

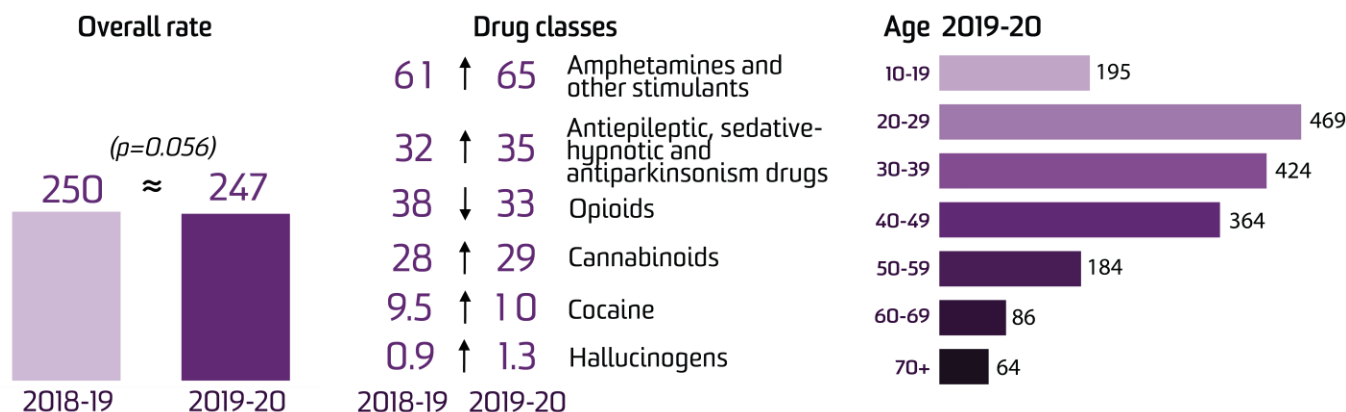
Trends in drug-related hospitalisations, 1999-2020

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New South Wales



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



Note: Arrows indicate a statistically significant increase/decrease between 2018-19 and 2019-20 ($p<0.05$); sign "≈" indicates no significant change.

There were 19,452 hospitalisations with a drug-related principal diagnosis in [New South Wales](#) in 2019-20, equivalent to 0.64% of all hospitalisations in New South Wales.

This is equivalent to 247 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, similar to 2018-19 (250 hospitalisations per 100,000 people; $p=0.06$) ([Table 1](#)), but an increase from 223 hospitalisations per 100,000 people in 1999-00 ([Figure 1](#)).

Sex

In 2019-20, the rate of hospitalisations was higher among [males](#) than females (287 versus 207 hospitalisations per 100,000 people).

Age

In 2019-20, the rate of hospitalisations was [highest](#) among the 20-29 age group, followed by the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups (469, 424, and 364 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, respectively).

Remoteness Area of Usual Residence

The highest rate of hospitalisations in 2019-20 was observed in [remote and very remote](#) New South Wales (384 hospitalisations per 100,000 people), while the number of hospitalisations was highest in major cities (14,944 hospitalisations) ([Figure 2](#)).

External Cause of Drug Poisoning

In 2019-20, 36% of drug-related hospitalisations in New South Wales were due to drug poisoning. Furthermore, 67% of drug poisoning related hospitalisations were intentional (60 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) and 23% were unintentional (20 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) ([Figure 3](#)).

Drug Type

In 2019-20, the rate of hospitalisations was [highest](#) where there was a principal diagnosis indicating amphetamines and other stimulants (65 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) ([Figure 4](#)).

Compared to 2018-19, there was a significant decrease in the rate of hospitalisations related to opioids in 2019-20, as well as hospitalisations where the principal diagnosis indicated involvement of multiple drugs ($p<0.050$) ([Table 1](#)).

In contrast, there were significant increases in the rate of hospitalisations related to amphetamines and other stimulants; antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and antiparkinsonism drugs; cannabinoids; cocaine; and hallucinogens ($p<0.050$) ([Table 1](#)).

Figure 1. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by sex, New South Wales, 1999-00 to 2019-20.

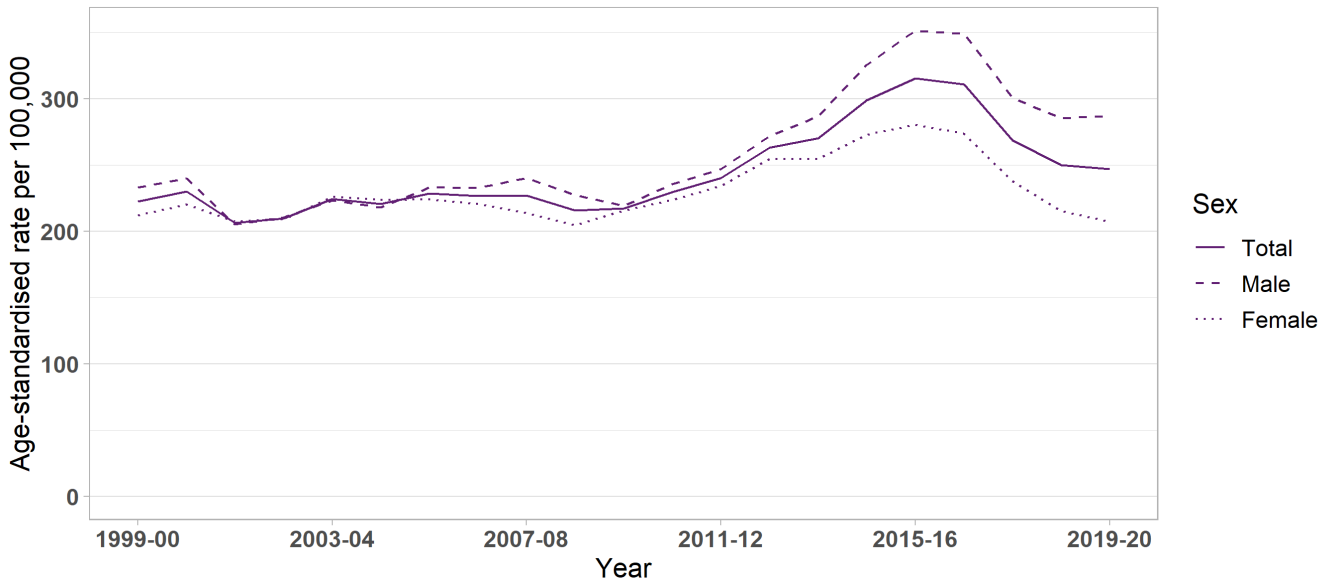
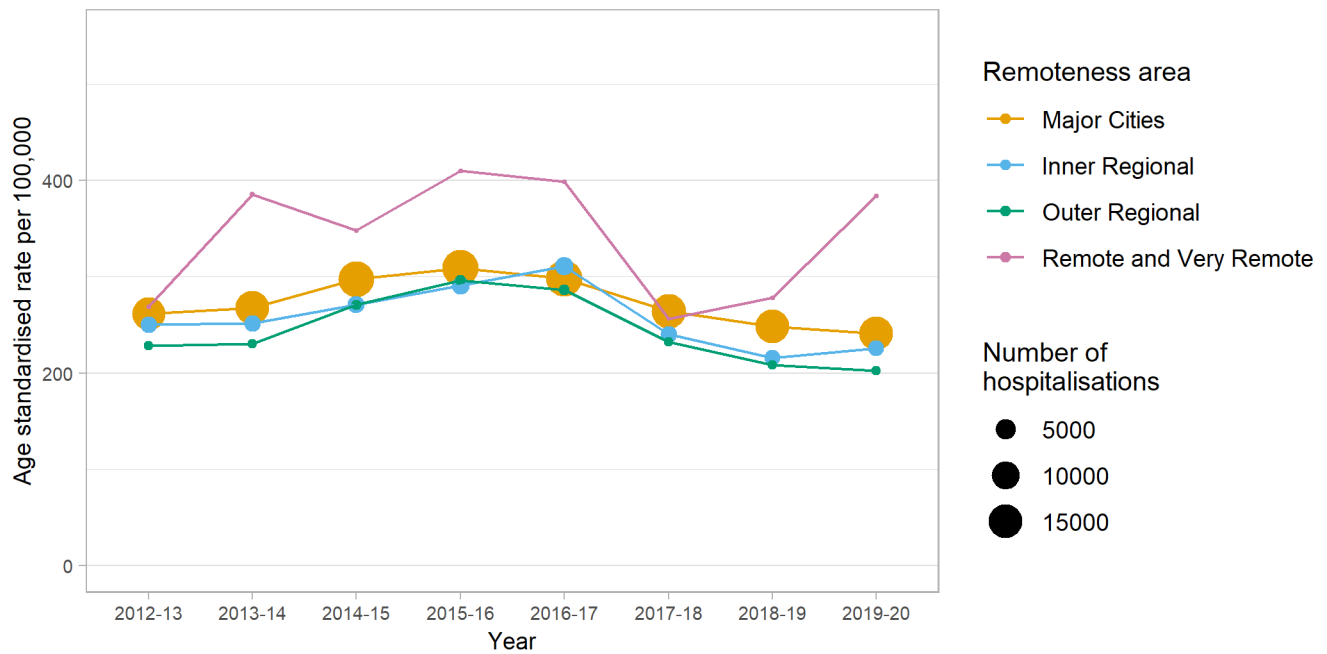


Figure 2. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by remoteness, New South Wales, 2012-13 to 2019-20.



Note: The size (area) of the bubble is proportional to the number of hospitalisations. 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), New South Wales, 1999-00 to 2019-20.

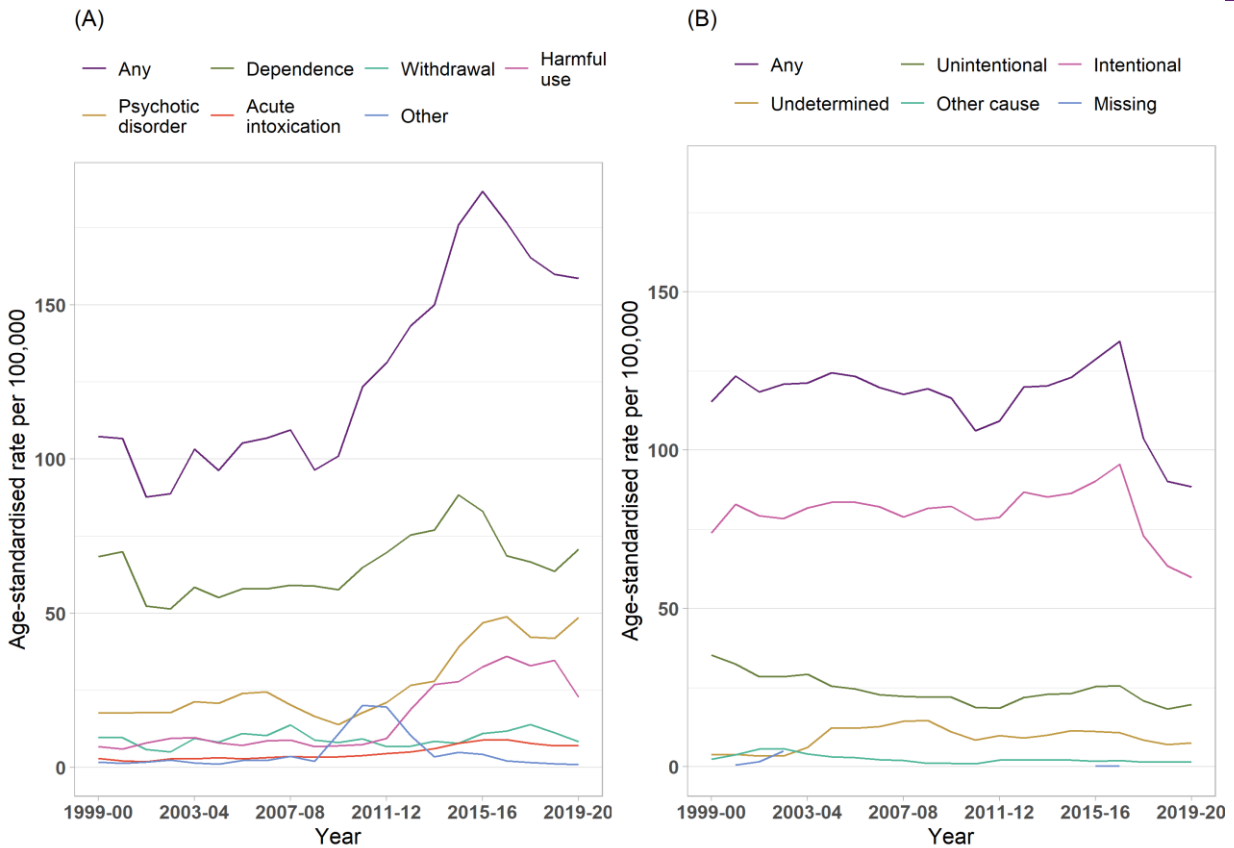
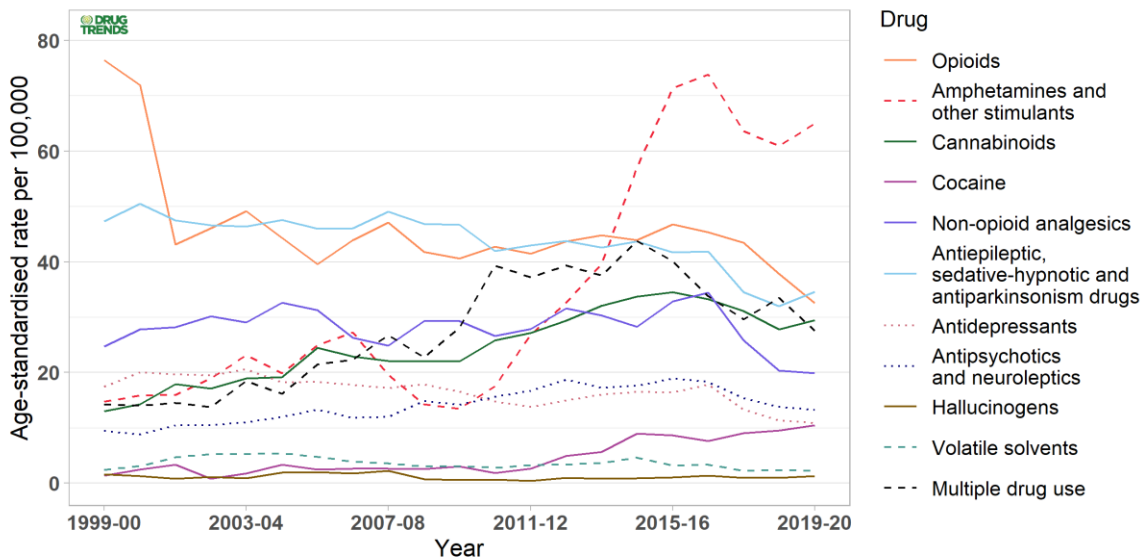


Figure 4. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by drug identified in the principal diagnosis, New South Wales, 1999-00 to 2019-20.



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 1. Age-standardised rate (per 100,000 people) of drug-related hospitalisations in 2019-20 and rate ratio and p-value for difference compared to 2018-19, in New South Wales by drug type identified in the principal diagnosis

Drug	Rate in 2019-20 (95% CI)	Rate in 2018-19 (95% CI)	Rate ratio	P-value
All drugs	247 (243.6,250.6)	250 (247,254)	0.99 (0.98,1.00)	0.056
Amphetamines and other stimulants	65 (63.2, 66.8)	61 (59,63)	1.07 (1.04,1.09)	<0.001
Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and antiparkinsonism drugs	35 (33.3, 35.9)	32 (31,33)	1.08 (1.05,1.12)	<0.001
Opioids	33 (31.3, 33.8)	38 (36,39)	0.86 (0.83,0.89)	<0.001
Cannabinoids	29 (28.3, 30.7)	28 (27,29)	1.06 (1.02,1.10)	0.002
Multiple drug use	28 (26.4, 28.7)	33 (32,35)	0.82 (0.79,0.85)	<0.001
Non-opioid analgesics	20 (18.9, 20.9)	20 (19,21)	0.98 (0.93,1.02)	0.302
Antipsychotics and neuroleptics	13 (12.5, 14.1)	14 (13,15)	0.96 (0.91,1.01)	0.138
Antidepressants	11 (10.1, 11.6)	11 (11,12)	0.96 (0.90,1.02)	0.167
Cocaine	10 (9.7, 11.2)	9.5 (8.8, 10.2)	1.10 (1.03,1.17)	0.004
Volatile solvents	2.3 (1.96, 2.62)	2.3 (2.0, 2.7)	0.98 (0.86,1.12)	0.774
Hallucinogens	1.3 (1.05, 1.57)	0.9 (0.7, 1.2)	1.36 (1.13,1.65)	0.001

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.

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Please note that as with all statistical reports there is the potential for minor revisions to data in this report over its life. Please refer to the online version at [Drug Trends](#).

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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-1999-2020>
- 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>
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