



**Family &
Community Services**
Ageing, Disability & Home Care

Aboriginal people:

access to disability services in NSW
2011 – 2012



Executive summary

Ageing, Disability and Home Care's (ADHC) Aboriginal Cultural Inclusion Framework provides a new model of accountability for monitoring programs and services to ensure real improvements are delivered to older Aboriginal people, Aboriginal people with disability, their families and carers. The success of the Aboriginal Cultural Inclusion Framework is measured by a number of headline indicators, four of which relate to Aboriginal client access to services.

ADHC has built a solid foundation in delivering flexible, responsive and culturally inclusive services for Aboriginal people. ADHC is proud to provide the following report on our achievements so far and highlight significant improvements in all indicators.

Headline indicators:

ADHC's progress in achieving culturally inclusive service delivery will be primarily measured by improvements in the following headline indicators:

- The proportion of Aboriginal people accessing ADHC operated and ADHC funded services
- Expenditure on Aboriginal disability and aged care programs and services
- Proportion of the potential population of Aboriginal people accessing disability and aged care services
- The number of Aboriginal clients receiving person-centred flexible support packages
- The percentage of Aboriginal staff employed by ADHC
- Governance and consultation model implemented at a state and regional level

The number of Aboriginal people receiving specialist disability services increased by 28.3% over the three years to 2011/12, much higher than the growth rate (9.5%) in the number of all disability services recipients. By 2011/12, 7.3% (3,855) of the disability service users were identified as Aboriginal, compared to 6.3% in 2009/10.

In 2011-12, there were 70 organisations providing Aboriginal specific services with funding totalling approximately \$35 million. Approximately half of the 70 organisations were Aboriginal community controlled. An additional \$1.3 million in ADHC operated and delivered Aboriginal disability services was also provided.

ADHC developed a new flexible, holistic and culturally appropriate model of service called Services Our Way. The program is being delivered to Aboriginal families to improve their quality of life, increasing access to disability and other services, strengthening the effectiveness of informal supports, building family capacity to transition to other services and preparing for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Aboriginal Flexible Respite currently operates in the Western Region, and aims to provide culturally appropriate, flexible respite to strengthen the capacity of Aboriginal carers to maintain their caring roles.

ADHC Aboriginal employment rate has risen from 2% in 2008 to 7% in 2013, meaning that over 300 Aboriginal people have been provided with ongoing employment opportunities.

ADHC established an Aboriginal Advisory Committee that played an integral role in the ongoing development of the Aboriginal Cultural Inclusion Framework 2011, particularly in monitoring regional Aboriginal cultural inclusion strategies.

The way forward

ADHC will succeed in building cultural inclusion by developing specific strategies and resources for Aboriginal people, their families and communities and by building on our strong track record of improving outcomes for Aboriginal people with a disability in NSW.

Introduction

This report provides an overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their access to disability services in NSW. The report includes five sections:

- Aboriginal population
- Aboriginal people with disability
- Disability services for Aboriginal people
- Home and Community Care Services for Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal specific service providers

The primary data sources for this report are the latest Census of Population and Housing (Census), Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC), and Disability Services and Home and Community Care Minimum Data Sets (MDS). In this report, 'Aboriginal' refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Aboriginal population¹

- NSW has the largest Aboriginal population among all State and Territories in Australia. In 2011, there were 172,624 Aboriginal people in NSW. This represented 31.5 percent of Aboriginal people in Australia and 2.5 percent of the total population in NSW.
- The Aboriginal population is predominantly younger than the general population, with the median age of 22 years, as compared to 37 years for the general population. About 85 percent of the Aboriginal population were aged under 50 years, compared to 67 percent of the general population.
- Just under half (49.3 percent) of the Aboriginal population were male, comparable to the general population.
- In 2011, more than two thirds of the Aboriginal population resided in ADHC non metro regions, compared to about 40 percent of the general population. Northern region had the highest number (41,300) of Aboriginal people, followed by Western and Hunter regions, while Western Region had the highest proportion (6.7%) of Aboriginal people. **Table 1** shows the distribution of Aboriginal population by ADHC regions.

¹ The data used in this section is sourced from ABS Census of Population and Housing unless specified otherwise.

- At a Local Government Area (LGA) level, Blacktown has the largest number of Aboriginal people in NSW (4.8 percent of the NSW Aboriginal population), followed by Lake Macquarie (3.2 percent), Wyong (3.2 percent), Penrith (3.1 percent) and Dubbo (2.9 percent) LGAs. In terms of Aboriginal people as a proportion of the general population, Brewarrina LGA ranked the highest with over half (59.1 percent) of its population being Aboriginal, followed by Central Darling (38.3 percent), and Bourke (30.1 percent) LGAs.

TABLE 1: Population of Aboriginal people in ADHC regions in 2011

Region	Aboriginal		Non- Aboriginal		Aboriginal status not stated		Total
	no. ('000)	%	no. ('000)	%	no. ('000)	%	no. ('000)
Hunter	28.2	3.2%	828	92.7%	37.4	4.2%	893.4
Metro North	23.2	1.2%	1847	94.4%	86.6	4.4%	1956.3
Metro South	24.3	1.1%	2030	92.8%	133.4	6.1%	2187.7
Northern	41.3	5.6%	666	90.0%	32.5	4.4%	739.8
Southern	16.4	2.9%	517	92.6%	24.8	4.4%	558.2
Western	38.4	6.7%	504	88.6%	26.8	4.7%	569.3
Total	171.7	2.5%	6391	92.6%	341.6	4.9%	6904.7

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011. Note: % represents percentage of regional population.

- According to the ABS experimental Aboriginal population estimates and projections, the Aboriginal population in NSW will increase by about 2.1 percent per annum to nearly 210,000 by 2021. The proportion of population under 15 years is expected to be 35.2 percent while the age group 15-54 years will be 52.6 percent of the total Aboriginal population. The median age of Aboriginal people in 2021 is projected to be 23.4 years as compared to the 22 years in 2011.

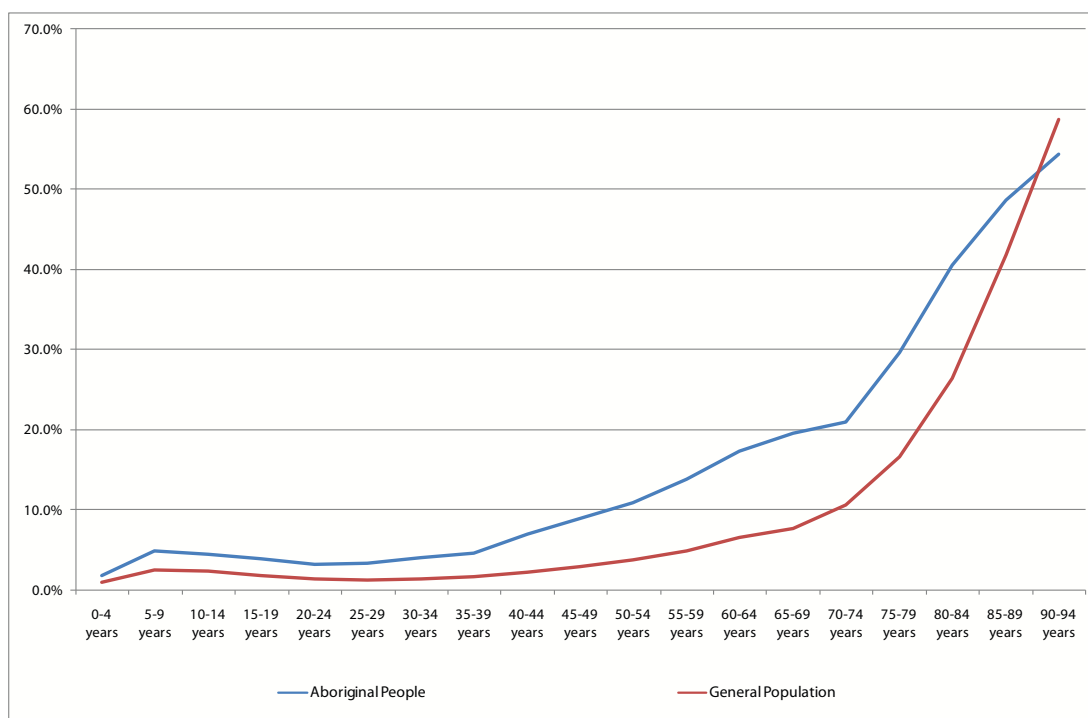
Aboriginal people with disability

- The 2009 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) conducted by the ABS shows that in 2009, 21.1 percent of the Aboriginal people in Australia had a disability, compared to 18.5 percent of the general population. In SDAC, disability is defined as 'any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least six months'. Due to the relatively small sample size of the SDAC, estimates of Aboriginal people with disability by States/Territories are not available.
- According to the 2011 Census, 10,730 Aboriginal people in NSW reported a need for assistance in one or more of the three core activities, i.e. self care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long term health condition or old age.² This accounted for 3.2 percent of all people in NSW with a need for assistance, higher than its population share of 2.5 percent.
- If the SDAC estimate of 21% of Aboriginal people with a disability was applied to the ABS Census data the number of Aboriginal disability in NSW could be as high as 36,000. The following data is based only on ABS 2011 Census data.
- The rate of disability in the Aboriginal population is substantially higher than the rate for the general population as a whole. In almost all age groups, the proportion of Aboriginal people who needed assistance was higher than for non-Aboriginal people (**Chart 1**). The ABS estimated that Aboriginal people were twice as likely as non-Aboriginal people to be living with a disability.³ According to the 2011 Census, 6.2 percent of the Aboriginal population in NSW reported a need for assistance while the proportion for the general population is 4.9 percent. These rates were higher than the national rates of 5.4 percent and 4.6 percent respectively.

2 This is conceptually similar to people with a profound or severe limitation in core activity defined in the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. However, due to the collapsed nature of the questions and different collection methodology, the Census underestimated the disability prevalence.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012 revised Mar 2013). Comparison of Disability Prevalence between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Non-Indigenous Peoples - *Profiles of Disability, Australia, 2009*. Catalogue no. 4429.0. ABS: Canberra.

Chart 1: Proportion of people with a need for assistance by age groups in NSW during 2011

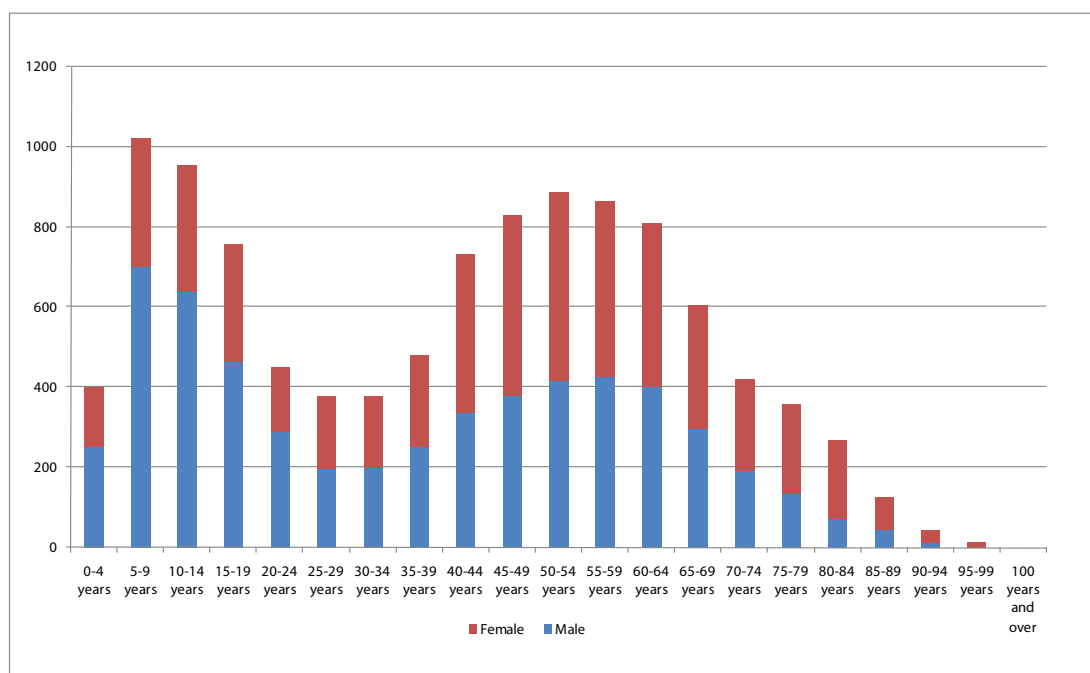


Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011

- In general, as people age, they are more likely to need assistance with daily activities. Similar patterns of increasing disability could be seen in both populations as people aged, but rates peaked at an earlier age for Aboriginal people as indicated in Chart 1. For example, the proportion of Aboriginal people aged 45-49 was about 10 percent, the same as the proportion for the general population aged 70-74.
- More than half (53 percent) of the Aboriginal people with a need for assistance were males, higher than that of the general population (45.4 percent).
- The 50-59 years age group had the highest number of Aboriginal people needing assistance in 2011. **Chart 2** shows the number of Aboriginal people with a need for assistance by age group and sex.

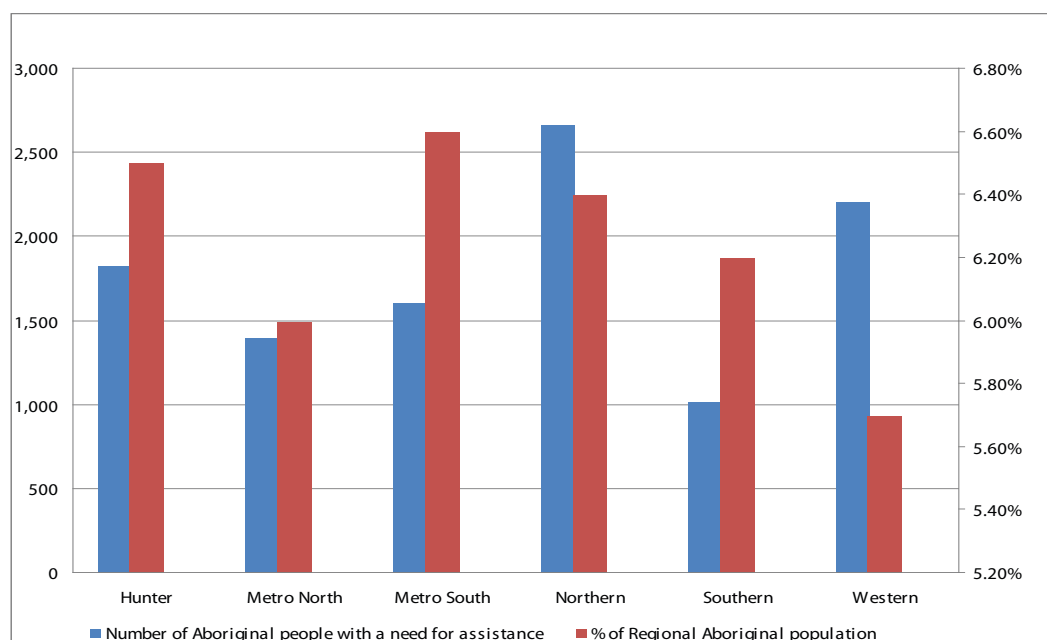
- Similar to the geographical distribution of Aboriginal people, ADHC Northern and Western regions had the highest number of Aboriginal people with a need for assistance while Metro South and Hunter regions had the highest proportions of Aboriginal people with a need for assistance. **Chart 3** shows the regional distribution of Aboriginal people with a need for assistance.
- At an LGA level, Blacktown LGA has the largest number of Aboriginal people with a need for assistance (529 people), followed by Wyong (387), Campbelltown (367), Lake Macquarie (366) and Penrith (297) LGAs. The distribution of the Aboriginal people needing assistance in different LGAs is shown in Map 1 (Tab A).

Chart 2: Number of Aboriginal people with a need for assistance by age group and sex in NSW in 2011



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011

CHART 3: Aboriginal people with a need for assistance by ADHC regions in 2011



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011

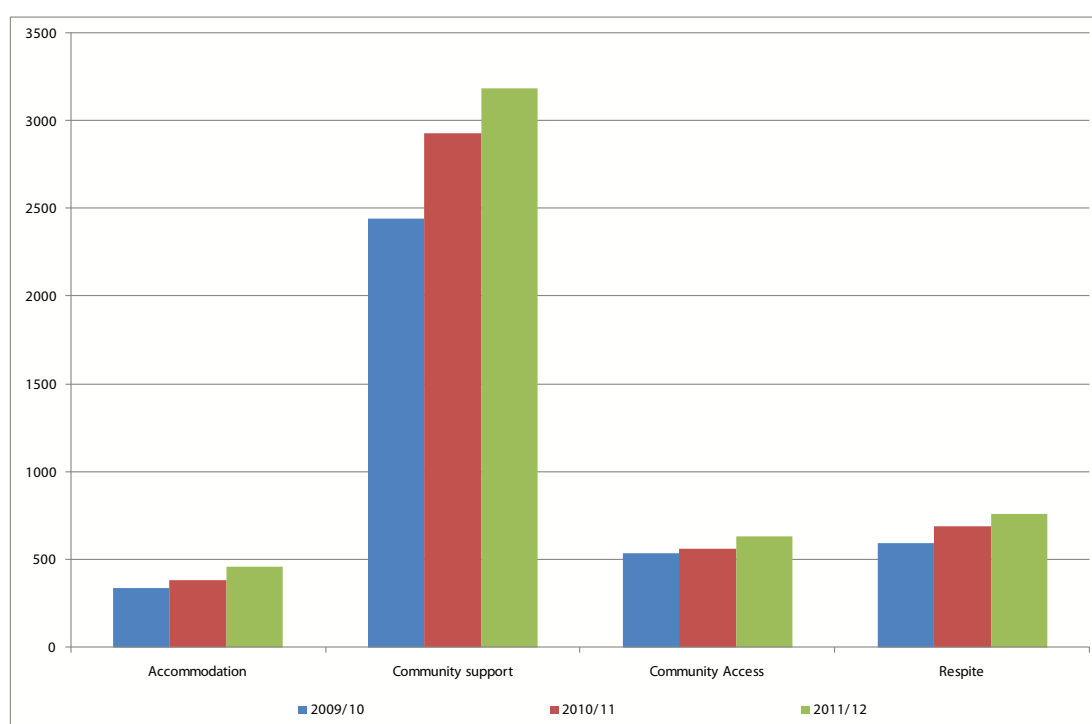
- According to the 2011 Census, 14.2 percent of Aboriginal people aged 15-64 with a need for assistance were in the labour force, compared to 17.8 percent for all people in this age group with a need for assistance in NSW. The unemployment rate for Aboriginal people with a need for assistance was 9.1 percent, higher than the 7 percent for the general population.
- The income distribution among Aboriginal people with a need for assistance follows a similar pattern to that of the general population with a need for assistance. The rate of Aboriginal people needing assistance with an income of less than \$300 per week was 35.5 percent, comparable to that for the general population with a need for assistance. The income gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people with a need for assistance is more pronounced at the upper end of the income range, with 7.8 percent of Aboriginal people needing assistance earning an income over \$600 per week, compared to 9.4 percent for all people with a need for assistance. Of the Aboriginal people needing assistance, 4.2 percent have stated that they did not have any income, which compares with 4.9 percent for all people needing assistance in NSW.
- Over 14,900 Aboriginal people provided unpaid care for people needing assistance in 2011. The proportion of unpaid carers in Aboriginal communities was 8.7 percent, which compares with 9.6 percent for the general population.

Disability services for Aboriginal people

The disability services covered in this section refers to specialist disability services under the National Disability Agreement.

- The number of Aboriginal people receiving specialist disability services increased by 28.3 percent over the three years to 2011-12. The growth rate in the number of all disability services recipients was 9.5 percent for the same period. By 2011-12, 7.3 percent (3,855) of the disability service users were identified as Aboriginal, compared to 6.3 percent in 2009-10. Chart 4 provides the number of Aboriginal people receiving disability services by service groups over the three years to 2011/12.

Chart 4: Number of Aboriginal people receiving disability services in 2009-10 and 2011-12



Source: Disability Services MDS.

- Of the Aboriginal people receiving disability services in 2011-12, 64.2 percent were males, slightly higher than the 62 percent for all people receiving disability services.
- The highest number of Aboriginal people receiving disability services was in the age group of 5 to 14 years. Over 35 percent of the Aboriginal people receiving disability services were in this age group. Over half (55 percent) of the Aboriginal people receiving services were less than 15 years of age while the rate for non-Aboriginal people was 36.9 percent, reflecting the different age structure between Aboriginal population and the non Aboriginal population.
- The service group most accessed by Aboriginal people was Community Support (3,186 or 83 percent of the Aboriginal clients), followed by Respite (20 percent), Community Access (16 percent) and Accommodation Support (12 percent) as indicated in Chart 4.
- Of ADHC regions, Northern region had the highest number (1,089) of Aboriginal people receiving disability services and Western region had the highest proportion (15.5 percent) of Aboriginal clients. **Table 2** shows the distribution of Aboriginal clients by region and service group in 2011-12.

Table 2: Aboriginal clients receiving disability services by service group and region in 2011-12

Region	Aboriginal Disability Clients					All disability clients	% Aboriginal clients
	Accommodation	Community support	Community access	Respite	Total (unique)		
Hunter	81	521	149	99	614	8,253	7.4%
Metro North	76	361	71	70	431	13,335	3.2%
Metro South	76	359	93	121	459	12,617	3.6%
Northern	118	863	143	234	1,089	7,418	14.7%
Southern	40	300	69	64	362	5,077	7.1%
Western	72	771	108	171	889	5,719	15.5%
Total	463	3,186	634	760	3,855	52,617	7.3%

Source: Disability Services MDS.

Note: 1) Total includes clients who did not state their location or lived in other jurisdictions. Totals may not be the sum of service groups as clients may access multiple service groups.

2) The last column should be read in conjunction with Table 1 and Table 3.

- A comparison with 2011 Census data shows that the number of Aboriginal population receiving disability services corresponds to 35.9 percent of Aboriginal people with a need for assistance, more than twice the rate (15.6 percent) for the general population with a need for assistance.⁴ **Table 3** shows the disability service clients as a proportion of people with a need for assistance by Aboriginal status and Region. The proportions are much higher for Aboriginal people in all regions although the level of access varies across regions.

Table 3: Aboriginal people needing assistance and receiving disability services by ADHC regions in 2011-12

Region	Disability service clients		People with a need for assistance		Proportion of people with a need for assistance accessing disability services	
	Aboriginal clients	All clients	Aboriginal people	All people	Aboriginal people	All people
Hunter	614	8,253	1,830	51,024	33.5%	16.2%
Metro North	431	13,335	1,399	76,902	30.8%	17.3%
Metro South	459	12,617	1,612	100,963	28.4%	12.5%
Northern	1,089	7,418	2,664	47,140	40.9%	15.7%
Southern	362	5,077	1,021	31,901	35.4%	15.9%
Western	889	5,719	2,204	29,755	40.3%	19.2%
Total	3,855	52,617	10,730	337,685	35.9%	15.6%

Sources: Disability Services MDS 2011-12 and ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011. Note: Total includes clients who did not state their location or lived in other jurisdictions.

⁴ This population of people with a need for assistance from Census is different from the target population for disability services, described as people aged under 65 years with profound or severe core activity limitation under the National Disability Agreement. In NSW, a person has a disability if that is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, physical or like impairment or to a combination of such impairments, that is permanent or is likely to be permanent, resulting in a significantly reduced capacity in life activities, such as communication, learning, mobility, decision-making or self-care, and the need for support. The comparison between people with a need for assistance and people receiving disability services is to illustrate the relative accessibility to disability services by Aboriginal people by region.

- At an LGA level, Blacktown LGA has the largest number (186) of Aboriginal people receiving disability services, followed by Dubbo (164), Lake Macquarie (135), Kempsey (116) and Shoalhaven (109). The distribution of Aboriginal people receiving disability services in different LGAs is shown in Map 2 (Tab A).
- In 2011-12, 42.6 percent of Aboriginal people who received disability services had intellectual disabilities. Aboriginal children in the 0-5 year age group were more likely to receive services related to developmental delays, when compared to the general population. Patterns of other disability types were similar between Aboriginal people and the general population in 2011.

Home and Community Care Services for Aboriginal people

- The number of Aboriginal people receiving Home and Community Care (HACC) services in NSW increased by 19.4 percent over the three years to 2011-12. The growth rate in the number of HACC services recipients was 8.2 percent for the same period. By 2011-12, 3.9 percent (10,538) of the HACC clients were identified as Aboriginal, compared to 3.5 percent (8,825) in 2009-10.
- Over 12 percent of HACC clients aged under 65 were Aboriginal. Of Aboriginal people receiving HACC services in NSW, 3,383 people or 32.1 percent were less than 50 years of age.
- Unlike Aboriginal people receiving specialist disability services, the majority of Aboriginal people receiving HACC services (60.5 percent) were females.
- In 2011-12, Aboriginal people received all types of HACC services. The service type received by the largest number of Aboriginal people was Transport. Other service types with large number of Aboriginal clients, both clients aged under 50 years and over 50 years, were domestic assistance, social support, home maintenance and case management.
- In 2011-12, nearly 158,000 trips were used by Aboriginal people through HACC transport services. Of these trips, 40 percent (or 62,800 trips) were used by Aboriginal people aged less than 50 years. In terms of number of hours of HACC services received by Aboriginal people, over 168,000 hours of domestic assistance and over 160,000 hours of social support were provided to Aboriginal people. Around 40 percent of these service hours were provided to Aboriginal people aged less than 50 years.
- Of ADHC regions, Northern and Western had the highest number of Aboriginal people receiving HACC services. **Table 4** shows the regional distribution of Aboriginal people receiving HACC services. The distribution of Aboriginal people receiving HACC services in different LGAs is shown in Map 3 (Tab A).

Table 4: Number of Aboriginal people receiving HACC services by ADHC regions in 2011-12

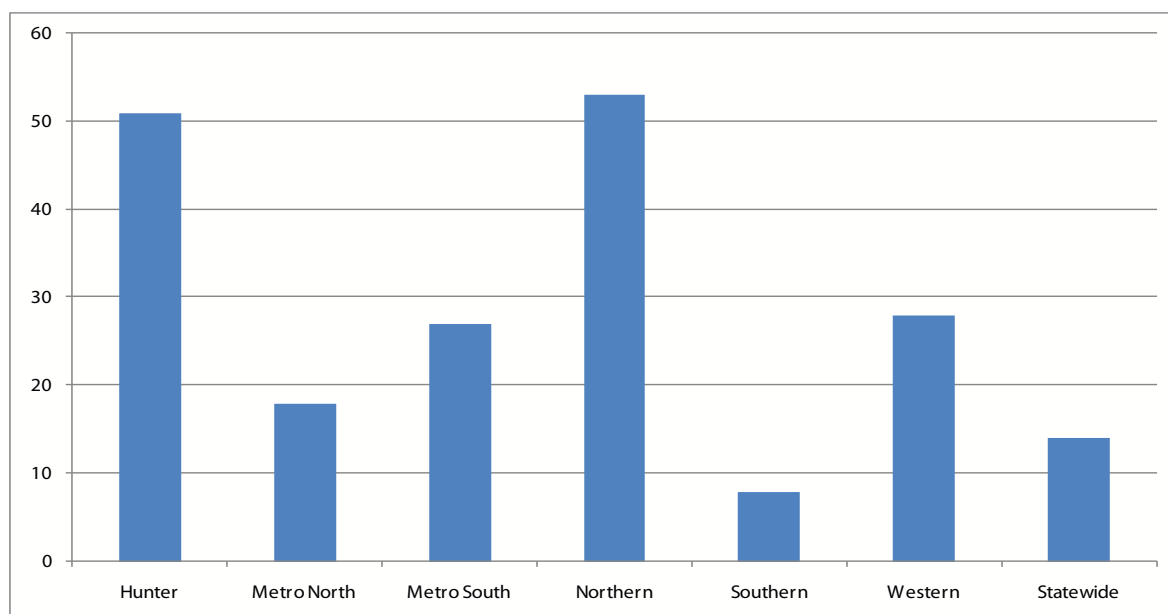
Region	Aboriginal people receiving HACC services			
	Under 50 years	50-64 years	All	% of under 50 years
Hunter	373	302	1,150	32.5%
Metro North	184	274	885	20.8%
Metro South	447	390	1,399	32.0%
Northern	1,283	1,174	3,585	35.8%
Southern	206	249	729	28.2%
Western	819	861	2,628	31.1%
Total	3,383	3,287	10,538	32.1%

Source: HACC MDS. Note: Total includes clients who did not state their location or lived in other jurisdictions.

Aboriginal specific service providers

- Generally, the majority of Aboriginal clients receive services from mainstream disability service providers that do not specifically target Aboriginal people. However, there is a small proportion of Aboriginal clients accessing services that specifically target Aboriginal people and provide priority of access to them.
- In 2011-12, there were 70 organisations providing approximately 200 Aboriginal specific services with funding totalling approximately \$35 million. Approximately half of these organisations are Aboriginal community controlled. The funding included nearly \$4.2 million for disability services and \$30.8 million for HACC services, which represented 0.5 percent of total funding of disability services and 5.7 percent of total funding for HACC services respectively.
- An additional \$1.3 million in ADHC operated and delivered Aboriginal disability services was also provided.
- The table below outlines the number of specific services by ADHC region (Chart 5).

CHART 5: Number of Aboriginal specific services by ADHC regions as at April 2013



Source: Funding Management System

- It is estimated that in 2011-12, the expenditure of disability services delivered to Aboriginal people was over \$31,000 per person, about 15 percent higher than the average expenditure of \$27,000 per person for all disability service clients.⁵
- Around 22 percent of total disability funding for Aboriginal services was provided to deliver in-home accommodation support for Aboriginal people. Of the funds provided to deliver host family/peer support respite services to all people with disability in NSW, 8.3 percent was allocated to Aboriginal services.
- Around 30 percent of total HACC funding for Aboriginal services was provided to deliver domestic assistance for Aboriginal people. Of the funds provided to deliver home maintenance services to all people eligible for HACC services in NSW, 8.3 percent was allocated to Aboriginal services.

⁵ The expenditure for Aboriginal clients was estimated based on the outlets of which all clients were identified as Aboriginal and reliable grants were reported. A number of factors can contribute to the higher average expenditure per Aboriginal clients, including the relatively higher needs Aboriginal people with disability, mix of service types used as well as locations of service delivery.

