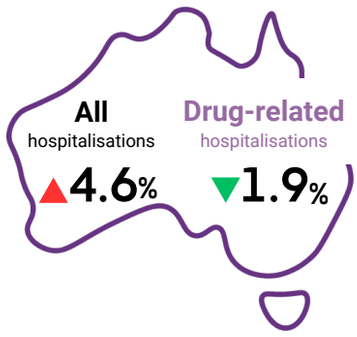
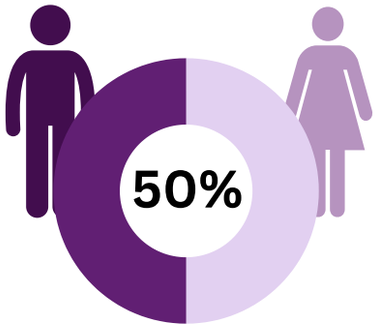
Drug-Related Hospitalisations, Australia, 2022-23

NIDIP
National Illicit Drug Indicators Project

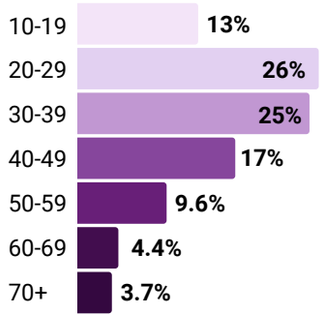
There were 51,413 drug-related hospitalisations (excluding alcohol and tobacco) in Australia in 2022-23.



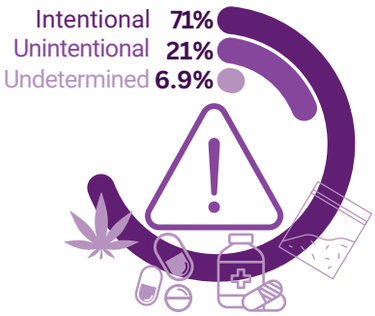
The number of drug-related hospitalisations decreased by 1.9% in 2022-23 relative to the previous year; by contrast, total number of all-cause hospitalisations increased by 4.6%



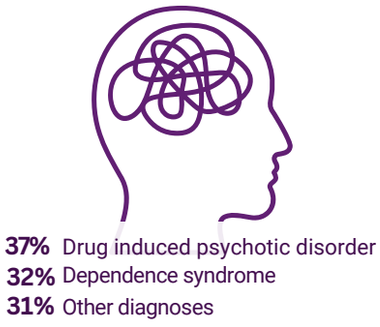
Males and females were equally represented among drug-related hospitalisations.



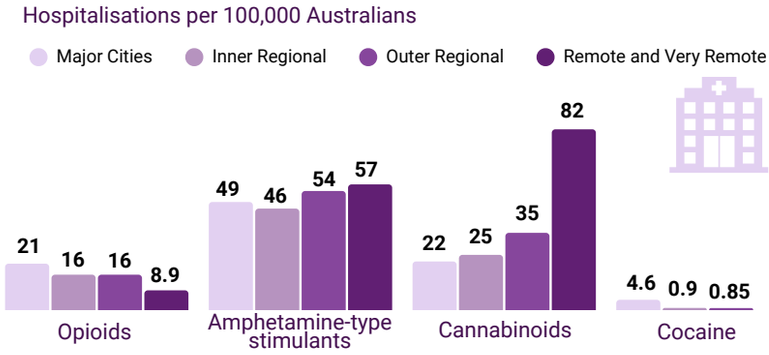
The highest percentage of drug-related hospitalisations occurred amongst Australians aged 20-29 and 30-39 years.



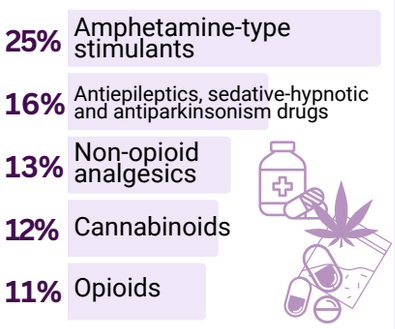
Intentional poisoning was the most common external cause of hospitalisations due to drug poisoning.



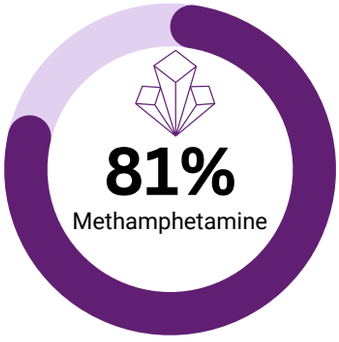
Drug-induced psychotic disorder and dependence syndrome were the leading diagnoses of mental and behavioural disorders due to substance use.



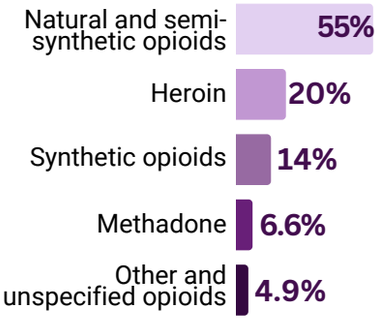
The highest rates of opioid- and cocaine-related hospitalisations were in major city areas. Amphetamine-type stimulant-related hospitalisations were highest in outer regional areas, and cannabinoid-related hospitalisations in remote and very remote areas.



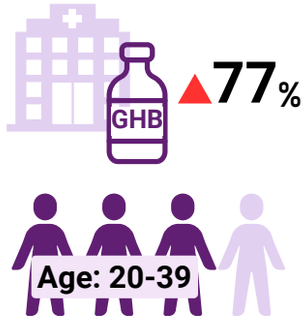
The five drug classes most commonly identified as the principal diagnosis in drug-related hospitalisations.



Methamphetamine-related hospitalisations comprised 81% of all hospitalisations related to amphetamine-type stimulants.

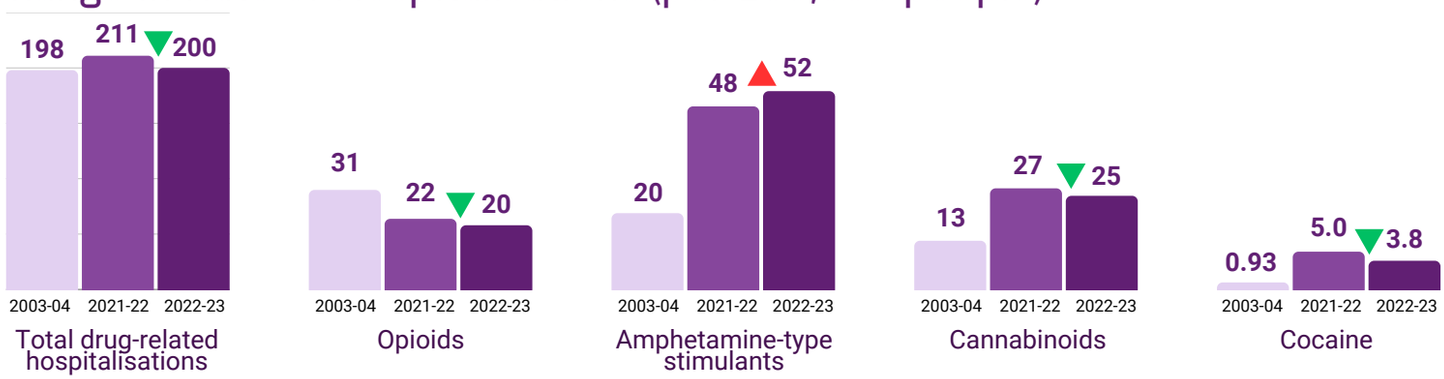


Natural and semi-synthetic opioids were the principal diagnosis in over half of opioid poisoning hospitalisations.



GHB-related hospitalisations increased 77% from 2021–22 to 2022–23, with 76% (765 hospitalisations) among the 20–39 age group.

Change in Rate of Hospitalisations (per 100,000 people)



The total rate of drug-related hospitalisations generally increased from 2002-03 to 2015-16, thereafter declining through to 2022-23.
Each drug type exhibited its own distinct pattern of change over time, but most saw a decline from 2021-22 to 2022-23, with the exception of amphetamine-type stimulants.