

## Oceania

### Latest epidemiological trends

- An estimated 59 000 [51 000–68 000] people were living with HIV in Oceania in 2008, of which 3900 [2900–5100] were new infections.
- There is generally a very low HIV prevalence in Oceania compared with other regions. In the small island nations, adult HIV prevalence tends to be well below 0.1%. **Australia's** epidemic is considerably less severe (0.2% prevalence) than those of any other high-income countries.
- Excluding the high-income countries of **Australia** and **New Zealand**, **Papua New Guinea** accounted for more than 99% of reported HIV cases in the region in 2007.
- Outside of **Papua New Guinea**, the island nations of **New Caledonia**, **Fiji**, **French Polynesia** and **Guam** account for the vast majority of HIV infections in the region.
- While most epidemics in the region appear to be stable, new infections in **Papua New Guinea** are on the rise. HIV infections are also increasing in **Fiji**.
- In **Fiji**, the number of new HIV cases in 2003–2006 was nearly 2.5 times greater than the number reported in 1999–2002.
- In **Australia** and **New Zealand**, males account for more than 80% of new diagnoses, whereas males and females are equally likely to become infected in **Papua New Guinea**.
- A number of countries have made important strides in expanding access to HIV treatment. In **Australia**, 72% of people living with HIV were receiving antiretroviral treatment in 2006.

### Key regional dynamics

- Heterosexual transmission accounts for 95% of HIV infections in **Papua New Guinea**, and 88% in **Fiji**.
- In high-income countries, heterosexual HIV transmission is significantly lower. In **Australia**, heterosexual transmission accounted for 21% of new HIV infections between 2003 and 2007. In **New Zealand**, one in three new HIV infections were a result of heterosexual contact.
- According to surveys conducted in the region, the level of HIV knowledge among young people is below the global average, although the vast majority of young people at higher risk knew that condoms could protect against sexual HIV transmission.
- In **Papua New Guinea**, fewer than half of young people surveyed reported using a condom during their last sexual encounter.
- Sex between men is the main driver of several epidemics in the region. In 2003–2007, men who have sex with men made up 86% of new HIV infections in **Australia**. In **New Zealand**, men who have sex with men represented 49% of new cases diagnosed in 2008.

- Injecting drug use is responsible for a modest share of new HIV infections in the region—2% of new HIV infections in **Australia** between 2003 and 2007 and 1% in **New Zealand** in 2008.
- Injecting drug users account for a higher percentage of HIV infections in the smaller island nations—11.7% of HIV cases in **French Polynesia** and 5.7% in **Melanesia** (excluding Papua New Guinea).
- Oceania is home to some of the world’s earliest harm reduction programmes. Early in the epidemic, **Australia** and **New Zealand** invested in harm reduction services to avert HIV transmission during drug use. **New Zealand** began offering needle exchange services in 1987.
- Mother-to-child HIV transmission is on the rise in **Papua New Guinea**. Services to prevent mother-to-child transmission have been expanded in the country, but prevention coverage in antenatal settings was only 2.3% in 2007.

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