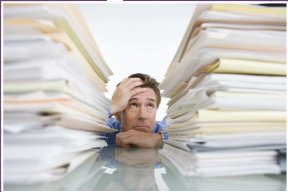



FACT SHEET 2

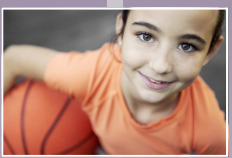
Statistics: Acquired brain injury and homelessness



The 1999 AIHW study on *The definition, incidence and prevalence of Acquired Brain Injury in Australia* estimated that there were 338,700 Australians who had a disability related to Acquired Brain Injury. Of these, 160,000 were severely or profoundly affected by Acquired Brain Injury thus needing daily support.




The 1993 ABS statistics on which this study was based barely included surveys of homeless accommodation establishments. People with Acquired Brain Injury who are homeless would increase these figures.



Based on AIHW studies, it is now possible to make direct comparisons between the numbers of people with intellectual disability and people with Acquired Brain Injury. In 1993, there were 328,000 people with intellectual disability. This was less than the comparable number of 339,000 people with Acquired Brain Injury.

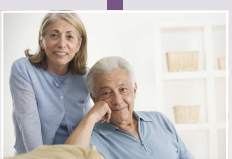
Anecdotal evidence from within the homelessness/SAAP sector as well as empirical research in the criminality field¹ points to the fact that the disabilities arising from Acquired Brain Injury are often either overlooked and/or included under the category of 'psychiatric or mental illness' or 'intellectual disability'. Both clinical and non-clinical workers often assume that the presence of a 'traditional' functional disorder is evidence of a mental or psychiatric illness.



The Federal Government's SAAP national data collection has not included people with Acquired Brain Injury although it has included other disability fields such as psychiatric, intellectual and physical disabilities.

Attempts have been made to estimate the number of people with Acquired Brain Injury either at risk of or who are homeless.

For example,

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- The 1998 *Down and Out in Sydney* project suggested that 10 per cent of people using inner city Sydney hostels and refuges have cognitive impairment as a result of alcohol related brain injury or traumatic brain injury.
 - Two Victorian studies² of pension-only Supported Residential Services (SRSs) in certain geographic areas point to the high proportion of residents with Acquired Brain Injury, ie, 13 per cent and 17 per cent.
 - Prior to the New South Wales Boarding House Reform Project, figures from the Ageing and Disability Department Licensing, Support and Development Unit reported that 458 individuals of a total 1749 were residents of boarding houses³.
 - A study conducted by Ozanam Community Support Services Outreach Program revealed that over a three year period, 1997-2000, 33% of clients had a diagnosed alcohol related brain injury⁴.

(Footnotes)

¹Hatzitaskos., P. (1995) *Crime Times*, Vol. 1, No.1-2, p.5. ²Byrne, B. (1997) *SRS Socialization Facilitation Project* (Caulfield General Medical Centre, Melbourne) and Community (Residential Services) Visitors' Board, *Annual Report of Community Visitors, 1996, Health Services Act 1988* (Office of the Public Advocate, Melbourne) cited in *HLACC Program Development & Access SRS/Rooming House Project*, Final Report December 1998. ³Heads and Tales : Issues Impacting on People with Brain Injury, A Community Consultation by the Public Guardian of NSW, Office of the Public Guardian, September 1999. ⁴McGregor, Robb (2000) Comparative data between clients with alcohol related brain injuries and other clients, Ozanam Community Support Services Outreach Program.

Lobbying to represent the needs, wishes and aspirations of people living with an acquired brain injury since 1991



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