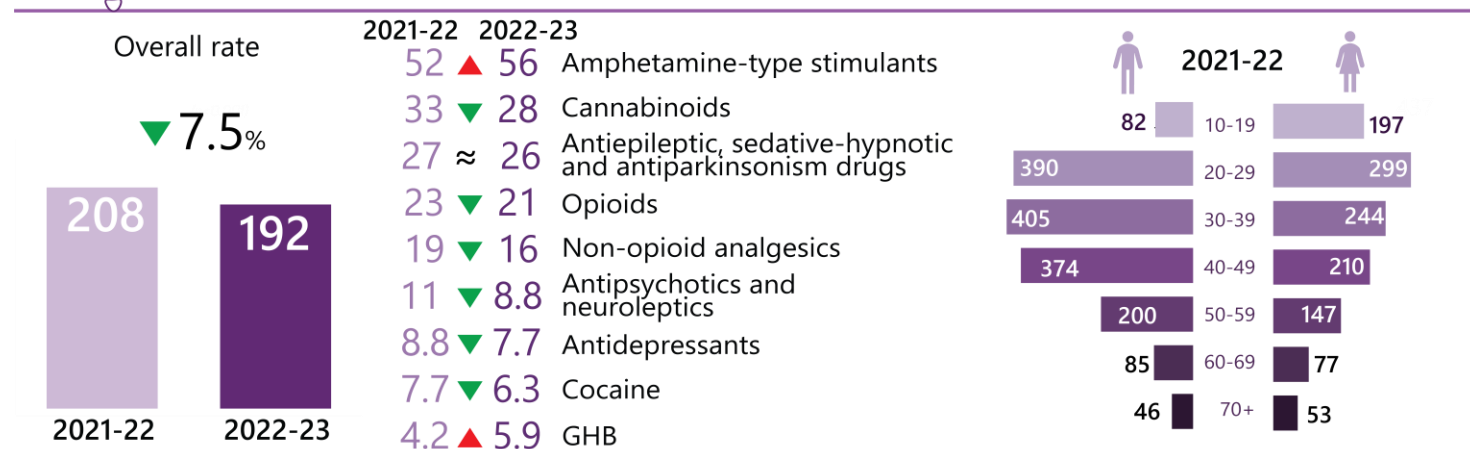


New South Wales



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



Note: The ▲ up arrow indicates a statistically significant increase, while the ▼ down arrow indicates a statistically significant decrease in population rates from 2021-22 to 2022-23. Sign '≈' indicates non-significant change.

There were 15,433 hospitalisations with a drug-related principal diagnosis in [New South Wales](#) in 2022-23, equivalent to 0.46% of all hospitalisations in New South Wales.

This is equivalent to 192 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, which was 7.5% lower than the rate in 2021-22 (208 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) (Table A18, [Appendix](#)), and a record low for the past two decades (Figure 1).

Sex

In 2022-23, the rate of hospitalisations was higher among [males](#) than females (218 versus 166 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, respectively).

Age

In 2022-23, the rate of hospitalisations was [highest](#) among the 20-29 age group, followed by the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups (346, 324, and 291 hospitalisations per 100,000 people, respectively). Among males, the rate of drug-related hospitalisations was highest in the 30-39 age groups, and among females in the 20-29 age group.

Remoteness Area of Usual Residence

The highest rate of hospitalisations in 2022-23 was observed in [remote and very remote](#) New South Wales (211 hospitalisations per 100,000 people), while the number of hospitalisations was highest in major city areas (12,138 hospitalisations) (Figure 2).

External Cause of Drug Poisoning

In 2022-23, 33% of drug-related hospitalisations in New South Wales were due to drug poisoning. Furthermore, 68% of drug poisoning-related hospitalisations were intentional (43 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) and 23% were unintentional (14 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) (Figure 3).

Drug Type

In 2022-23, the rate of hospitalisations was [highest](#) where there was a principal diagnosis indicating amphetamine-type stimulants (56 hospitalisations per 100,000 people) (Figure 4).

Compared to 2021-22, there were significant decreases in the 2022-23 rates of hospitalisations related to:

- cannabinoids (▼15%),
- opioids (▼8.5%),
- non-opioid analgesics (▼15%),
- antipsychotics and neuroleptics (▼16%),
- antidepressants (▼12%), and
- cocaine (▼18%) (Table A18, [Appendix](#)).

In contrast, there were significant increases in the rates of hospitalisations related to:

- GHB (▲39%),
- amphetamine-type stimulants (▲8.2%),
- methamphetamine (▲9.6%), and
- MDMA/ecstasy (▲33%).

Figure 1. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by sex, New South Wales, 2003-04 to 2022-23.

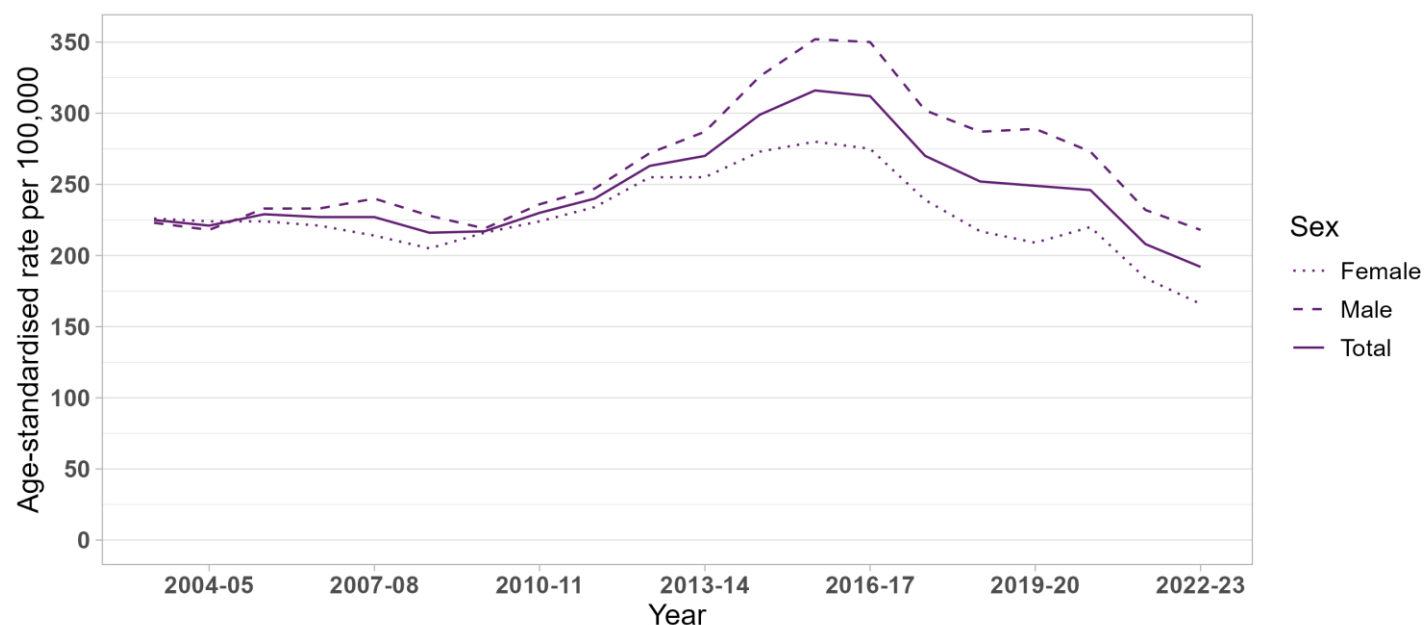
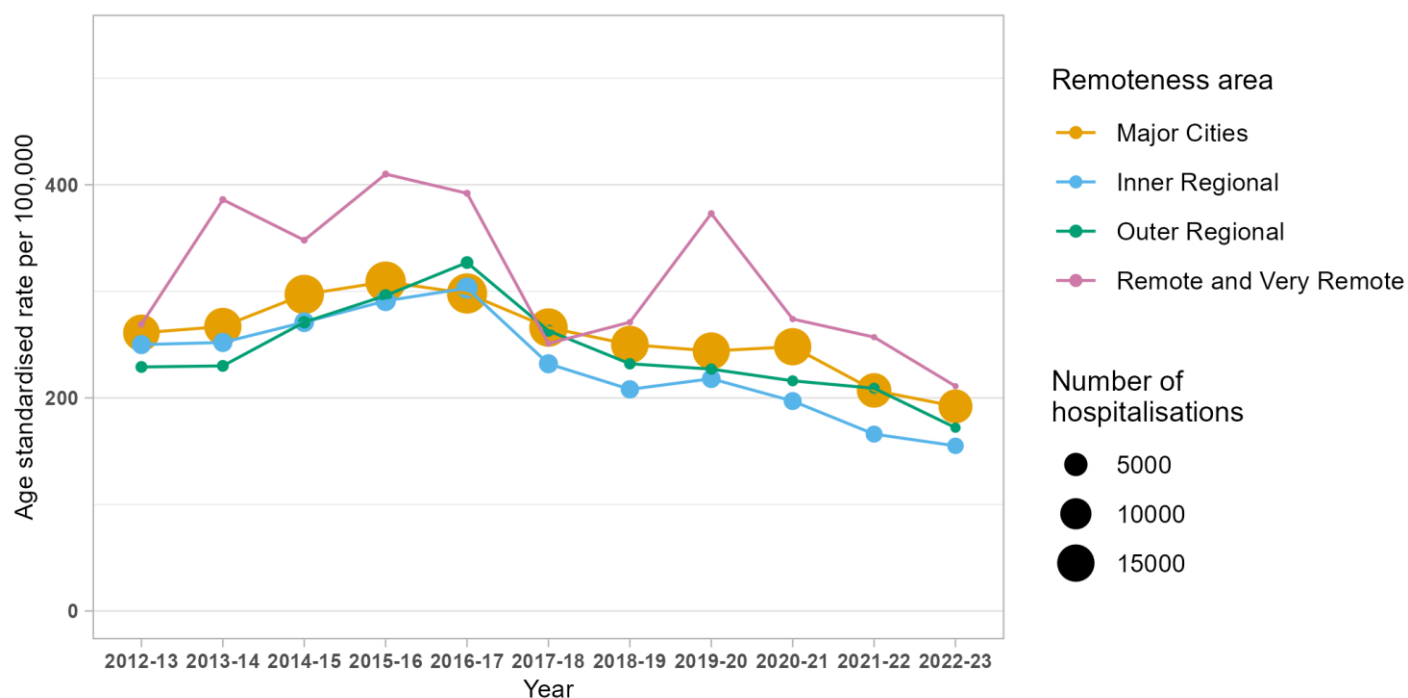


Figure 2. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by remoteness, New South Wales, 2012-13 to 2022-23.



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, 2003-04 to 2022-23.

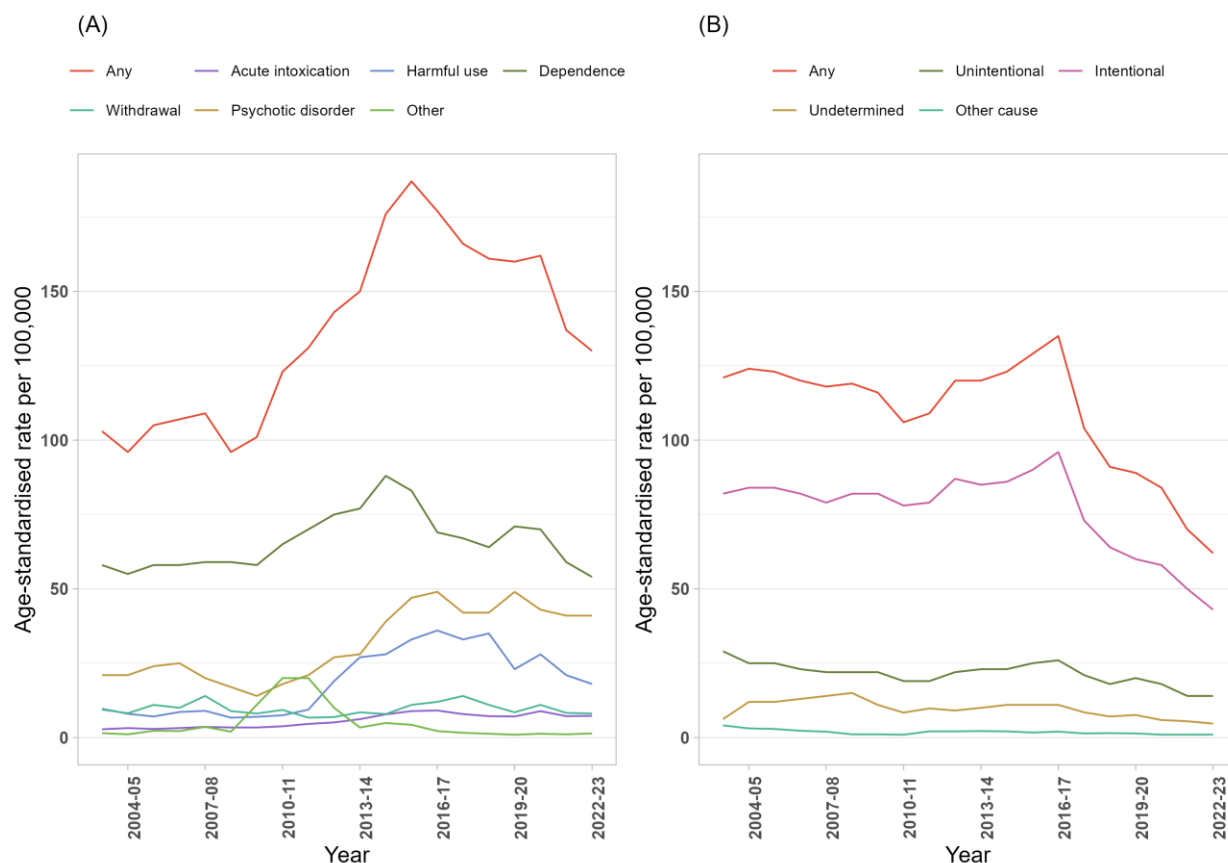


Figure 4. Age-standardised rate per 100,000 people of drug-related hospitalisations, by drug identified in the principal diagnosis, New South Wales, 2003-04 to 2022-23.

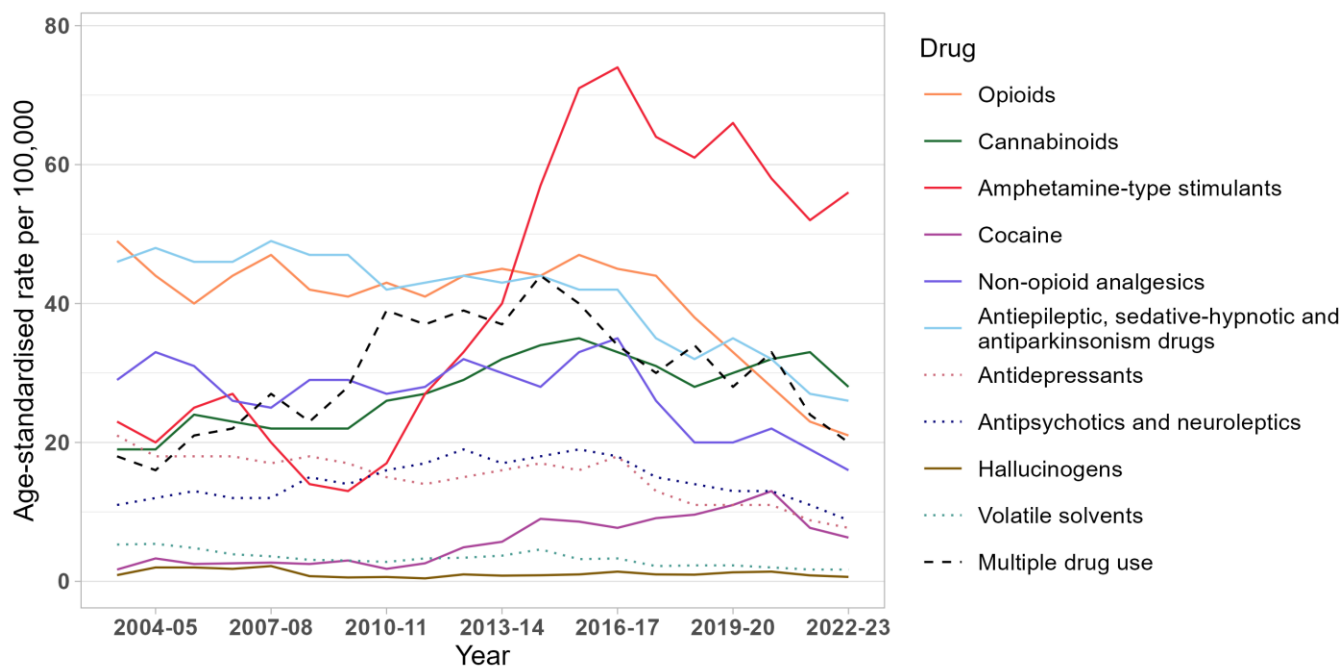


Table A18. Age-standardised rate (per 100,000 people) of drug-related hospitalisations in 2022-23 and average percent change for difference compared to 2021-22, in New South Wales by drug type identified in the principal diagnosis

| Drug | Rate in 2022-23 (95% CI) | Rate in 2021-22 (95% CI) | APC (95% CI) |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| All drugs | 192 (189, 195) | 208 (204, 211) | -7.5 (-9.5, -5.4) |
| Amphetamine-type stimulants | 56 (54, 58) | 52 (50, 53) | 8.2 (3.6, 13.0) |
| Methamphetamine | 46 (44, 47) | 42 (40, 43) | 9.6 (4.5, 15.0) |
| Cannabinoids | 28 (27, 29) | 33 (32, 34) | -15 (-20, -10) |
| Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic and antiparkinsonism drugs | 26 (25, 27) | 27 (26, 28) | -3.2 (-8.8, 2.8) |
| Opioids | 21 (20, 22) | 23 (22, 24) | -8.5 (-14.4, -2.2) |
| Multiple drug use | 20 (19, 21) | 24 (23, 25) | -19 (-24, -13) |
| Non-opioid analgesics | 16 (15, 17) | 19 (18, 20) | -16 (-22, -9) |
| Antipsychotics and neuroleptics | 8.8 (8.2, 9.5) | 11 (10, 11) | -17 (-25, -8) |
| Antidepressants | 7.7 (7.1, 8.4) | 8.8 (8.1, 9.5) | -12 (-21, -2) |
| Cocaine | 6.3 (5.8, 6.9) | 7.7 (7.1, 8.3) | -18 (-27, -8) |
| GHB | 5.9 (5.4, 6.4) | 4.2 (3.8, 4.7) | 39 (21, 61) |
| MDMA/Ecstasy | 1.9 (1.6, 2.2) | 1.4 (1.2, 1.7) | 33 (3, 71) |
| Volatile solvents | 1.7 (1.4, 2.0) | 1.7 (1.4, 2.0) | -1.1 (-21.6, 24.9) |
| Hallucinogens | 0.64 (0.48, 0.85) | 0.86 (0.67, 1.10) | -25 (-48, 8) |

Note: 95% confidence intervals for the age-standardised rate and average percent change are shown in brackets. Please refer to our [methods](#) document on 'Presentation of results' for interpretation of average percent change. 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. 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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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which the work for this report was undertaken. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

Related Links

- Hospitalisations data visualisations: https://drugtrends.shinyapps.io/hospital_separations
- Hospitalisations methods document: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/research/ndarc/resources/trends-drug-related-hospitalisations-australia-2003-2023>
- For other Drug Trends publications on drug-related hospitalisations and drug-induced deaths in Australia, go to: [National Illicit Drug Indicators Project \(NIDIP\)](#)
- For more information on NDARC research, go to: [National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre | Medicine & Health - UNSW Sydney](#)
- For more information about the AIHW and NHMD, go to: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/>
- For more information on ICD coding go to: [ICD-10-AM/ACHI/ACS Eleventh Edition | Resources | IHACPA](#)
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