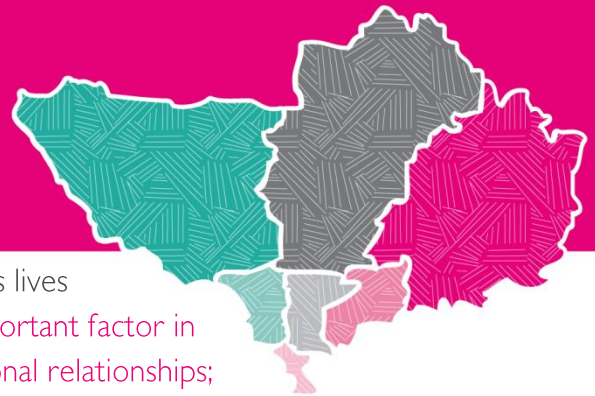


Young Women



**WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN THE NORTH**
voice • choice • power

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SNAPSHOT 2014-2015



Sexual and reproductive health has a defining impact on women's lives beginning at puberty and continuing past menopause. 'It is an important factor in shaping how women develop and maintain meaningful interpersonal relationships; appreciate their bodies; interact with others; express affection, love, and intimacy; and by choice, bear children'. This snapshot illustrates the sexual and reproductive health outcomes experienced by the 72,291² 12 to 24-year old women living in the local government areas of Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra.

SEXUAL DEBUT In the NMR 5.6% of young people have had sex at 12 to 14 years of age, which is higher than the Victorian average of 4.7%. Yarra and Banyule both had rates of 6.9% and Hume had 6.7%³. In Australia, at year 10, 22.9% of female and 22.3% of male students have had sex, and 49.4% of females and 52.1% of males at year 12⁴.

SEXUAL PARTNERS Sexually active Australian young women at secondary school are most likely to have one sexual partner in the past year. In 2013 60.2% of females and 48.3% of males had one sexual partner, 15.3% of females and 17.1% of males had two partners and 20.4% of females and 27.9% of males had three or more partners⁴.

FERTILITY

BIRTH RATES In 2011 five NMR LGAs had 15 to 19-year-old birth rates that were higher than the Melbourne average of 7.3 per 1,00 young women. Hume had 10.3, Whittlesea 10.1, Yarra 9.63, Darebin 9.1 and Moreland 8.4 per 1,000 young women⁵. Teenage pregnancies are often planned and wanted; however young mothers are more likely to experience negative outcomes including poverty, substance abuse and reduced education⁶.

BIRTH NUMBERS In 2011, 219 babies were born to mothers aged 15 to 19-years old in the NMR. Hume had the highest number of births with 68 babies born to teenage mothers and Whittlesea had 52⁵.

CONTRACEPTION Three NMR LGAs have higher proportions of young women in years 7, 9 and 11 who do not use contraception in comparison to the Victorian rate of 21.2%. Non-use rates ranged from 10.9% in Whittlesea to 54.7% in Yarra. The NMR also has two LGAs that have lower rates of adolescent condom use. Condom non-use rates ranged from 28.6% in Hume to 53.2 in Yarra compared to 41.9% in Victoria⁷. Lower rates of contraception and condom use can result in higher numbers of unplanned pregnancy and STI transmission.

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY The majority of women who experience unplanned pregnancy (63%) are aged 24 or younger at the time of conception and most are in the 20-24 year age group⁸.

SEXUAL HEALTH is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social wellbeing in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled¹⁰.

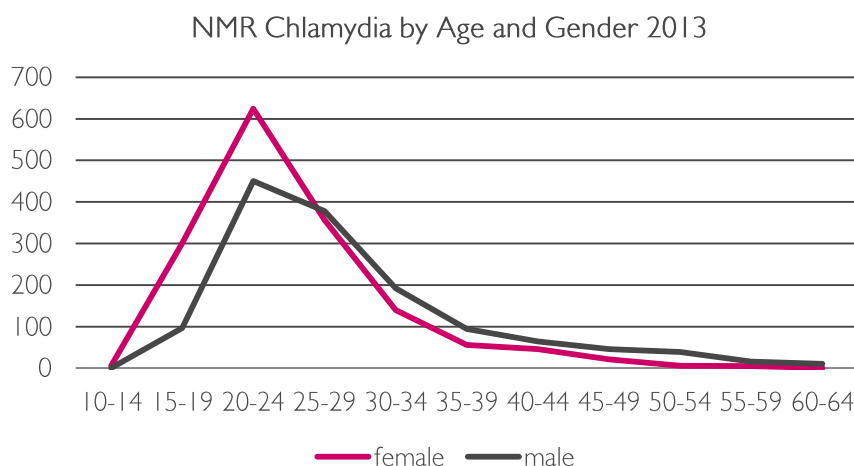
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH addresses the reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of life. Reproductive health, therefore, implies that people are able to have a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life, and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so¹¹.

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SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

Nearly half of all Australian women don't take STIs into consideration when thinking about contraception⁸.

CHLAMYDIA The most common STI in Australia is chlamydia. In 2013 2,946 cases of chlamydia were diagnosed in the NMR. Women experienced 53% of these diagnoses and 60% of these women diagnosed were less than 25 years old¹¹.



HPV IMMUNISATION Four LGAs had HPV vaccination coverage rates lower than the Victorian rate for 15-year old girls in 2012. The Victorian rate was 73.7%, Whittlesea had the NMR lowest with 68.7%, Yarra had 69.9% and both Hume and Banyule had 72.1%¹². Diagnosis of Genital Warts (HPV) has declined significantly in young women since the implementation of the HPV vaccination program¹³.

OTHER INDICATORS

SEXUAL ASSAULT In the NMR from 2012-2013 there were 339 rapes and 965 other sexual offences recorded by police. Of the victims, 89% were female and 99.5% of alleged offenders were male. Women aged less than 25 years-old accounted for 54% of rape and 82% and other sexual offences committed against females¹⁴.

FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING (FGC) The NMR is home to a significant population of women who are from communities where FGC is traditionally practiced and 13% of these women live in Banyule¹⁸. For further information refer to WHIN's FGC factsheet.

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