

2017

AUSTRALIA'S  
**HEALTH TRACKER**  
BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

A brief report card on preventable chronic diseases,  
conditions and their risk factors  
Tracking progress for a healthier Australia by 2025

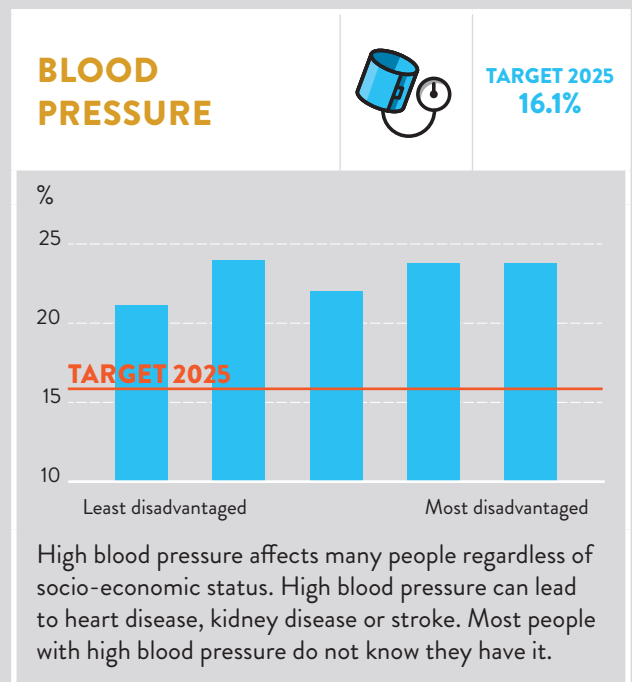
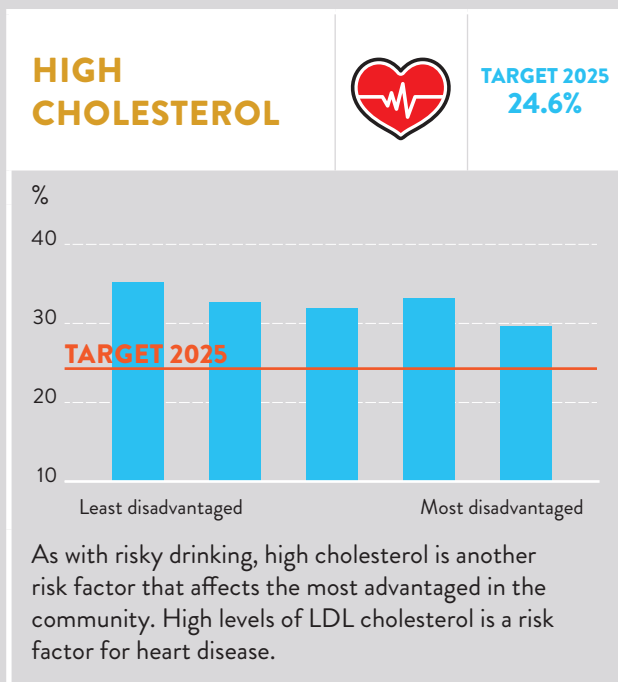
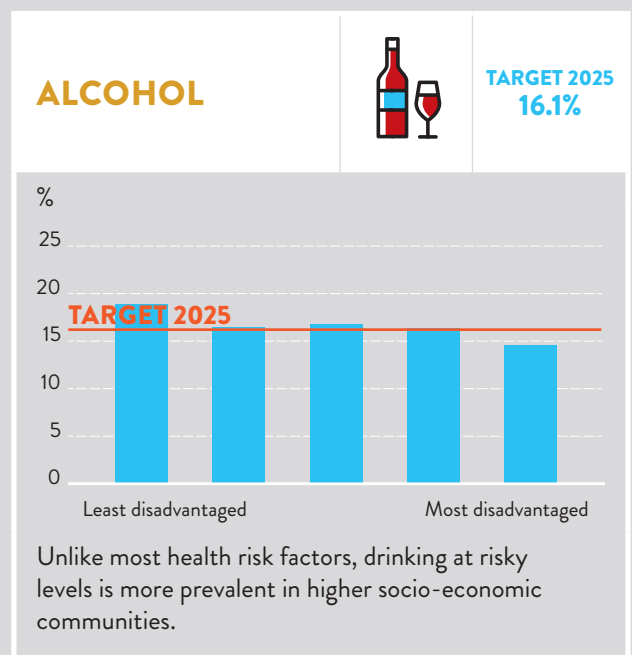
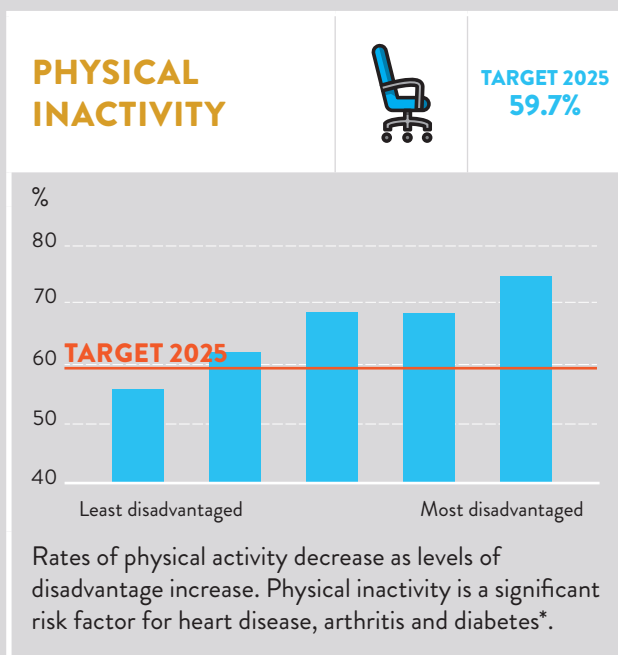


AUSTRALIAN  
HEALTH POLICY  
COLLABORATION

## AUSTRALIA'S HEALTH TRACKER BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS – 2017

This report card looks at the health of adult Australians by socio-economic status in relation to chronic diseases, risk factors and rates of death.

Australia's Health Tracker by Socio-Economic Status will be updated regularly and will track progress towards the targets for a healthier Australia by 2025.




\* Variation from the national report cards, Australia's Health Tracker: no or low exercise undertaken in the last week - 18 years and over.

The data in this report graphically highlights that people and families in the lower two socio-economic quintiles – ten million Australians – are at much greater risk of poor health.

These risk factors can and do lead to increased levels of chronic disease and higher risk of early death from preventable causes. Chronic diseases such as arthritis, heart disease, back pain, mental health and cancer affect employment, education and community participation, leading to fewer opportunities to improve income and family circumstances.


Cost of living pressures, including the cost of essentials such as housing, food and energy, are more intense for people with less household income. In addition, time pressures caused by work, family and carer duties and other commitments can have a significant impact on diet and exercise.


Struggling families and individuals do not just have more chronic disease – having a chronic disease is much more likely to kill people in the lower two socio-economic quintiles.



**1 in 2**  
Australians have a chronic disease.

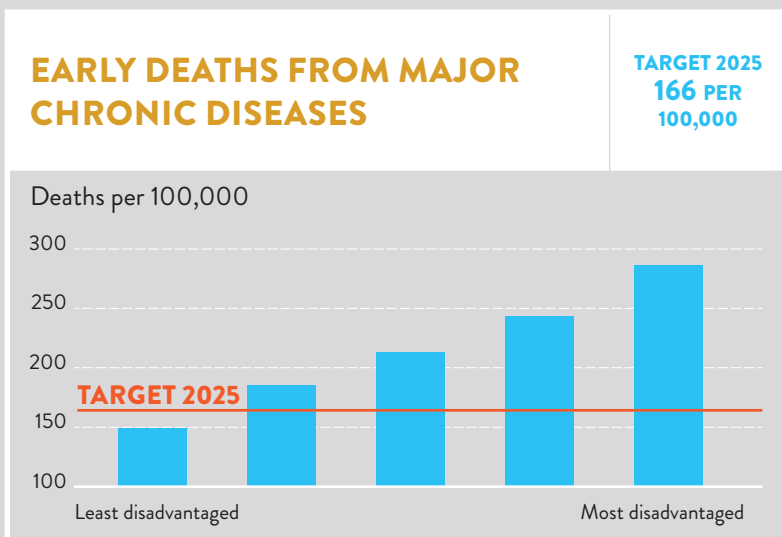
**10 MILLION**  
Australians are at much greater risk of poor health





Almost **ONE THIRD** could be prevented  
by removing exposure to risk factors such as smoking, high body mass, alcohol use, physical inactivity and high blood pressure.

Despite the need...  
**ONLY 1.3%** of spending\* is dedicated to prevention.  
\*As a proportion of total health expenditure.



More than **40,000** people have died before the age of 75 in lower socio-economic groups over the last four years.

Early death rates from the same conditions are markedly higher for people with lower socio-economic status.

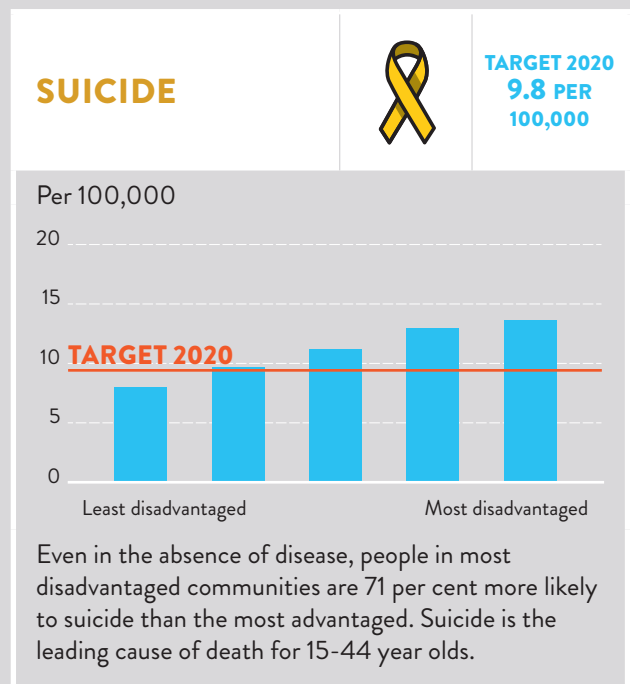
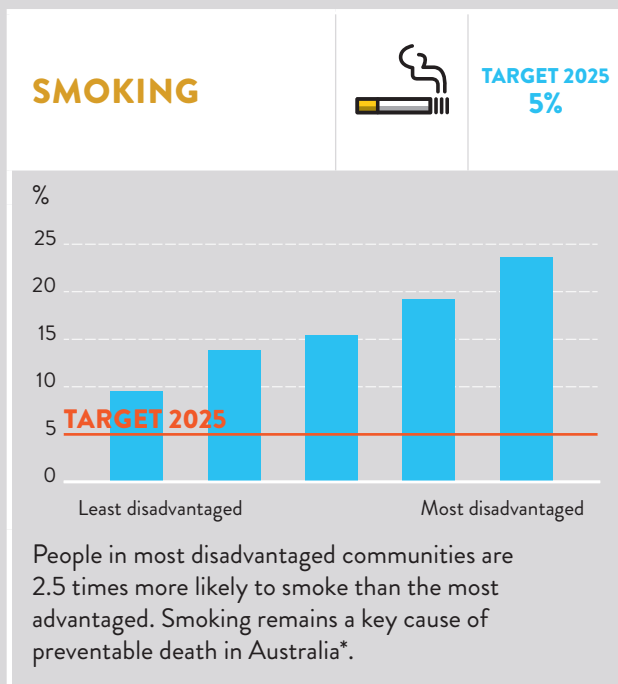
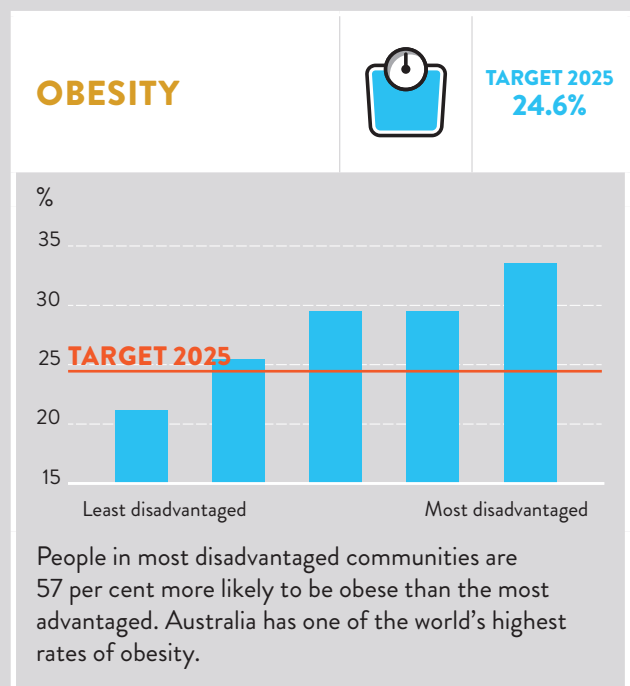
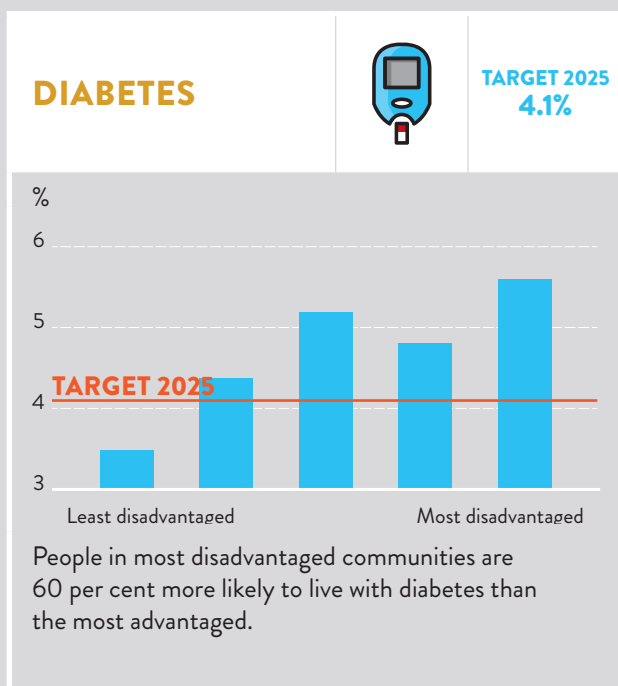
Action by communities and governments, services and families, can help prevent chronic diseases regardless of socio-economic status, improve health across the life-course, and help prevent unnecessary deaths.

The 2025 targets for a healthier Australia have been developed through the collective effort and guidance of Australia's leading scientists, researchers and clinicians.

Failure to tackle the health of Australians affected by disadvantage will result in rising costs and burden on health services, widening existing health disparities and have to manage higher rates of hospital admissions for preventable causes.

Poor health experienced by disadvantaged Australians will continue to affect welfare and education; systems and costs; productivity levels and employment; and social participation.

Health, education and other public policies must be tailored to tackle the impacts of socio-economic disadvantage to improve the health of all Australians.



\* Variation from the national report cards, Australia's Health Tracker: current smokers - 18 years and over.



# Low socio-economic status is a major risk factor for poor health.

Policies which address the health impacts of social and economic conditions will significantly improve all aspects of society and contribute directly to a prosperous, productive and healthy nation.

The Australian Health Policy Collaboration at Victoria University works with and supports a collaborative network of organisations and leading chronic disease experts, bringing together Australia's leading thinkers to translate rigorous research into good policy. The national collaboration has developed health targets and indicators for 2025 that together, will reduce preventable chronic diseases and reduce the health impacts of chronic conditions.

*Australia's Health Tracker* and *Getting Australia's Health on Track* are the policy focussed reports compiled by the national collaboration.

*Australia's Health Tracker by Socio-Economic Status* is the latest report card as part in the Australia's Health Tracker series. A companion report, *Getting Australia's Health on Track* shows where national action should be focused to improve the health of Australians.

*Australia's Health Tracker by Socio-Economic Status* presents a national level snapshot of the impact of socio-economic status on risk factors for chronic diseases, on levels of chronic diseases and on premature deaths from chronic diseases.

More than 50 organisations continue to support a systemic and sustained approach to the prevention and management of chronic diseases in Australia.



Australia needs a healthier future for all. We can, and we must, do better.

#### Technical note

Technical details are available at Australia's Health Tracker by Area website [ahpc.org.au/trackerbyarea](http://ahpc.org.au/trackerbyarea)

#### Preferred citation

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[vu.edu.au/ahpc](http://vu.edu.au/ahpc)

#AusHealthTracker, #SESTracker, @AHPC\_VU

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## Collaborating Organisations

Alliance for Research in Exercise, Nutrition and Activity (ARENA)
Australia and New Zealand Obesity Society
Australian Centre for Health Research
Australian Dental Association
Australian Disease Management Association
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
Australian Health Care Reform Alliance
Australian Health Promotion Association
Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet
Australian Institute for Musculoskeletal Science
Australian Psychological Society
Australian Women's Health Network
Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute
Better Health Plan for the West
Brimbank City Council
Cabrini Institute
Cancer Council Australia
Catholic Health Australia
Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney
Chronic Illness Alliance
Caring & Living As Neighbours
Cohealth
Confederation of Australian Sport
CRANApus
Deakin University
Diabetes Australia
Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
George Institute for Global Health
Health West Partnership
Inner North West Primary Care Partnership
Jean Hailes for Women's Health
Kidney Health Australia
Lowitja Institute
Mental Health Australia
MOVE Muscle, Bone & Joint Health
National Heart Foundation
National Rural Health Alliance
National Stroke Foundation
NCD FREE
Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies
Networking Health Victoria
Obesity Australia
Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis
People's Health Movement OZ
Public Health Association of Australia
Royal Flying Doctor Service
School of Medicine, University of Notre Dame
School of Psychology and Public Health, La Trobe University
Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health
Social Determinants of Health Alliance
South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
Suicide Prevention Australia
The Telethon Kids Institute
Victoria University
Victorian Health Promotion Foundation
YMCA