

CANNABIS

Prevalence

General population

- The prevalence of last year cannabis use in Australia declined between 1998 and 2007 (from 17.9% to 9.1), with 2010 recording a significant increase to 10.3%.
- The increase in 2010 was driven by higher prevalence among Australians aged 50 to 59 years.
- Data from the survey of secondary school students showed a decline in cannabis use from 32.4% in 1996 to 12.7% in 2011.
- Daily cannabis use among those who continue to use has remained relatively stable over time (13% of cannabis users in 2010).
- The highest proportion reporting daily cannabis use were Australians aged 40 years and over.

Sentinel Groups

- Among PWID, past 6 month cannabis use has declined significantly from 86% in 2001 to 72% in 2013.
- Daily cannabis use among current users has remained stable (46% in 2013).
- Among regular ecstasy users cannabis use has remained stable at 85% (in 2003 and 2013), while daily use among this group has decreased significantly from 30% in 2003 to 18% in 2013.

Treatment seeking

- There have been increases (particularly among older age groups) in numbers presenting to hospital for problems associated with cannabis use between 2001 and 2013. Cannabis related presentations remain highest among 20 to 29 year olds.
- There was an increase in outpatient treatment episodes for problems associated with cannabis from 23,826 in 2001/02 to 32,321 in 2011/12. Cannabis treatment episodes accounted for 22% of all drug treatment episodes in 2011/12.

Law enforcement

- Two thirds of all drug-related arrests in 2011/12 were for cannabis which represents a drop from 75% of all drug arrests in 2001/02. Numbers of cannabis arrests have increased slightly over time.

Market indicators

- Increases were reported in the price for larger amounts of cannabis (ounces), while prices for a gram remained stable. Both bush cannabis and hydroponic cannabis have remained readily available in Australia over time.