

also of their families and carers. By undertaking this survey, and disseminating its findings widely, the BCAG hopes that consumers' views will inform service development and quality improvement strategies in breast cancer services across NSW.

CONCLUSION

This survey also demonstrates that consumer-initiated and designed research can make a contribution to the treatment experiences of people living with cancer. It also provides consumer groups, such as the BCAG, with an evidence-based platform for their advocacy and lobbying activities.

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RELEASE OF THE 2002 AREA HEALTH SERVICE REPORTS

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The 2002 Area Health Service Reports (AHSRs) are the first of a series of annual reports produced to assist the area health services monitor the health status of their population, and to support policy development and service planning at the area level.

The AHSRs present data from the 1997, 1998, and 2002 NSW Health Surveys that is specific to each of the 17 area health services. These surveys were conducted by the Centre for Epidemiology and Research through the NSW Department of Health's Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) Facility. The 2002 NSW Health Survey reports on data collected from approximately 15,000 randomly-selected adults.

The NSW Department of Health, in consultation with the 17 area health services, has identified 15 indicators that will be reported on annually. These are:

Health Behaviours

- alcohol risk drinking behaviour
- fruit intake
- vegetable intake
- physical activity
- smoking status
- smoke-free households

Health Status

- self-rated health status
- asthma
- diabetes or high blood sugar
- oral health—no natural teeth missing
- overweight and obesity
- psychological distress

Health Services

- difficulties getting health care when needing it
- emergency department care rating
- hospital care rating.

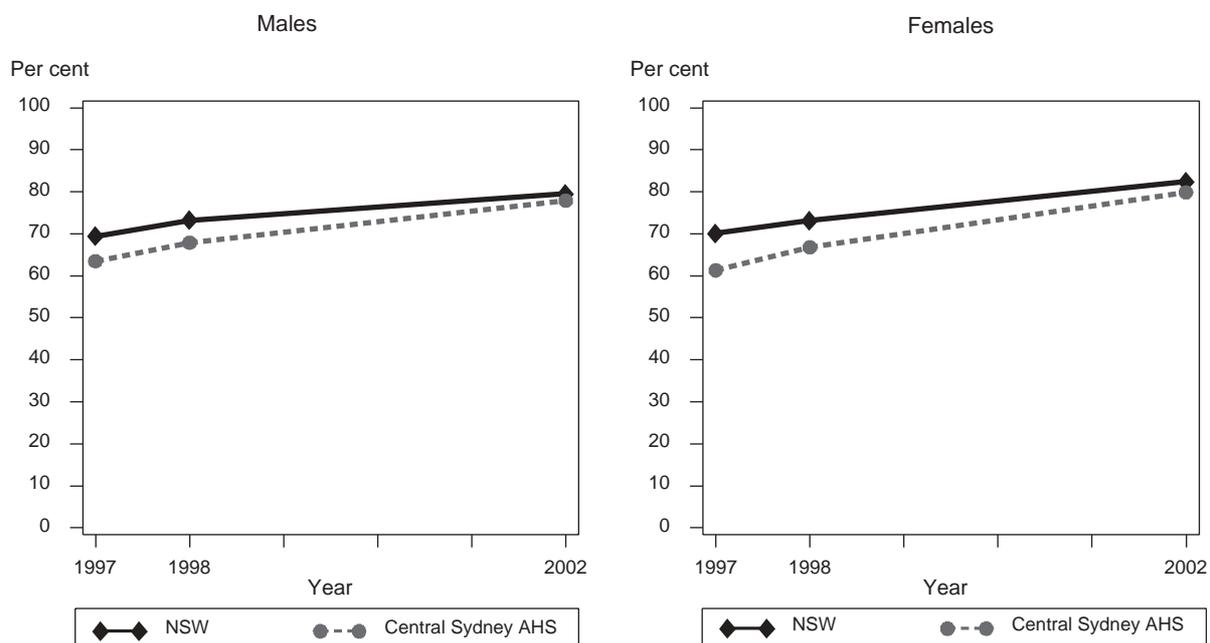
These indicators are presented in graphical and tabular form. For each indicator, the AHSRs include line charts of trend by sex (1997, 1998, 2002 data) comparing the area health service with the whole of NSW, and a bar chart of the indicator by age group (2002 Area Health Service data).

Examples of the trend graph for one of the indicators used in the Health Survey Program Area Reports—Smoke-free households by sex for people aged 16 years and over—are shown for an urban area (Central Sydney Area Health Service, Figure 1) and a rural area (New England Area Health Service, Figure 2).

The AHSRs were released during May 2003 and are available via the NSW Department of Health intranet as both PDF and HTML files.

FIGURE 1

SMOKE-FREE HOUSEHOLDS BY SEX, PEOPLE AGED 16 YEARS AND OVER, CENTRAL SYDNEY AREA HEALTH SERVICE, NSW, 1997–2002



Area	Year	Males (95% CI)	Males (est. no.)	Females (95% CI)	Females (est. no.)	Persons (95% CI)	Persons (est. no.)
Central Sydney AHS	1997	63.5 (59.2–67.9)	122000	61.3 (57.3–65.3)	119000	62.4 (59.4–65.4)	241000
	1998	67.9 (62.6–73.2)	132000	66.8 (62.6–71.0)	132000	67.4 (64.0–70.7)	264000
	2002	77.9 (72.6–83.2)	156000	79.9 (75.7–84.1)	164000	78.9 (75.5–82.3)	320000
NSW	1997	69.4 (68.1–70.7)	1644000	70.1 (68.9–71.3)	1704000	69.8 (68.9–70.6)	3348000
	1998	73.2 (71.9–74.6)	1755000	73.2 (72.0–74.3)	1798000	73.2 (72.3–74.1)	3553000
	2002	79.6 (78.0–81.1)	1966000	82.4 (81.2–83.7)	2106000	81.0 (80.0–82.0)	4072000

Source: NSW Health Survey 1997, 1998, and 2002 (HOIST), Centre for Epidemiology and Research, NSW Department of Health.

Notes: Estimates are based on the following numbers of respondents:

1997–1225 (Central Sydney AHS) and 17495 (NSW).

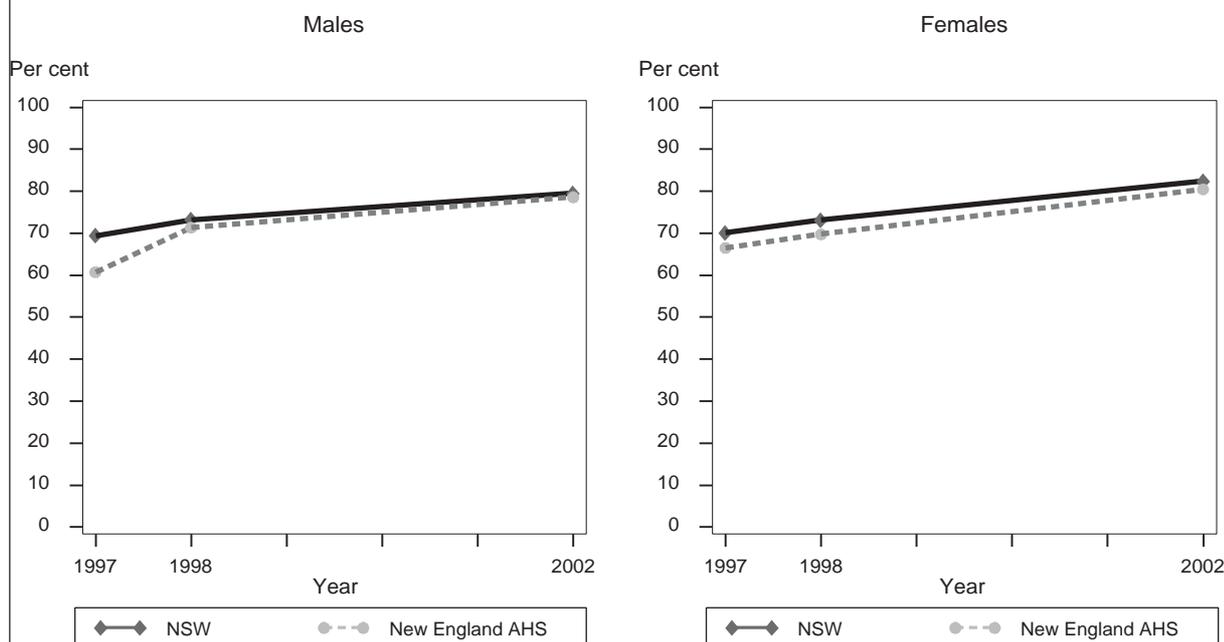
1998–1037 (Central Sydney AHS) and 17451 (NSW).

2002–810 (Central Sydney AHS) and 12610 (NSW).

The indicator includes those households with respondents indicating that their home was smoke free. The question used to define the indicator was: "Which of the following best describes your home situation? My home is smoke free (includes smoking is allowed outside only), people occasionally smoke in the house, and people frequently smoke in the house".

FIGURE 2

SMOKE-FREE HOUSEHOLDS BY SEX, PEOPLE AGED 16 YEARS AND OVER, NEW ENGLAND AREA HEALTH SERVICE, NSW, 1997–2002



Area	Year	Males	(95% CI)	Males (est. no.)	Females	(95% CI)	Females (est. no.)	Persons	(95% CI)	Persons (est. no.)
New England AHS	1997	60.7	(55.7–65.7)	39000	66.5	(62.5–70.6)	44000	63.7	(60.5–66.9)	84000
	1998	71.3	(66.5–76.2)	46000	69.8	(65.8–73.8)	46000	70.5	(67.4–73.7)	92000
	2002	78.6	(72.7–84.5)	50000	80.5	(76.0–84.9)	53000	79.6	(75.9–83.2)	103000
NSW	1997	69.4	(68.1–70.7)	1644000	70.1	(68.9–71.3)	1704000	69.8	(68.9–70.6)	3348000
	1998	73.2	(71.9–74.6)	1755000	73.2	(72.0–74.3)	1798000	73.2	(72.3–74.1)	3553000
	2002	79.6	(78.0–81.1)	1966000	82.4	(81.2–83.7)	2106000	81.0	(80.0–82.0)	4072000

Source: NSW Health Survey 1997, 1998, and 2002 (HOIST), Centre for Epidemiology and Research, NSW Department of Health.

Notes: Estimates are based on the following numbers of respondents:

1997–1030 (New England AHS) and 17495 (NSW).

1998–1017 (New England AHS) and 17451 (NSW).

2002–745 (New England AHS) and 12610 (NSW).

The indicator includes those households with respondents indicating that their home was smoke free. The question used to define the indicator was: "Which of the following best describes your home situation? My home is smoke free (includes smoking is allowed outside only), people occasionally smoke in the house, and people frequently smoke in the house".