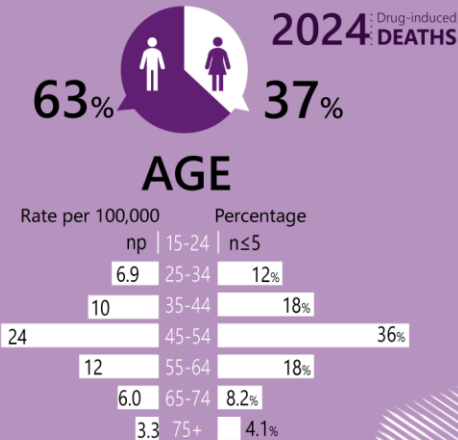


South Australia



DRUG INVOLVEMENT
(deaths per 100,000 population)

- 3.6 Opioids
- 3.5 Amphetamine-type stimulants
- 2.8 Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and anti-parkinsonism drugs
- 1.5 Antidepressants
- 0.98 Antipsychotics & neuroleptics (n=8)
- (n≤5) Non-opioid analgesics
- (n≤5) Cocaine
- (n=0) Cannabinoids



South Australia showed a marked increase in drug-induced deaths in 2024, with the rate rising from 6.1 to 8.0 deaths per 100,000 people. The most affected group was people aged 45-54 years, whose rate was substantially higher than other age groups. Opioids and amphetamine-type stimulants contributed at similarly high rates to overdose deaths, with amphetamine-type stimulant involvement increasing significantly compared with 2023.

There were 147 registered overdose and other drug-induced deaths (excluding alcohol and tobacco) in [South Australia](#) in 2024, which is equivalent to 0.93% of all registered deaths in this jurisdiction.

The rate fluctuated between 2005 and 2023, with the highest rate observed in 2009 (8.8 deaths per 100,000 people). The preliminary age-standardised rate of drug-induced deaths in 2024 was 8.0 deaths per 100,000 people, significantly higher than the rate for 2023 (6.1 deaths per 100,000 people in 2023; [Figure 1](#); Table A33). Both estimates remain subject to further revision and may change.

Sex



In 2024, [males](#) accounted for 63% (93 deaths) of drug-induced deaths. The rate of drug-induced deaths was also higher among males than females (10 versus 5.7 deaths per 100,000 people, respectively). Although both male and female rates in 2024 were higher than the revised 2023 rates, analyses did not indicate a statistically significant difference for either sex (Table A33).

Age



In 2024, drug-induced deaths were most common among the [45-54 age group](#) (36%, 53 deaths).

The age-specific rate was highest in the 45-54 age group, followed by the 55-64 and 35-44 age groups (24, 12 and 11 deaths per 100,000 people, respectively).

Compared with the revised 2023 estimates, the preliminary 2024 mortality rate doubled among people aged 45-54 years, rising from 12 to 24 deaths per 100,000, and almost doubled among those aged 25-34 years, from 3.5 to 6.9 deaths per 100,000. However, only the increase among people aged 45-54 years was statistically significant (Table A34).

Remoteness Area of Usual Residence

In 2024, the greatest proportion and the highest age-standardised rate of drug-induced deaths occurred among people residing in major city areas (76%, 114 deaths, 8.0 deaths per 100,000 people).

Analyses did not indicate statistically significant differences in the estimated rates between 2024 and 2023 for any region (see Table A35).

Intent of Drug Overdose Deaths

In 2024, 98% (144 deaths) of drug-induced deaths were due to overdose. Unintentional drug overdose accounted for 76% (110 deaths) and intentional drug overdose for 17% (25 deaths) of these deaths. Although the rate of unintentional overdose deaths has fluctuated over time, it was significantly higher in 2024 than in 2023 (Table A36).

Place of Occurrence



In 2024, the location of the incident underlying death was coded as home for the majority (72%, 104 deaths) of drug overdose deaths.

Drug Involvement

In South Australia, the three [most common drug types](#) involved in drug overdose deaths in 2024 were:

- **opioids** (3.6 deaths per 100,000 people, 68 deaths),
- **amphetamine-type stimulants** (3.5 deaths per 100,000 people, 62 deaths), and
- **antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and anti-parkinsonism drugs** (2.8 deaths per 100,000 people, 49 deaths) ([Figure 2](#)).

Comparison of estimated rates of drug overdose deaths in South Australia identified a significantly higher rate of deaths involving **amphetamine-type stimulants** in 2024 compared to 2023 (by 74%), noting that both these estimates are subject to revision and may increase (Table A37).

Figure 1. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-induced deaths, by sex, South Australia, 2005-2024

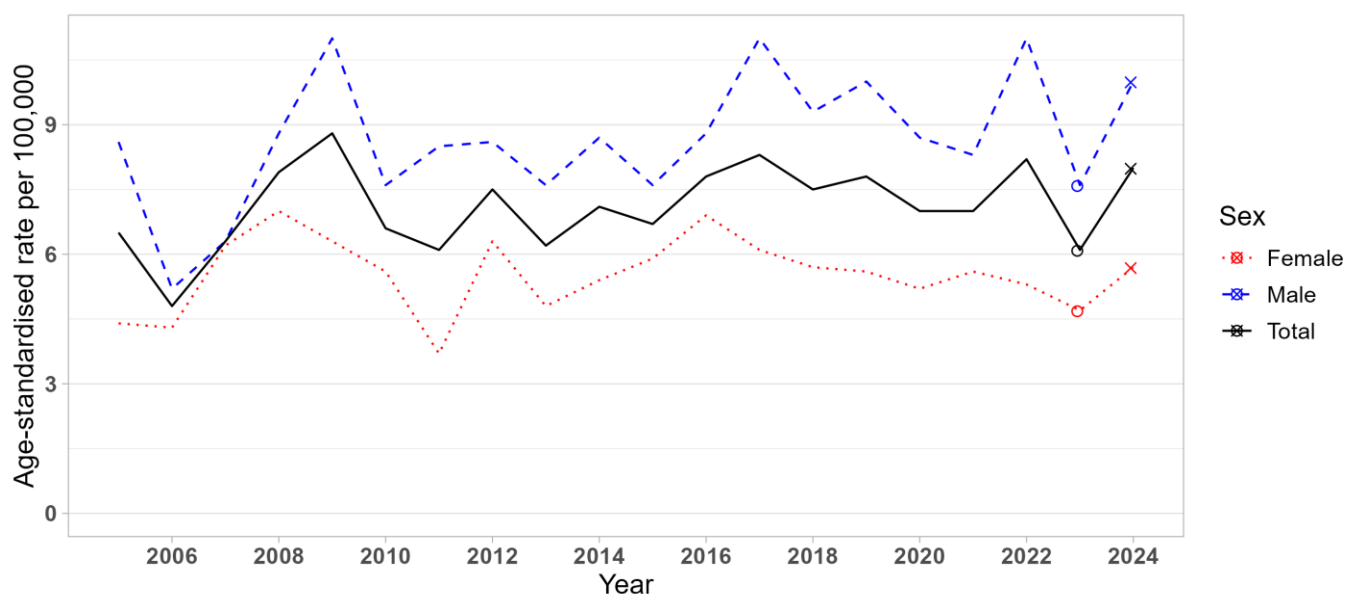
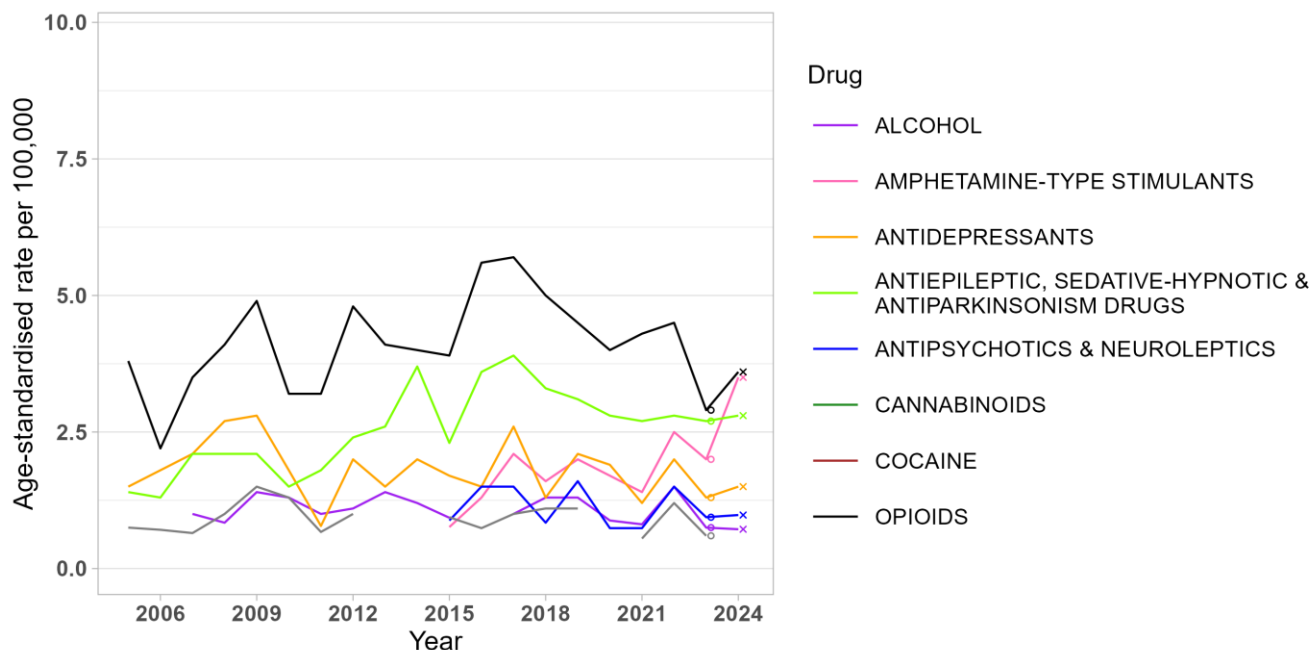


Figure 2. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug overdose deaths, by drug class, South Australia, 2005-2024

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2023 and 2024 are not final and thus are subject to further revision. The symbol 'o' indicates revised estimates and 'x' preliminary revised estimates. Age-standardised rates were not calculated if the number of deaths 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 A33. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-induced deaths in South Australia in 2023 and 2024, and percent change for difference between 2024 and 2023 (with 95% confidence intervals), by sex

Sex	Rate in 2023	Rate in 2024	Percent change for 2024 vs 2023
Female	4.7 (3.5, 6.3)	5.7 (4.3, 7.5)	21 (-19, 80)
Male	7.6 (5.9, 9.6)	10 (8, 13)	35 (-1, 85)
Total	6.1 (5.1, 7.4)	8.0 (6.7, 9.4)	29 (1, 65)*

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2023 and 2024 are not final and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of 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 A34. Crude rate per 100,000 people of drug-induced deaths in South Australia in 2023 and 2024, and percent change for difference between 2024 and 2023 (with 95% confidence intervals), by age

Age	Rate in 2023	Rate in 2024	Percent change for 2024 vs 2023
15-64	8.1 (6.5, 9.9)	11 (9, 13)	34 (2, 77)*
15-24	NA (NA, NA)	NA (NA, NA)	–
25-34	3.5 (1.6, 6.7)	6.9 (4.1, 10.9)	96 (-16, 396)
35-44	10 (7, 15)	10 (7, 15)	1.3 (-43.8, 82.8)
45-54	12 (8, 17)	24 (18, 31)	105 (26, 241)*
55-64	14 (9, 19)	12 (8, 17)	-13 (-50, 51)
65-74	7.1 (3.9, 11.9)	6.0 (3.1, 10.5)	-16 (-64, 97)

75-84	–	–	–
85+	16 (7, 32)	–	–

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2023 and 2024 are not final and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the crude rate and percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of 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 A35. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-induced deaths in South Australia in 2023 and 2024, and percent change for difference between 2024 and 2023 (with 95% confidence intervals), by remoteness area

Remoteness	Rate in 2023	Rate in 2024	Percent change for 2024 vs 2023
Major Cities	6.5 (5.2, 7.9)	8.0 (6.6, 9.6)	24 (-6, 63)
Regional and Remote	4.9 (3.0, 7.7)	6.0 (3.8, 9.0)	22 (-33, 124)

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2023 and 2024 are not final and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of 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 A36. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of overdose deaths in South Australia in 2023 and 2024, and percent change for difference between 2024 and 2023 (with 95% confidence intervals), by intent

Intent	Rate in 2023	Rate in 2024	Percent change for 2024 vs 2023
Unintentional	4.3 (3.4, 5.3)	6.2 (5.1, 7.5)	45 (8, 94)*
Intentional	1.4 (1.0, 2.1)	1.2 (0.7, 1.8)	-18 (-52, 43)

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2023 and 2024 are not final and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of 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 A37. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of overdose deaths in South Australia in 2023 and 2024, and percent change for difference between 2024 and 2023 (with 95% confidence intervals), by drugs involved

Drug	Rate in 2023	Rate in 2024	Percent change for 2024 vs 2023
Opioids	2.9 (2.2, 3.8)	3.6 (2.8, 4.6)	24 (-14, 77)
Amphetamine-type stimulants	2.0 (1.4, 2.8)	3.5 (2.7, 4.6)	74 (15, 162)*
Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic & antiparkinsonism drugs	2.7 (2.0, 3.6)	2.8 (2.1, 3.7)	3.8 (-30.3, 54.6)
Antidepressants	1.3 (0.8, 1.9)	1.5 (1.0, 2.2)	19 (-31, 105)
Antipsychotics & neuroleptics	0.94 (0.55, 1.49)	0.98 (0.57, 1.56)	4.8 (-46.2, 104.3)
Alcohol	0.75 (0.41, 1.26)	0.72 (0.38, 1.24)	-4.3 (-55.1, 104.2)
Cannabinoids	–	–	–
Cocaine	–	–	–
Non-opioid analgesics	0.60 (0.30, 1.07)	–	–

Note: Deaths where conditions related to alcohol or tobacco comprised the underlying cause of death are not captured here. Causes of death data for 2023 and 2024 are not final and thus are subject to further revision. 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of 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.

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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.

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Related Links

- For interactive data visualisations accompanying this report, go to: https://drugtrends.shinyapps.io/deaths_2024
- For full details of the methods underpinning this report, go to: <http://www.unsw.edu.au/research/ndarc/resources/trends-drug-induced-deaths-australia-2005-2024>
- 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/>