



Government of South Australia
Department of Health

Cancer in South Australia 2004

with incidence projections to 2007

A report on the incidence and mortality patterns of cancer

Cancer Series Number Twenty Seven

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Preface

Cancer is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in our community. It continues to be a topic of broad community interest with many cancer related topics being in the media in the last twelve months, including a comparison of melanoma mortality in different regions of Adelaide, immunisation against cervical cancer with Human Papilloma Virus vaccine, and concern about better diagnostic techniques for ovarian cancer. Ensuring we have information to identify the size of the problem and to review the impact of our efforts in managing and controlling the impact is important. This year's report includes an extensive chapter on survival rates for seventeen different types of cancer. This is the first time we have revised survival calculations since 1997. We have also included a chapter about geographical distribution of cancer prevalence, using combinations of statistical local areas (SLAs) as the geographical unit.

The data collected by the South Australian Cancer Registry also is used to assess the impact of screening programs such as the Cervix Screening Program of SA and BreastScreen SA. It can also be used to examine the impact of anti-smoking and sun protection campaigns. This information is also used to support research into cancer- identifying risk factors, highlighting unusual patterns, and examining risks in particular population groups.

This South Australian Cancer Report is the latest in one of the longest running continuous public health information collections in Australia (having commenced in 1977). It represents the culmination of a large volume of information collected about the cancer patterns in our State.



John Hill
MINISTER FOR HEALTH

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The South Australian Cancer Registry (SACR) operates within the Epidemiology Branch of the South Australian Department of Health, however it relies on the cooperation of a large number of agencies and clinicians to provide it with the vital information required to succeed.

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Executive Summary

In 2004 there were 8190 new cases of cancer diagnosed in South Australia, while there were 3249 cancer deaths. This represented 415 additional new cases over the previous year, but 33 fewer deaths.

For the past five years there has been a trend towards stable incidence rates for males and females, but 2004 has seen an increase in prostate cancer in particular, with lesser increases in female breast and female lung cancer. The female lung cancer incidence rate this year is 30.1/100,000, which is only slightly below the highest incidence rate ever recorded in South Australia in 2001, and reflects the continuing concern regarding female lung cancer rates in this state. The corresponding mortality rate for 2004 is 23.9/100,000, which is the highest rate ever recorded. Female lung cancer mortality rates have shown a relative increase from about one-seventh of male mortality rates in 1977 to nearly one-half of male mortality rates in 2004.

Projecting forward, it is estimated that in 2007 there will be an additional 378 new cases of cancer, and 281 more deaths compared with 2004. The majority of new cases and deaths are expected to be females. This information can be used to adjust service delivery arrangements to meet the needs of patients. The age-specific incidence and mortality rates are expected to remain relatively stable.

Mortality rates have shown declines in both males and females, mainly due to declines in prostate cancer deaths in males and breast cancer deaths in females.

The most common cancers in South Australia are:

- ❖ In males - Prostate, colorectal, lung and melanoma
- ❖ In females - Breast, colorectal, lung and melanoma.

Emerging developments of note are:

- ❖ The continued increase in lung cancer incidence and mortality in females as female smoking patterns continue to trend towards male smoking patterns.
- ❖ Increases in prostate and female breast cancer incidence are not associated with any increase in mortality for these cancers.
- ❖ Melanoma incidence and mortality has remained static for both sexes.

Cancer remains a disease predominantly of the older population with:

- ❖ 0-14 year olds accounting for <1% of cancers
- ❖ 15-44 year olds accounting for 8% of cancers
- ❖ 45-64 year olds accounting for 31% of cancers
- ❖ 65+ year olds accounting for 61% of cancers.