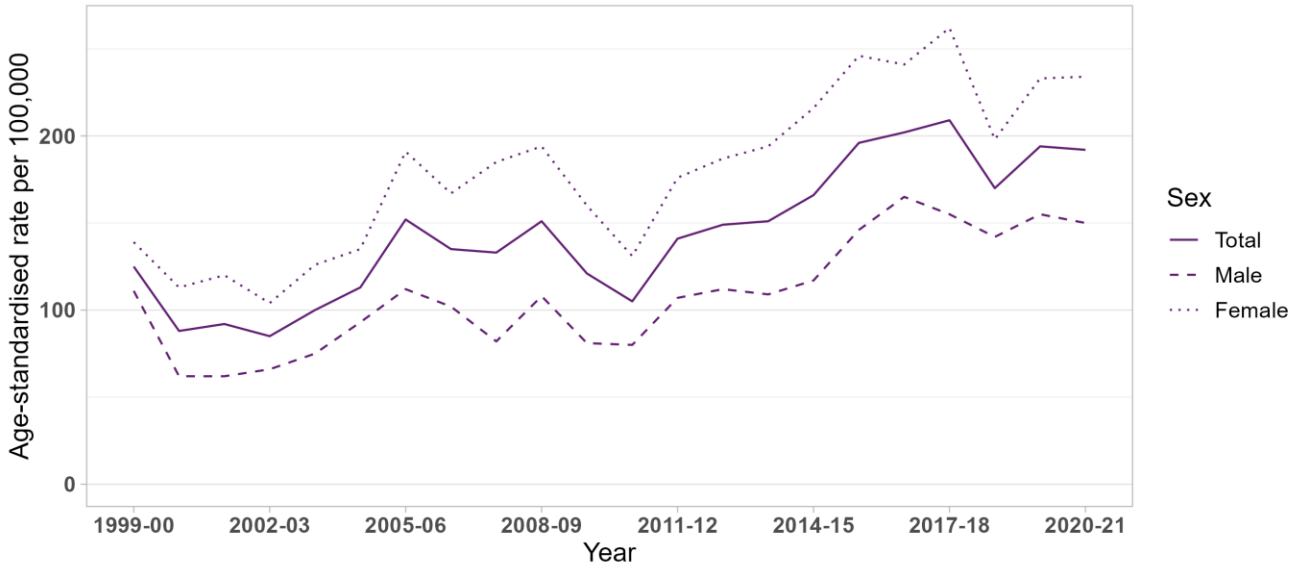
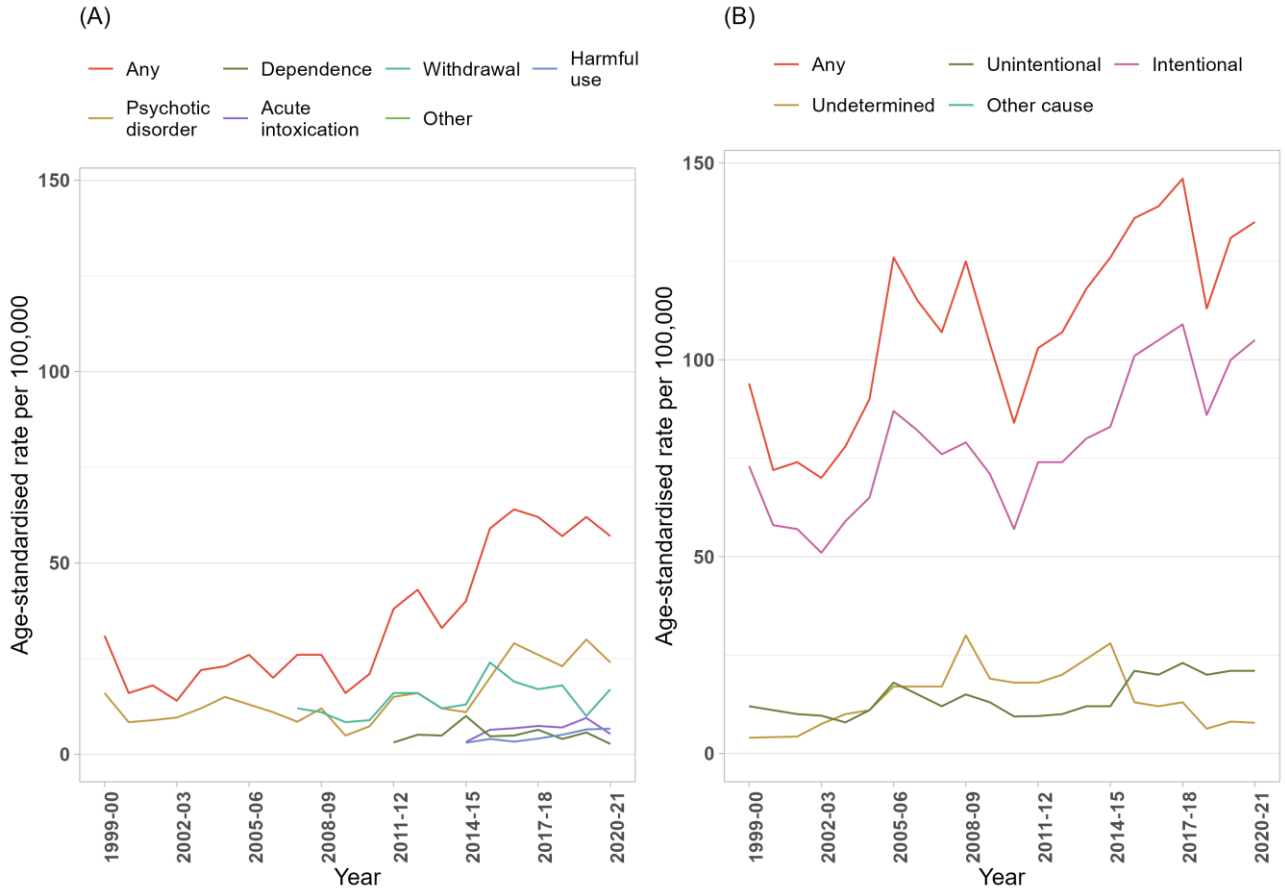
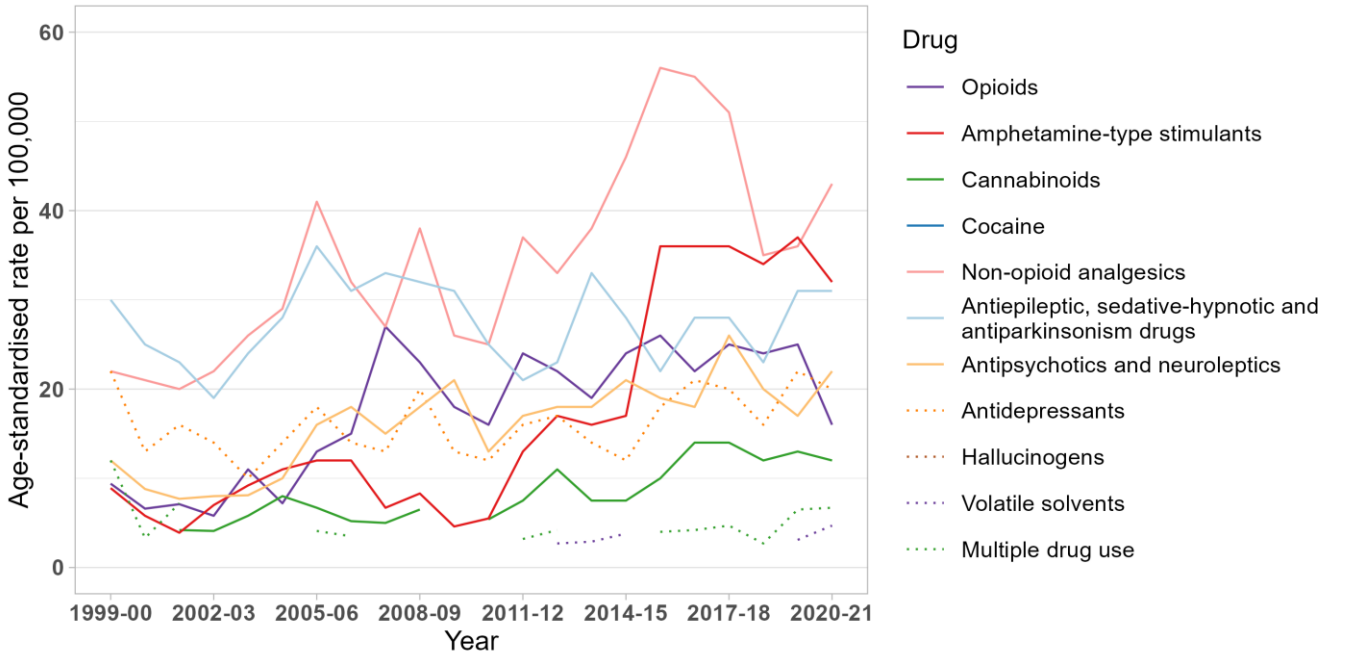


Figure 2. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by principal diagnosis of mental and behavioural disorder due to substance use (A) and external cause of poisoning (B), the Australian Capital Territory, 1999-00 to 2020-21.



Note: Age-standardised rates were not calculated if the number of hospitalisations was less than or equal to 10 (please refer to our methods document for details). Suppressed data are visible as gaps in the data series.

Figure 3. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by drug identified in the principal diagnosis, the Australian Capital Territory, 1999-00 to 2020-21.



Note: Age-standardised rates were not calculated if the number of hospitalisations was less than or equal to 10 (please refer to our methods document for details). Suppressed data are visible as gaps in the data series.

Table A19. Age-standardised rate (per 100,000 people) of drug-related hospitalisations in 2020-21 and rate ratio and p-value for difference compared to 2019-20, in the Australian Capital Territory by drug type identified in the principal diagnosis

Drug	Rate in 2020-21 (95% CI)	Rate in 2019-20 (95% CI)	Rate ratio (95% CI)	P-value
All drugs	192 (180, 206)	194 (181, 207)	0.99 (0.90, 1.09)	0.868
Non-opioid analgesics	43 (37, 49)	36 (30, 42)	1.19 (0.96, 1.47)	0.117
Amphetamine-type stimulants	32 (27, 38)	37 (32, 43)	0.87 (0.70, 1.08)	0.197
Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and antiparkinsonism drugs	31 (26, 37)	31 (26, 36)	1.01 (0.80, 1.27)	0.934
Antipsychotics and neuroleptics	22 (18, 27)	17 (13, 21)	1.31 (0.97, 1.77)	0.076
Antidepressants	20 (16, 25)	22 (17, 26)	0.93 (0.69, 1.24)	0.604
Opioids	16 (13, 21)	25 (21, 30)	0.65 (0.49, 0.87)	0.004
Cannabinoids	12 (9, 16)	13 (9.6, 16)	0.96 (0.67, 1.38)	0.825
Multiple drug use	6.7 (4.5, 9.6)	6.5 (4.4, 9.3)	1.03 (0.62, 1.72)	0.896
Volatile solvents	4.7 (2.9, 7.1)	3.1 (1.7, 5.3)	1.49 (0.76, 2.93)	0.243
Hallucinogens	2.9 (1.4, 5.1)	*np	-	-
Cocaine	*np	*np	-	-

Note: 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and rate ratio are shown in brackets. Please refer to our methods document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of rate ratios. Please also refer to our methods document on 'Scope of the data' and 'Coding of hospitalisations' for specifications of data selected and all exclusions. "*np" means data not publishable due to small numbers.

For complete report on trends in drug-related hospitalisations in Australia please go to the national report.

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Data source

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Related Links

- Hospitalisations data visualisations: https://drugtrends.shinyapps.io/hospital_separations
- Hospitalisations methods document: https://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/resource-analytics/trends-drug-related-hospitalisations-australia-1999-2021
- For other Drug Trends publications on drug-related hospitalisations and drug-induced deaths in Australia, go to: https://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/project/national-illicit-drug-indicators-project-nidip
- For more information on NDARC research, go to: http://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/
- For more information about the AIHW and NHMD, go to: https://www.aihw.gov.au/
- For more information on ICD coding go to: http://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/ https://www.ihacpa.gov.au/resources/icd-10-amachiacs-eleventh-edition
- For more research from the Drug Trends program go to: https://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/program/drug-trends

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Please note that as with all statistical reports there is the potential for minor revisions to data in this report. Please refer to the online version at Drug Trends.

Please contact the Drug Trends team with any queries regarding this publication: drugtrends@unsw.edu.au.