



## ALCOHOL HARM SNAPSHOT SURVEY RESULTS – 02:00 SATURDAY 16 DEC 2017

The Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) carried out a binational point prevalence study using email, fax and telephone at 02:00 on 16 December 2017. Potential sites were 152 eligible Emergency Departments (EDs), comprising all adult and mixed EDs accredited by ACEM for training, as well as selected non-accredited EDs.

The survey was answered by 118 EDs (77.6%), which all gave details of the number of patients in their ED at 02:00 and the number of alcohol-related presentations. ACEM's previously established definition of an alcohol-related presentation was used.<sup>1</sup>

The results in 2017 were similar to previous Snapshots going back to 2014. At 2:00 across Australia and New Zealand, there were 671 patients waiting to be seen, 1,854 patients being treated and a further 575 in ED short stay units (SSUs). Of these, 17.1%, 12.9% and 9.4% respectively were identified as alcohol-related presentations, giving an overall total of 13.2% across all sites (409 patients).

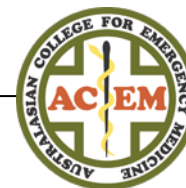
There was no significant difference between Australia (13.4%) and New Zealand (12.1%) – both had around one in eight patients in EDs whose presentation related to alcohol. However, there were significant differences between the larger and smaller jurisdictions in Australia – NSW (9.6%) and Victoria (9.8%) compared with Queensland (16.4%), South Australia (16.0%), Western Australia (19.4%) and the combination of ACT-NT-Tas (17.5%). This was partly due to a difference between urban hospitals (9.7%) and large tertiary centres (16.5%), plus rural hospitals (13.9%). NSW and Victoria have proportionally more urban hospitals than the other jurisdictions. With only 20 eligible hospital EDs in New Zealand, there were insufficient numbers to compare different hospital roles.

There were 23 hospital EDs that reported zero alcohol-related presentations and 13 that reported 10 or more, including two EDs with 15 each and one with 19. Nine hospitals reported that more than 30% of their patients were in the ED in relation to alcohol, with the highest being 85% (10 of 12 patients). Such a workload is obviously a major burden on staff.

In summary, one in 10 patients in NSW and Victorian EDs were alcohol-related presentations, with one in 6 in other Australian jurisdictions and one in 8 in New Zealand.

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<sup>1</sup> Egerton-Warburton D, Gosbell A, Wadsworth A, Fatovich DM, Richardson DB. Survey of alcohol-related presentations to Australasian emergency departments. *Med J Aust* 2014; 201 (10): 584-587.



**Table 1. Alcohol Harm Snapshot Survey Results, 2017**

	Eligible EDs (n)	Count EDs (n)	Response (%)	Wait (n)	Treat (n)	SSU (n)	Total (N)	Alc Wait (n)	Alc Treat (n)	Alc SSU (n)	Alc Total (N)	Wait (%)	Treat (%)	SSU (%)	Total (%)
NSW	43	35	<b>81.4</b>	180	532	110	822	31	44	4	79	17.2	8.3	3.6	<b>9.6</b>
VIC	32	15	<b>46.9</b>	152	239	117	508	10	34	6	50	6.6	14.2	5.1	<b>9.8</b>
QLD	29	24	<b>82.8</b>	89	315	96	500	17	53	12	82	19.1	16.8	12.5	<b>16.4</b>
SA	7	5	<b>71.4</b>	21	94	29	144	5	11	7	23	23.8	11.7	24.1	<b>16.0</b>
WA	13	13	<b>100.0</b>	55	213	78	346	14	44	9	67	25.5	20.7	11.5	<b>19.4</b>
ACT-NT-TAS	8	8	<b>100.0</b>	58	141	52	251	14	23	7	44	24.1	16.3	13.5	<b>17.5</b>
New Zealand	20	18	<b>90.0</b>	116	320	93	529	24	31	9	64	20.7	9.7	9.7	<b>12.1</b>
AUS	132	100	<b>75.8</b>	555	1534	482	2571	91	209	45	345	16.4	13.6	9.3	<b>13.4</b>
<b>All</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>77.6</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>1854</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>3100</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>13.2</b>