

Australian Capital Territory



Drug-induced deaths in the

Australian Capital Territory

DRUG INVOLVEMENT

(deaths per 100,000 population)

4.2	Opioids
2.5	Antidepressants
(n≤10)	Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and anti-parkinsonism drugs
(n≤10)	Amphetamine-type stimulants
(n≤5)	Antipsychotics & neuroleptics
(n≤5)	Non-opioid analgesics
(n≤5)	Cannabinoids
(n≤5)	Cocaine



AGE

Rate per 100,000	Percentage
n≤5	n≤5
7.3	25-34 22%
8.3	35-44 22%
12	45-54 23%
5.5	55+ 22%

There were 27 registered overdose and other drug-induced deaths (excluding alcohol and tobacco) in the [Australian Capital Territory](#) in 2023, which is equivalent to 1.12% of all registered deaths in this jurisdiction.

The age-standardised rate of [drug-induced deaths](#) in the Australian Capital Territory has fluctuated over time, with a recent increase observed between 2015 and 2020 from 4.3 to 12 deaths per 100,000 people, before declining ([Figure 1](#)). The preliminary age-standardised rate in 2023 of 5.7 deaths per 100,000 people was significantly lower than the revised rate in 2022 (9.4 deaths per 100,000 people) (Table A18). Estimates for 2022 and 2023 are subject to further revision and may increase.

Sex



In 2023, [males](#) accounted for 63% (17 versus 10 deaths) of drug-induced deaths, with a rate of 7.3 per 100,000 people.

The rate in 2023 was significantly lower compared to 2022 for males (13 deaths per 100,000 people, 30 deaths); the rate for females was not estimable due to small numbers (Table A18).

Age



In 2023, there 7 drug-induced deaths in the 45-54 age group, 6 deaths in the 35-44 age group and 6 deaths in 25-34 age group. The rate for the 35-44 age group was significantly lower in 2023 compared to 2022 (Table A19).

Remoteness Area of Usual Residence

Over 99% of the population in the Australian Capital Territory resided in major city areas and the remaining resided in inner regional areas in 2023. For this reason, data on deaths by remoteness area are not presented.

Intent of Drug Overdose Deaths

In 2023, all 27 drug-induced deaths were due to overdose, of which 78% (21 deaths) were deemed [unintentional](#) and 22% (6 deaths) were intentional. This profile has been broadly consistent over time.

Place of Occurrence



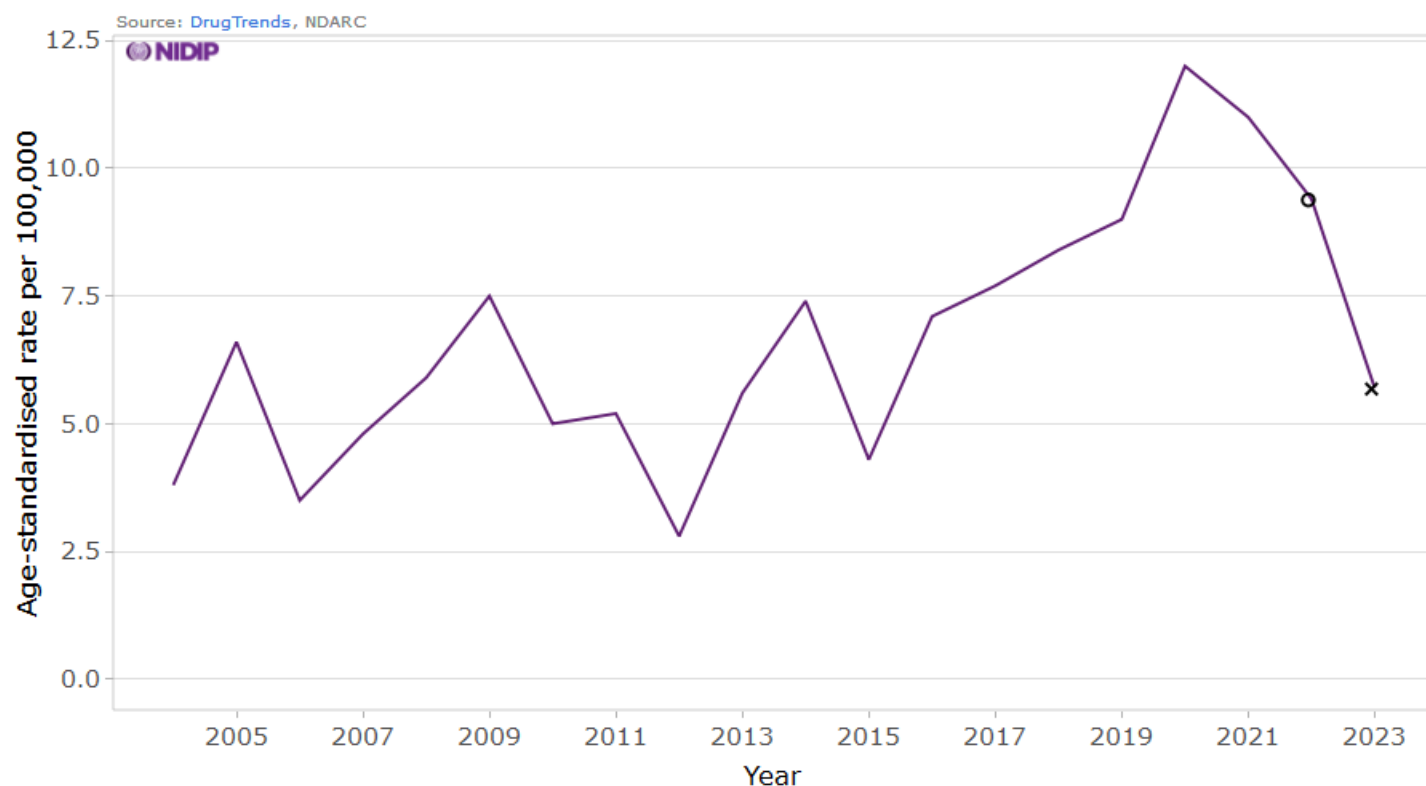
In 2023, the location of the incident underlying death was coded as home for the majority (59%, 16 deaths) of drug overdose deaths.

Drug Involvement

In the Australian Capital Territory, the three [most common](#) drug types involved in drug overdose deaths in 2023 were:

- **opioids** (4.2 deaths per 100,000 people, 20 deaths),
- **antidepressants** (2.5 deaths per 100,000 people, 11 deaths),
- **amphetamine-type stimulants** (9 deaths).

Comparison of estimates for drug overdose deaths in the Australian Capital Territory did not identify a statistically significant change in drug involvement from 2022 to 2023 (Table A21).

Figure 1. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-induced deaths, Australian Capital Territory, 2004-2023

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2022 and 2023 are not final and thus are subject to further revision. The symbol 'o' indicates revised estimates and 'x' preliminary estimates.

Table A18. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-induced deaths in Australian Capital Territory in 2022 and 2023, and average percent change (APC) for difference between 2023 and 2022 (with 95% confidence intervals), by sex

Sex	Rate in 2022	Rate in 2023	APC for 2023 vs 2022
Female	5.4 (2.9, 9.2)	–	–
Male	13 (9, 19)	7.3 (4.2, 11.7)	-45 (-70, -0)*
Total	9.4 (6.8, 12.7)	5.7 (3.7, 8.3)	-39 (-63, -2)*

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2022 and 2023 are preliminary and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and average percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of average percent change. Please also refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Data source' and 'Coding of deaths' for details on the data used. * Indicates a statistically significant difference.

Table A19. Crude rate per 100,000 people of drug-induced deaths in Australian Capital Territory in 2022 and 2023, and average percent change (APC) for difference between 2023 and 2022 (with 95% confidence intervals), by age

Age	Rate in 2022	Rate in 2023	APC for 2023 vs 2022
15-64	13 (9, 17)	7.8 (5.1, 11.6)	-37 (-64, 6)
15-24	NA (NA, NA)	NA (NA, NA)	–
25-34	8.8 (3.5, 18.1)	7.3 (2.7, 15.8)	-17 (-77, 188)
35-44	23 (13, 37)	8.3 (3.1, 18.1)	-63 (-88, -2)*
45-54	18 (9, 33)	12 (5, 25)	-31 (-78, 101)
55-64	NA (NA, NA)	NA (NA, NA)	–
65-74	NA (NA, NA)	NA (NA, NA)	–

75-84	NA (NA, NA)	0 (–)	–
85+	NA (NA, NA)	0 (–)	–

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2022 and 2023 are preliminary and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the crude rate and average percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of average percent change. The estimates for the 0-14 years age group are not presented due to sensitivity of the data. Please also refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Data source' and 'Coding of deaths' for details on the data used. * Indicates a statistically significant difference.

Table A20. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of overdose deaths in Australian Capital Territory in 2022 and 2023, and average percent change (APC) for difference between 2023 and 2022 (with 95% confidence intervals), by intent

Intent	Rate in 2022	Rate in 2023	APC for 2023 vs 2022
Unintentional	5.9 (3.9, 8.7)	4.5 (2.7, 6.8)	-25 (-58, 33)
Intentional	3.0 (1.6, 5.0)	NA (NA, NA)	–

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2022 and 2023 are preliminary and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and average percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of average percent change. Please also refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Data source' and 'Coding of deaths' for details on the data used.

Table A21. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of overdose deaths in Australian Capital Territory in 2022 and 2023, and average percent change (APC) for difference between 2023 and 2022 (with 95% confidence intervals), by drugs involved

Drug	Rate in 2022	Rate in 2023	APC for 2023 vs 2022
Opioids	6.4 (4.3, 9.2)	4.2 (2.6, 6.5)	-34 (-63, 17)
Antidepressants	4.0 (2.3, 6.3)	2.5 (1.2, 4.4)	-38 (-71, 33)
Alcohol	–	–	–
Amphetamine-type stimulants	–	–	–
Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic & antiparkinsonism drugs	4.4 (2.7, 6.8)	–	–
Antipsychotics & neuroleptics	3.5 (2.0, 5.6)	NA (NA, NA)	–
Cannabinoids	NA (NA, NA)	NA (NA, NA)	–
Cocaine	NA (NA, NA)	NA (NA, NA)	–
Non-opioid analgesics	NA (NA, NA)	NA (NA, NA)	–

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2022 and 2023 are preliminary and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and average percent change (APC) are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of average percent change. Please also refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Data source' and 'Coding of deaths' for details on the data used.

ISSN 2981-8036

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This report was prepared by researchers from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre for the Drug Trends program. The Drug Trends program is coordinated by the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney and undertaken in partnership with Burnet, National Drug Research Institute, University of Queensland, and University of Tasmania.

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Recommended citation: Chrzanowska A, Man N, Sutherland R, Degenhardt L, Peacock A. Trends in overdose and other drug-induced deaths in Australia, 2004-2023. Sydney: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney; 2025. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/31245>

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.

Funding

The Drug Trends program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing under the Drug and Alcohol Program.

Data source

We acknowledge all state and territory Registries of Births, Deaths and Marriages, the Coroners and the National Coronial Information System (NCIS) for enabling Cause of Death Unit Record File (COD URF) data to be used for this publication.

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge Lauren Moran and the team at the Australian Bureau of Statistics for their assistance with the data and ICD-10 coding practices to ensure rigorous, comprehensive, and consistent reporting on drug-induced deaths in Australia.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which the work for this report was undertaken. We pay respect to Elders past, present, and emerging.

Related Links

- For interactive data visualisations accompanying this report, go to: https://drugtrends.shinyapps.io/deaths_2023
- For full details of the methods underpinning this report, go to: <http://www.unsw.edu.au/research/ndarc/resources/trends-drug-induced-deaths-australia-2004-2023>
- For other Drug Trends publications on drug-related hospitalisations and drug-induced deaths in Australia, go to: [National Illicit Drug Indicators Project \(NIDIP\) \(unsw.edu.au\)](#)
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- For more information about the ABS, go to: <http://www.abs.gov.au>
- For more information on ICD coding go to: <http://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/>
- For more information on the Remoteness Areas Structure within the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), go to: <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.005>
- For more research from the Drug Trends program and to subscribe to our newsletter, go to: [Drug trends | National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre - UNSW Sydney](#)
- For details on the collection, organisation and interpretation of NCIS data, go to: <https://www.ncis.org.au/about-the-data/explanatory-notes/>
- For statistics about case closure statistics in NCIS, go to: <https://www.ncis.org.au/about-the-data/operational-statistics/>