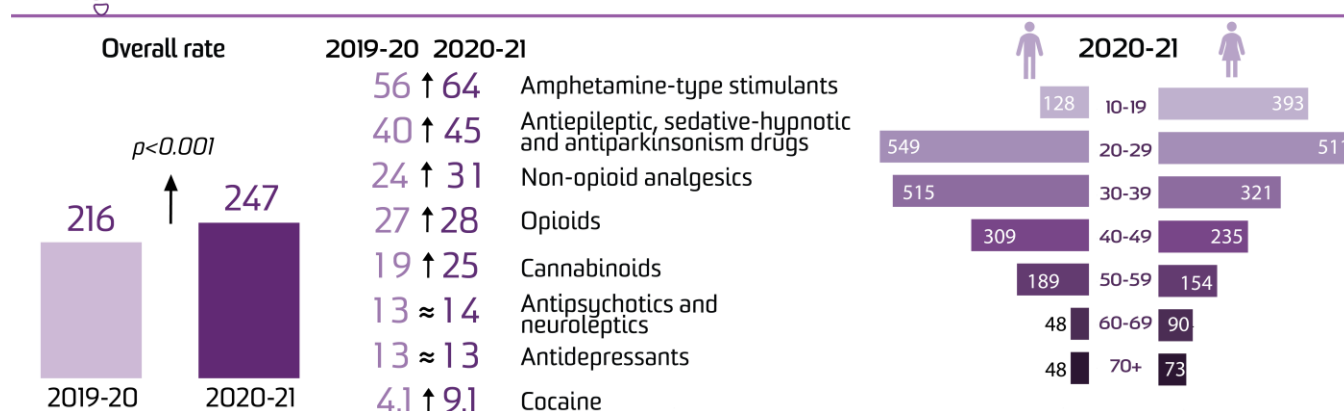


Victoria



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 15,743 hospitalisations with a drug-related principal diagnosis in [Victoria](#) in 2020-21, equivalent to 0.54% of all hospitalisations in Victoria.

This is equivalent to 247 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, which was a significant increase from 2019-20 (216 hospitalisations per 100,000 people; $p < 0.001$) (Table A25), and the highest rate over the course of monitoring ([Figure 1](#)).

Sex

The rate of hospitalisations was higher among [males](#) than females in 2020-21 (251 versus 244 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, respectively).

Age

In 2020-21, the rate of hospitalisations was highest [among](#) the 20-29 age group, followed by the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups (532, 417, and 272 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, respectively). Among both males and females, the rates of drug-related hospitalisations were highest in the 20-29 age groups.

Remoteness Area of Usual Residence

The highest number and rate of hospitalisations in 2020-21 was observed in [major city areas](#) (12,279 hospitalisations, 242 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) ([Figure 2](#)).

External Cause of Drug Poisoning

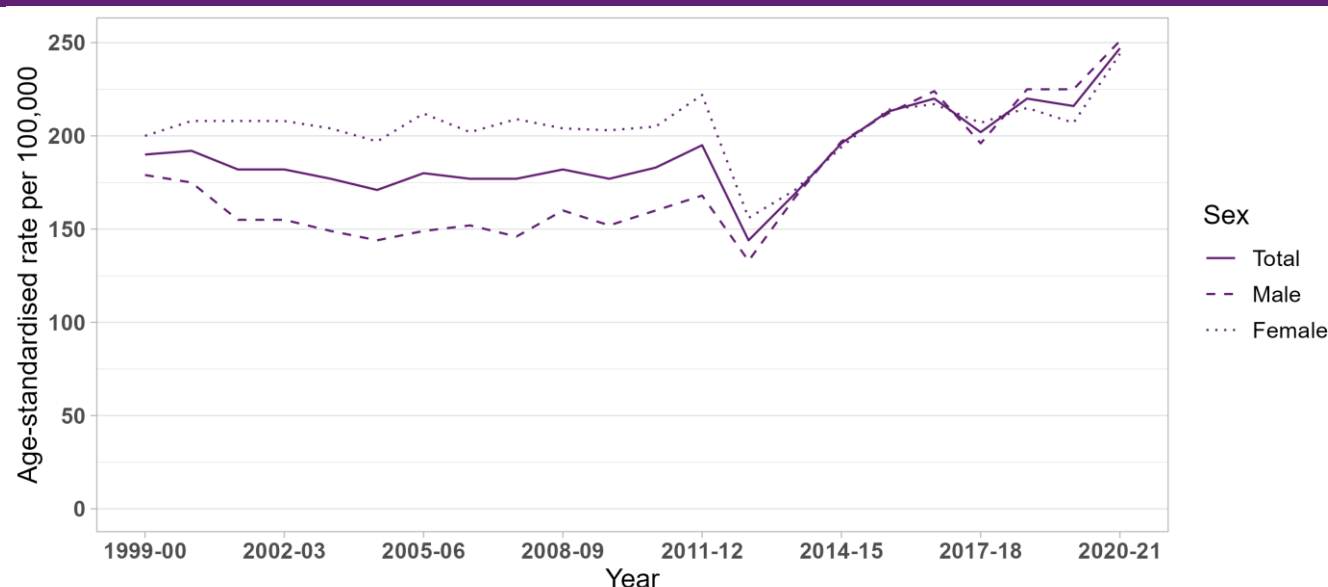
In 2020-21, 44% of drug-related hospitalisations in Victoria were due to drug poisoning. Furthermore, 68% of drug poisoning related hospitalisations were intentional (75 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) and 19% were unintentional (20 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) ([Figure 3](#)).

Drug Type

In 2020-21, the rate of hospitalisations was [highest](#) where there was a principal diagnosis indicating amphetamine-type stimulants (64 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) ([Figure 4](#)).

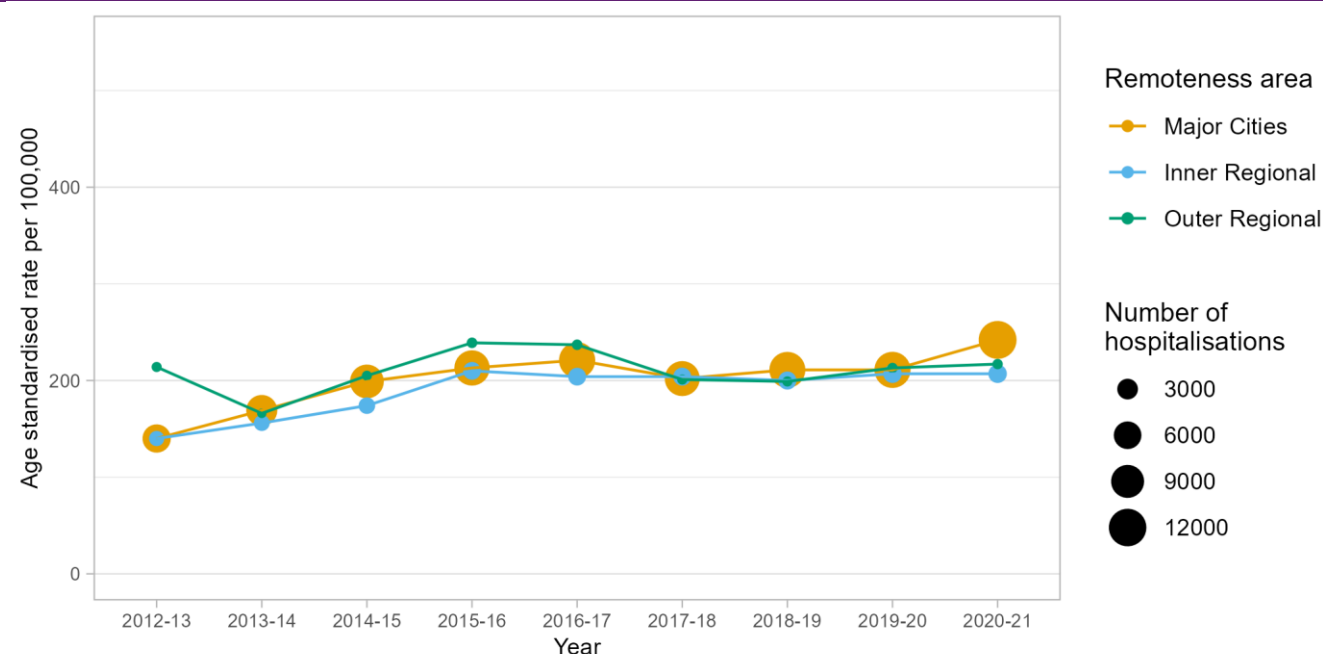
Compared to 2019-20, there were significant increases in 2020-21 in the rates of hospitalisations related to: amphetamine-type stimulants; antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and antiparkinsonism drugs; non-opioid analgesics; opioids; cannabinoids; and cocaine ($p < 0.050$) (Table A25).

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



Note: From 1st July 2011 to 30th June 2013 (i.e., between 2011-12 and 2012-13), there was a large decrease in public hospitalisations reported for the Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset (VAED) because episodes where the patient's entire care is provided in the emergency department were not considered for admission, irrespective of whether a criterion for admission is met. From 2013-14 onwards, "ED-only admissions" were largely replaced with admissions to Short Stay Observation Units.

Figure 2. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by remoteness, Victoria, 2012-13 to 2020-21.



Note: The size (area) of the bubble is proportional to the number of hospitalisations. The number of hospitalisations for remote and very remote Victoria in each year were small (less than or equal to 10) thus age-standardised rates were not calculated. Please refer to our [methods](#) document for details. Data on remoteness are only available from 2012-13.

Figure 3. 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), Victoria, 1999-00 to 2020-21.

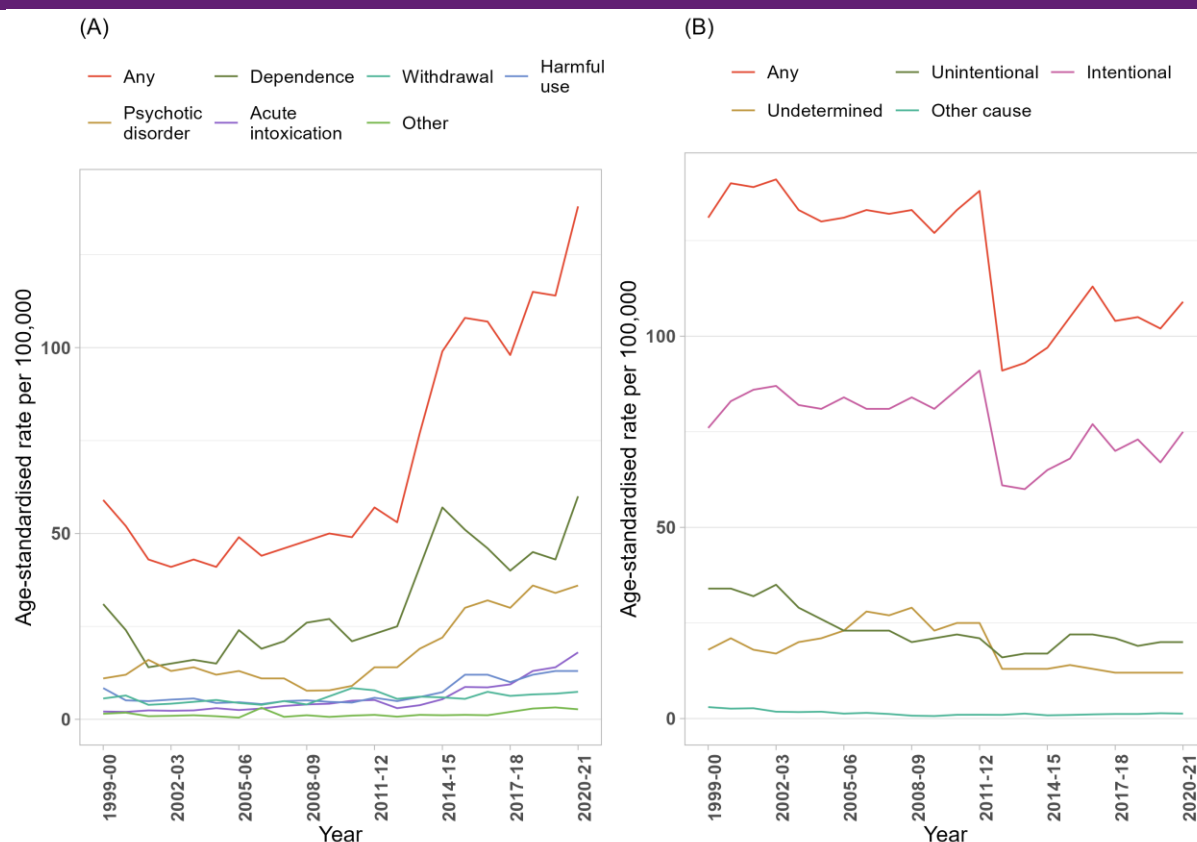
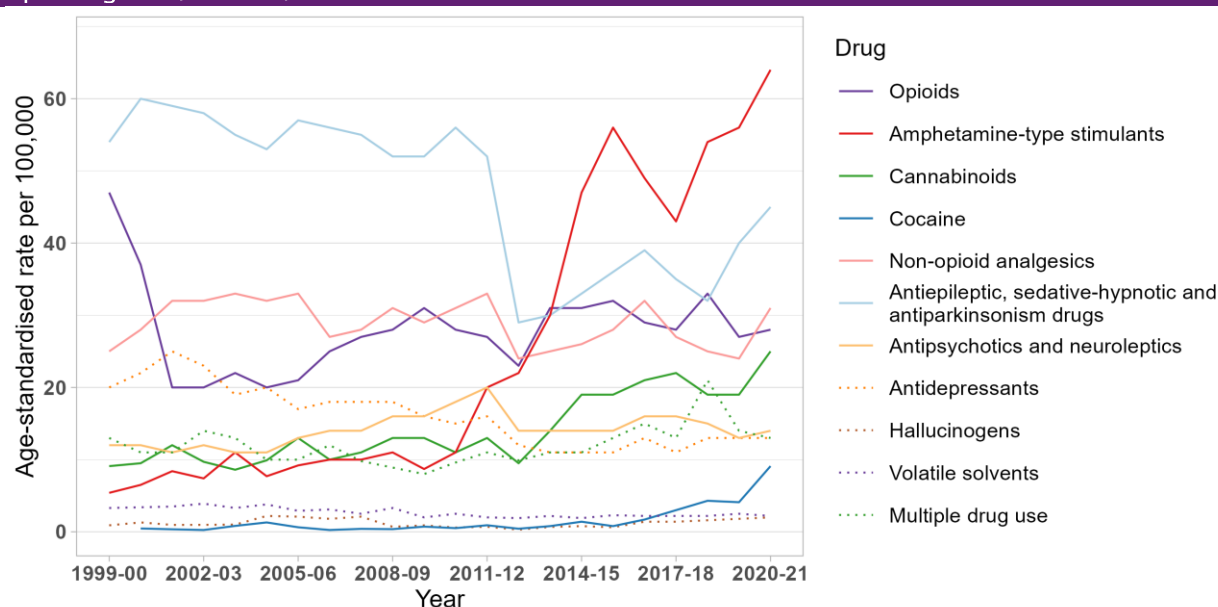


Figure 4. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by drug identified in the principal diagnosis, Victoria, 1999-00 to 2020-21.



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 A25. 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 Victoria 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	247 (243, 251)	216 (212, 219)	1.15 (1.12, 1.17)	<0.001
Amphetamine-type stimulants	64 (62, 66)	56 (55, 58)	1.13 (1.08, 1.19)	<0.001
Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and antiparkinsonism drugs	45 (43, 47)	40 (39, 42)	1.13 (1.07, 1.19)	<0.001
Non-opioid analgesics	31 (30, 32)	24 (23, 25)	1.28 (1.20, 1.37)	<0.001
Opioids	28 (27, 30)	27 (25, 28)	1.07 (1.00, 1.14)	0.046
Cannabinoids	25 (24, 26)	19 (18, 21)	1.29 (1.20, 1.39)	<0.001
Antipsychotics and neuroleptics	14 (13, 15)	13 (12, 14)	1.05 (0.96, 1.16)	0.287
Antidepressants	13 (12, 14)	13 (12, 14)	0.98 (0.89, 1.08)	0.678
Multiple drug use	13 (12, 14)	14 (13, 15)	0.97 (0.88, 1.07)	0.527
Cocaine	9.1 (8.4, 9.9)	4.1 (3.6, 4.6)	2.21 (1.92, 2.56)	<0.001
Volatile solvents	2.2 (1.8, 2.6)	2.5 (2.1, 2.9)	0.87 (0.69, 1.08)	0.210
Hallucinogens	2.0 (1.7, 2.4)	1.8 (1.5, 2.1)	1.12 (0.87, 1.45)	0.381

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.

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.