



1000 PEOPLE A WEEK WILL BE DIAGNOSED WITH DEMENTIA IN 2005

A new Report, *Dementia Estimates and Projections: Australian States and Territories*, commissioned from Access Economics by Alzheimer's Australia estimates that nearly 52,000 people will be newly diagnosed with dementia this year – 1000 people every week.

The new national and state and territory data indicate that in 2005, the total number of Australians with dementia will pass the 200,000 mark (1% of the population).

By 2050 the total number of people with dementia will exceed 730,000 (2.8% of the projected population). The new estimates and projections of Access Economics are 25% higher by mid century than previously projected in 2003.

There are three main reasons for these increased figures:

- i) Higher rates of diagnosis of dementia.
- ii) More precise (and higher) prevalence rates of dementia for the oldest old.
- iii) Revision of ABS demographic projections yielding higher forecasts of the future Australian population, particularly in the older age groups.

Lynne Pezzullo, Access Economics, said “the higher estimates and projections for dementia incidence and prevalence across Australia since 2003 show the sensitivity of the projections to relatively minor changes. While this means that such forecasts should be used with caution, it also indicates that any *actual* delay in the onset of dementia – as a result, for example, of dementia research and medical breakthroughs – could have a dramatic impact on the future number of cases and the real costs of dementia.”

She said “earlier work had shown that if the onset of Alzheimer's disease can be delayed by five years, by mid century there will be a 49% reduction in the projected number of cases”.

Glenn Rees, National Executive Director, said “the new figures have significant implications for all parts of the health and aged care systems and underline the importance of the commitment by the Australian Government to *Make Dementia A National Health Priority*.”

He said “It is critical to meet the dementia epidemic head on by investment in dementia research. The real cost of dementia to the health system and family and carer costs was estimated by Access Economics in 2003 at nearly \$6 billion. An annual investment in dementia research of \$50 million is a small price to pay for the prospect of delaying the onset of dementia and dramatically reducing health care costs and improving quality of life”.

Alzheimer’s Australia Vic and Alzheimer’s Australia WA have commissioned regional estimates and projections for their states of the numbers of people with dementia from Access Economics.

Glenn Rees said, “The national and state and territory level figures together with the regional figures for Victoria and Western Australia will be provided to the working group of Australian Government and state and territory officers who are developing a National Framework for Action on Dementia”.

“Access to dementia services is already an issue and will become of increased concern if health planners do not agree on a program of national action to meet the dementia epidemic,” he said.

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The Report is available on {web site URL?}

For information about the Victorian and WA regional reports contact Lynette Moore (03 9815 7800 and 0419 561 164) and Frank Schaper (08 9388 2800 or 0412 150 915) respectively.

Dementia Helpline 1800 639 331

Figures at national and state and territory level (Access 2005).

Prevalence of dementia (total number of cases 000s)

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
2000	60.3	44.3	29.2	16.1	14.5	4.6	0.4	1.8	171.2
2005	71.4	52.5	36.2	18.8	17.7	5.4	0.5	2.3	204.9
2010	83.2	61.9	44.3	21.8	21.6	6.2	0.7	2.9	242.5
2020	110.3	83.6	65.6	28.0	31.8	8.2	1.0	4.3	332.9
2030	149.5	114.0	99.0	36.8	47.3	11.0	1.6	6.3	465.5
2040	194.8	149.8	138.7	46.2	65.5	13.6	2.2	8.3	619.1
2050	227.2	176.1	171.1	50.7	79.2	14.3	2.7	9.6	731.0

Incidence of Dementia (new cases of dementia 000s)

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
2001	16.1	11.8	7.8	4.3	3.9	1.2	0.1	0.5	45.7
2005	18.1	13.4	9.2	4.8	4.5	1.4	0.1	0.6	52
2010	20.8	15.6	11.1	5.4	5.4	1.6	0.2	0.7	60.6
2020	27.3	20.8	16.4	6.9	7.9	2.1	0.3	1.1	82.5
2030	37.4	28.7	25	9.2	11.9	2.8	0.4	1.6	116.6
2040	48	37.2	34.3	11.3	16.1	3.4	0.5	2	152.4
2050	54.7	42.9	41.3	12	19	3.4	0.7	2.3	175.6