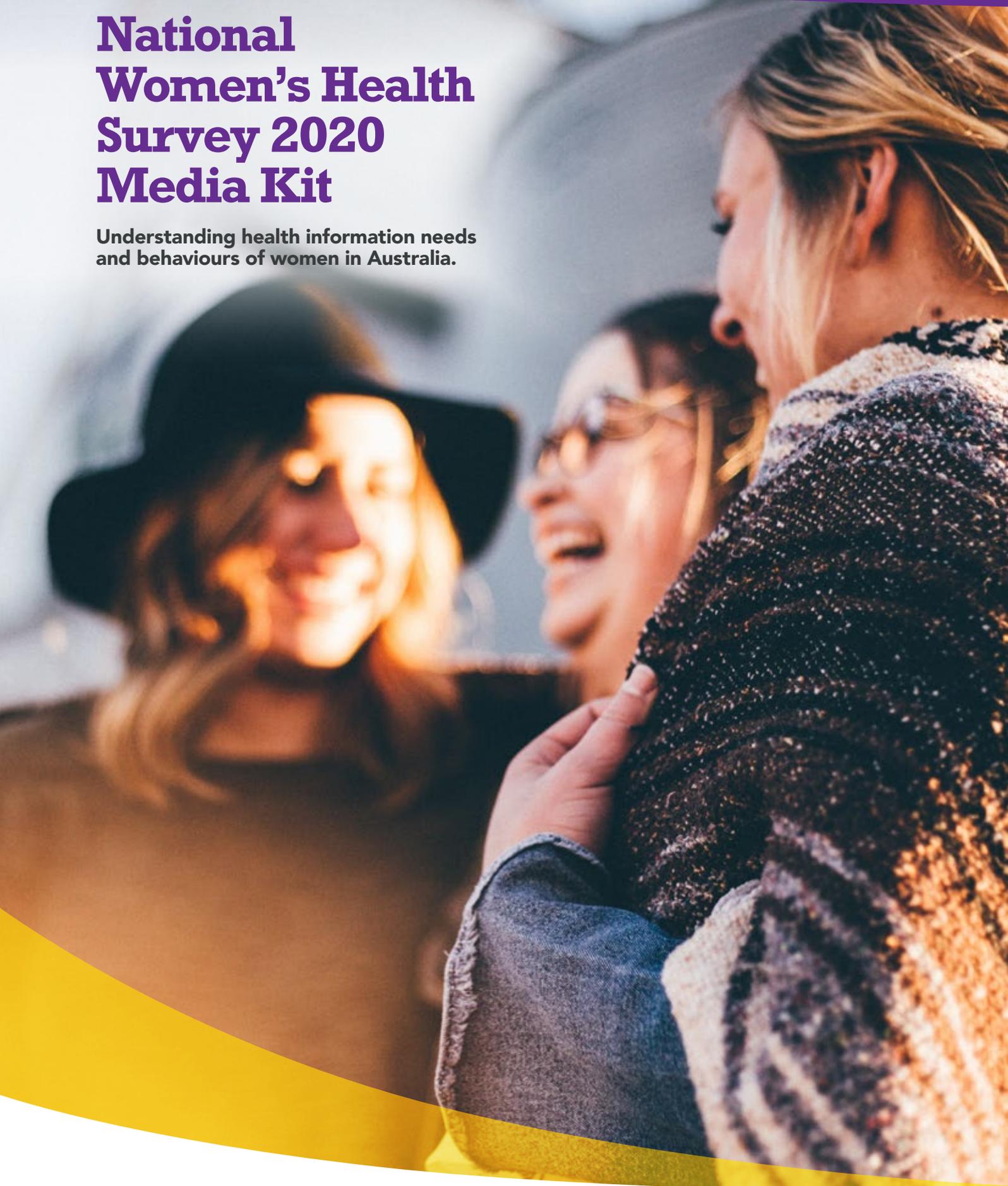


National Women's Health Survey 2020 Media Kit

Understanding health information needs
and behaviours of women in Australia.



Women's Health Survey 2020 Snapshot

Our sixth annual national Women's Health Survey reveals the health needs and behaviours of women across the country, as they share their experiences of the past 12 months. From 9361 responses, an analysis of 6218 was made, taking into account complete data and 'weighting' to deliver more nationally representative results. Here are some highlights.

Health Needs & Health Information

39.1% could not afford healthcare when they needed it.

(One in three respondents who identified as women with a disability).

27.6% (1 in 4 women aged 18-24) did not know where to go to access health services.

31.7% of women aged 25-44 did not have enough time to attend health check appointments.

One in four (24.1%) could not get an appointment when they needed one.

31.1% of women in rural & remote regions could not get medical appointments when they needed one.

Physical & Mental Health

In the two weeks prior to taking the survey,

33.2% (1 in 3 women) reported feeling anxious.

One in four reported feeling depressed (**28.7%**). In women aged 18-24, one in two reported feeling anxious (**55.2%**), two in five reported feeling depressed (41.9%) and one out of three (**36.8%**) reported feeling both.

49.2% of women with a disability said their health was poor or very poor,

compared to 10.5% of those with no disability.

40.2% (2 in 5 women) considered themselves a healthy weight

43.7% considered themselves overweight and **12.4%** obese.

Reproductive & Maternal Health

60% of women who had miscarriages or stillbirths said they did not receive enough information and support;

this rose to two thirds of women in rural and remote areas (63.9%) and was even higher for women with a disability (69.7%).

25.7% 1 in 4 women who had ever been pregnant had experienced a termination of pregnancy.

35.6% (1 in 3 women aged 25-44) said they would consider freezing their eggs to attempt to have children later in life.

Just 1% of women in this age group had already frozen eggs.

Intimate Partner Violence

Of women in a relationship or in contact with an ex-partner in the past 12 months **one in four (23.9%) had experienced some forms of intimate partner violence (IPV).**

19.5% of women experienced emotional abuse.

11.1% (1 in 10 women) reported having a controlling partner

The figure was higher among women with a disability (**18.9%**) and those reporting a worse financial situation than before COVID-19 (**15.3%**).

Physical (4.3%) and sexual violence (5.5%)

was highest among women aged 18-24.

Impact of COVID-19 & Bushfires

33.6% reported that their health was worse than before COVID-19.

Drinking more alcohol since COVID-19 was highest among women aged 25-44 (**24.4%**). Drinking less alcohol since COVID-19 was highest among women aged 18-24 (**25.8%**).

20.4% (1 in 5 women) reported feeling physically affected by bushfire smoke.

4.3% of women reported that their home, or that of a close family member or friend, was damaged or destroyed by bushfire.

Introduction

Jean Hailes for Women's Health CEO, Janet Michelmore AO, is available for interviews prior to and on the survey's release. Please contact media@jeanhailes.org.au, or Jo Roberts on 0416 156 566 to arrange.

Additional expert comments

To further assist in your coverage of this year's survey, we have pre-arranged attributable comments from relevant health industry experts. These experts have kindly agreed to be available for further comment if required, prior to and on the survey's release.

Social media

We have also supplied some suggested wording for social media posts, should you choose to share the survey with others via your socials from 8 December.

Expert Comments

On women with a disability

"This is an important study which sheds light on key health issues, trends, concerns and outcomes."

"This survey demonstrates that for women with disability the results are particularly poor when compared to the results for those without disability, and again highlights the well documented ongoing disadvantage they face daily. We also know that similar disadvantage exists for girls and young women with disability."

"The survey reveals 39.1 % of women with disability cannot afford healthcare when they need it; 32.7% cannot get an appointment when needed; 49.2% consider their health was poor or very poor; and, disturbingly, 18.9% said they were in a controlling partner relationship."

"Domestic violence, inclusive of control, is particularly aimed at, and a high risk for women with disability. Access to reproductive health support and information is another significant issue for young women and women with disability."

"These results are a disgrace and we all need be held accountable to do more and address these key health issues for all women and for women with disability in particular."

Ross Joyce, CEO,
Australia Federation of Disability Organisations.
Email: ceo@afdo.org.au
Phone: 0402 842 040.

"We have known for some years that women and girls with disability disproportionately experience higher rates of violence, including sexual violence, than our non-disabled peers."

"The statistics in this report highlight the scale and extent of violence against women and girls with disability. The figures around intimate partner violence are particularly disturbing, and it's likely these figures are only scratching the surface as many women and girls with disability often face barriers in making reports and accessing specialist domestic violence services."

"The figures on access to healthcare, including reproductive health, are alarming, especially when overlaid with the indirect and direct discriminatory attitudes that sadly we know from evidence provided to the Disability Royal Commission exists within the health system."

"We hope that all policy and decision-makers will read and respond to the findings in this important report."

Romola Hollywood,
Director of policy and advocacy,
People with Disability Australia.
Email: romolah@pwd.org.au
Phone: 0431 998 273.

On LGBTI women

"We are not surprised by the findings in the Jean Hailes Survey. We have known for the longest time about the discrimination that LGBTI women face both in accessing healthcare and in affording good healthcare. We know from data that LGBTI women have low presentation rates for breast screening and cervical screening when compared to the general population."

"As an organisation, we are certainly concerned about it. We need national leadership and leadership across each jurisdiction to recognise the significant health disparity that exists. There is a need for a joined-up approach with LGBTI-controlled health organisations at the centre of that response to ensure it is targeted and with a broad enough reach to ensure it speaks directly to the communities."

"What we often see is a generalist response and our communities fall through the net because we know from our data that LGBTI women and communities prefer to access services that are highly skilled in meeting their health needs."

Nicky Bath, CEO,
National LGBTI Health Alliance.
Email: nicky.bath@lgbtihealth.org.au
Phone: 0432 328706.

On mental health

"The level of psychological distress revealed in these findings is of public concern and is similar to that found in national surveys of mental health during COVID restrictions."

"These very valuable data will enable us to identify those who are most vulnerable and to understand what aspects of their lives might be able to be changed to improve their mental health."

Professor Jane Fisher AO,
Finkel Professor of Global & Women's Health,
School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine.
Email: jane.fisher@monash.edu
Phone: (03) 99030290.

On domestic violence

"The decision by Jean Hailes to measure the levels of intimate partner domestic violence is most welcome. The data reveal that women experience multiple forms of violence in their relationships despite national efforts to reduce and prevent it. These data reveal an alarmingly high prevalence."

"Stereotypically we think that all violence is the physical act, whereas the most common forms of violence experienced by women are emotional abuse and controlling behaviours. These are very harmful things to experience in intimate relationships and as the survey has shown, these behaviours are much more common than has been generally believed."

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Finkel Professor of Global & Women's Health,
School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine.
Email: jane.fisher@monash.edu
Phone: (03) 99030290.

On reproductive and maternal health

"Infertility and pregnancy loss are subjects that we, as a society, have trouble talking about. The survey found that almost one in four women had experienced infertility and more than one in three had experienced miscarriage, which highlights how common these reproductive events are. More awareness about the impact of infertility and pregnancy loss on women's mental health and more support for women who struggle to conceive or who experience miscarriage is needed."

"Egg freezing to preserve fertility and have children later in life is increasing. While egg freezing offers women a chance of pregnancy, it's not an insurance policy. Almost 70% of women aged 18-24 said that they would consider or might consider freezing their eggs to have children later in life. Public education is needed to make sure that women understand that freezing eggs doesn't guarantee a baby."

Dr Karin Hammarberg,
Senior Research Fellow, Global & Women's Health,
School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Monash University.
Email: Karin.hammarberg@monash.edu
Phone: (03) 99030293.

"We as an organisation see miscarriage as disenfranchised grief in Australia. It is not validated as real grief. People assume it happens early and so doesn't matter. But one third of the women who experience pregnancy loss will be symptomatic for anxiety, depression or PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) for up to three years post a loss – this is according to research by Professor Tom Bourne, who with a team of scientists at Imperial College London and KU Leuven in Belgium conducted the largest ever study into the psychological impact of early-stage pregnancy loss."

"There are 103,000 miscarriages a year in Australia – that is, 282 families every day will lose a baby to miscarriage. There is a real lack of support because of the social stigma that surrounds miscarriage. We hear heartbreaking stories from women who lack clear emotional and mental wellbeing pathways to help them to recover."

"We have seen a 60% increase in women accessing our organisation for support during COVID. The additional layer of isolation exacerbated grief, particularly for those women who lived in Victoria."

Samantha Payne, co-Founder and CEO,
The Pink Elephants Support Network.
Email: sam@pinkelephantssupport.com
Phone: 0434 480 788.

"I'm not terribly surprised by these numbers. Shock is the first response from women who have just heard that their baby has died, and they have little capacity to take in information about possible support."

"There needs to be follow up. The system has to include a check on emotional as well as physical wellbeing weeks later."

Jackie Mead, co-CEO,
Red Nose.
Email: jackiemead@rednose.org.au
Phone: (03) 8595 2400.

Social Media

Facebook – suggested posts

National not-for-profit organisation Jean Hailes for Women's Health has just released the results of its sixth annual women's health survey. They provide an insight into the health and wellbeing of women in Australia over the past 12 months. Read the main findings here: jeanhailes.org.au/survey2020

The annual Women's Health Survey from Jean Hailes for Women's Health has found that women in Australia are reporting high levels of feelings of anxiety and depression. Discover all the findings of this important survey by visiting jeanhailes.org.au/survey2020

The findings of the annual Women's Health Survey, conducted by Jean Hailes for Women's Health, are out now. They provide a snapshot of the current health experiences and behaviours of women in Australia, in particular providing an insight into the impact of the pandemic on women's health. Read the main findings here > jeanhailes.org.au/survey2020

Instagram – suggested posts

Jean Hailes for Women's Health has just released its annual Women's Health Survey. It provides an insight into the health and wellbeing of women in Australia over the past 12 months. You can read the main findings of the survey by visiting the link in our bio.

Link for bio: jeanhailes.org.au/survey2020

First comment: #JeanHailes #WomensHealth #JHSurvey

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Twitter

@JeanHailes has just released its annual #womenshealth survey. It provides an insight into the #health and #wellbeing of #women in Australia over the past 12 months. Read the main findings of the survey here > jeanhailes.org.au/survey2020

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LinkedIn

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Jean Hailes for Women's Health social media handles:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JeanHailesforWomensHealth>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/jeanhailes/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/JeanHailes>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-jean-hailes-foundation>

Please tag us where possible.



Further information

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