

# Country WA PHN

## Needs Assessment on a page

### Overview

The Country WA PHN is home to nearly 560,000 Western Australians, spanning 2.5 million square kilometres and comprises of regional centres, rural towns, remote and very remote communities across 13 SA3s. It includes diverse populations such as 39,000 residents born overseas and 63,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ('Aboriginal') residents.

### Health needs analysis

#### Health status

- Compared to other parts of WA, residents in the Country WA PHN region experience poorer health outcomes related to social determinants of health.
- Key concerns across the region include high rates of avoidable deaths and chronic disease, clinician-diagnosed depression, anxiety, alcohol misuse and drug misuse, and increased lifestyle factors for chronic disease.

#### Communities at risk of poorer health outcomes

- A number of areas experience poorer health outcomes, particularly those communities experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage and with high Aboriginal and migrant populations.
- Key areas include Albany, Bunbury, Goldfields, Kimberley, the Mid West and Wheatbelt-North.

#### Potential priorities based on the health needs analysis

- Reduce risk factors for chronic disease.
- Improve management of chronic conditions.
- Reduce avoidable deaths.
- Enable access to mental health care.

### Service needs analysis

#### Location characteristics

- Access to healthcare is limited in many Country WA PHN areas and some areas have high rates of potentially preventable hospitalisations (PPHs) due to chronic disease placing avoidable burden on the hospital system.
- Within the Country WA PHN, the Pilbara, Midwest, Wheatbelt and Goldfields have the lowest workforce and service supply.

#### Workforce and service distribution

- The Country WA PHN is the largest PHN in Australia, covering a vast and sparsely populated geographical area of 2.5 million square kilometres. It has a lower supply of health workforce and service distribution compared to the metropolitan PHNs.
- Local housing and childcare availability act as barriers for attracting and retaining health workforce in many areas, and the cost of travelling vast distances to provide clinical services further impacts healthcare accessibility across Country WA.

#### Priority locations based on the health & service needs analysis

- Bunbury, East Pilbara, Goldfields and Wheatbelt-North.
- Albany, Esperance.

### Triangulation & priorities

#### Triangulation

Health need	Service need	Triangulation
High rates of chronic conditions and avoidable deaths.	There is limited access to services. Chronic diseases are a leading cause of potentially preventable hospitalisations (PPHs).	Enable access to best-practice management for chronic disease in at-risk areas.
High prevalence of chronic disease risk factors.	There is limited access to screening.	Support primary health care providers to promote healthy lifestyle changes and improve screening for chronic disease risk factors.
Aboriginal people experience disproportionate levels of poor health outcomes.	There is limited access culturally appropriate services in regions with large Aboriginal communities.	Enable access to coordinated culturally appropriate primary care for Aboriginal people.

#### Priorities

- Enable access to best-practice management for chronic disease in at-risk areas.
- Enable access to coordinated culturally appropriate primary care for Aboriginal people.
- Support primary health care providers to manage chronic disease populations and build capacity for patient self-management.
- Support primary health care providers to promote healthy lifestyle changes and improve screening for chronic disease risk factors.