

# Homelessness

## in North East Victoria

The North East sub-region within the Murray PHN catchment covers eight LGAs, with a total population of almost 200,000 people. Around half of this region's population live in and around the twin regional cities of Albury and Wodonga that are separated by the Murray River, and the NSW/Victoria state border. The North East sub-region includes diverse regional and rural communities, and encompasses the eastern part of Victorian highlands and ski fields, which are major tourist attractions and experience an influx of workers and travellers during the winter months.

**Table 1: People who are experiencing homelessness or marginally housed by LGA across the North East region<sup>1</sup>**

Rank	LGA	Count			Rates per 1000		
		Homeless	Marginally housed	Total	Homeless	Marginally housed	Total
1	Wodonga	207	132	339	5	3	8
2	Wangaratta	126	47	173	4	2	6
3	Towong	8	25	33	1	4	5
4	Albury	167	104	271	3	2	5
5	Benalla	18	49	67	1	3	5
6	Mansfield	15	29	44	1	3	4
7	Alpine	23	22	45	2	2	3
8	Indigo	13	37	50	1	2	3
<b>Total</b>		577	445	1022	3	2	5

\*Murray PHN region totals calculated using LGA level data. LGAs ranked by rate of total homelessness and marginally housed.

**Table 2: SHS clients by LGA across the North East region<sup>2</sup>**

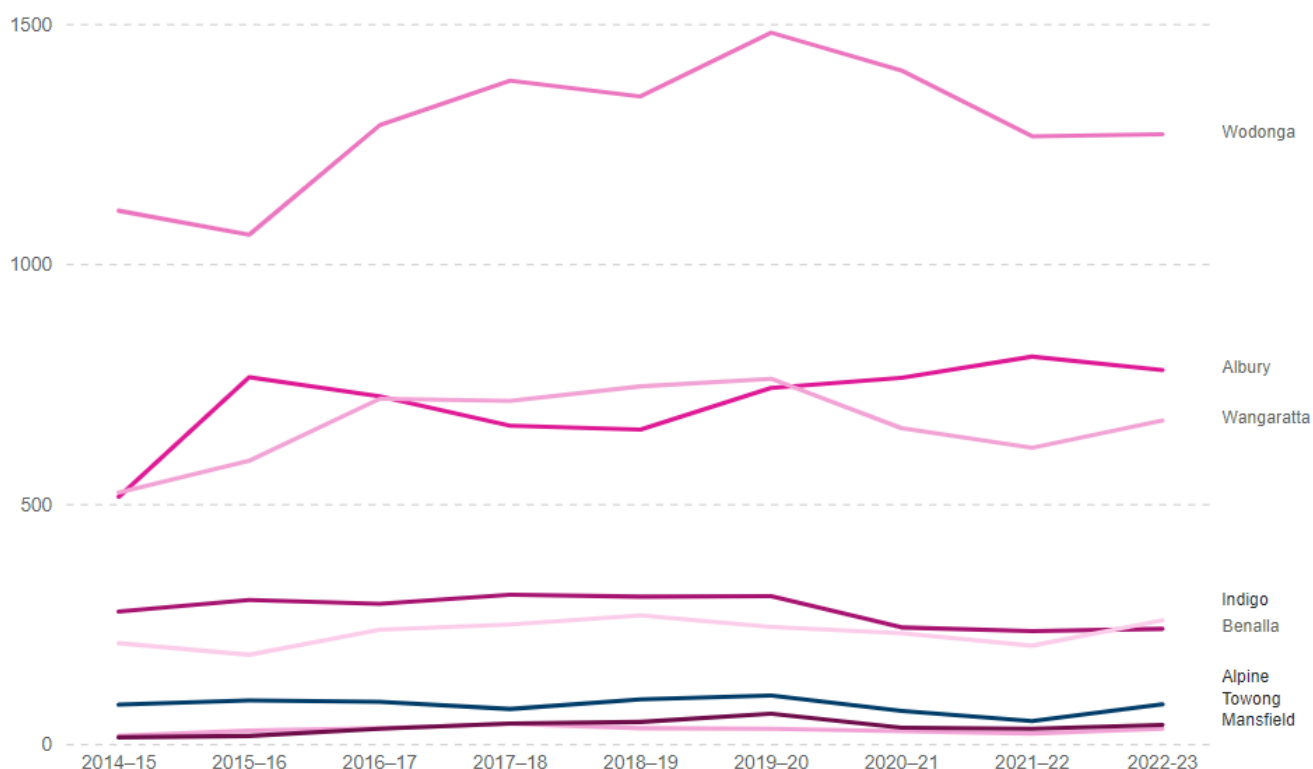
Rank	LGA	Client count				Rate per 1000 people			
		Homeless	At risk	Not stated	Total	Homeless	At risk	Not stated	Total
1	Wodonga	497	652	103	1252	12	15	2	29
2	Wangaratta	316	309	42	667	11	10	1	23
3	Benalla	95	120	29	244	7	8	2	17
4	Indigo	48	206	5	259	3	12	0	15
5	Albury	408	348	26	782	7	6	0	14
6	Towong	10	27	5	42	2	5	1	7
7	Alpine	25	51	15	91	2	4	1	7
8	Mansfield	15	27	5	47	1	3	0	5
<b>Total</b>		1414	1740	230	3384	7	9	1	18

\*Murray PHN region totals calculated using LGA level data. LGAs ranked by rate of total SHS clients.

In the North East sub-region, 10 per cent of all people recorded as experiencing homelessness in the 2021 ABS Census identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This is the same proportion as the average across the catchment (10%), but higher than state (4%).

The homelessness rate for people who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander was 11 per 1000 people in the North East region. This is lower than the rate at both the catchment (14 per 1000) and state (17).

**Figure 1: Trend of SHS client count for the Goulburn Valley sub-region by LGA - July 2014 to June 2023<sup>3</sup>**



**Table 3: People who are experiencing homelessness or marginally housed and have long-term health conditions in the North East sub-region (by count)<sup>1</sup>**

	Albury	Alpine	Benalla	Indigo	Mansfield	Towong	Wangaratta	Wodonga	Total
Arthritis	15	0	5	6	3	6	15	16	66
Asthma	24	0	6	7	4	0	23	41	105
Cancer (including remission)	4	0	4	4	0	4	3	6	25
Dementia (including Alzheimer's)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diabetes (excluding gestational diabetes)	8	0	0	0	0	0	6	12	26
Heart disease (including heart attack or angina)	9	0	0	6	3	0	4	10	32
Kidney disease	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Lung condition (including COPD or emphysema)	5	0	3	4	0	0	0	10	22
Mental health condition (including depression or anxiety)	34	5	12	7	8	4	19	61	150
Stroke	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Any other long-term health condition(s)	21	9	9	7	6	0	17	31	100
No long-term health condition(s)	122	32	34	24	27	24	74	163	500
Not stated	69	0	11	8	3	0	55	75	221

\*Murray PHN region totals calculated using LGA level data

**Table 4: People who are experiencing homelessness or marginally housed and have long-term health conditions in the North East region**  
(per 1000 people)<sup>1</sup>

	Albury	Alpine	Benalla	Indigo	Mansfield	Towong	Wangaratta	Wodonga	Total
Arthritis	55	0	75	120	68	182	87	47	65
Asthma	89	0	90	140	91	0	133	121	103
Cancer (including remission)	15	0	60	80	0	121	17	18	24
Dementia (including Alzheimer's)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diabetes (excluding gestational diabetes)	30	0	0	0	0	0	35	35	25
Heart disease (including heart attack or angina)	33	0	0	120	68	0	23	29	31
Kidney disease	0	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	4
Lung condition (including COPD or emphysema)	18	0	45	80	0	0	0	29	22
Mental health condition (including depression or anxiety)	125	111	179	140	182	121	110	180	147
Stroke	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Any other long-term health condition(s)	77	200	134	140	136	0	98	91	98
No long-term health condition(s)	450	711	507	480	614	727	428	481	489
Not stated	255	0	164	160	68	0	318	221	216

\*Murray PHN region totals calculated using LGA level data

## Key findings from stakeholder consultations in the North East region

### *Strengths*

In the North East, there are two ACCHOs operating: the Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS), with sites in Albury, Wodonga and Wangaratta, and Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, based in Wodonga and Wangaratta. AWAHS was noted for its exemplary role in supporting primary healthcare access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on both sides of the river, Albury to the north, and Wodonga and Wangaratta to the south.

Other strengths noted include services provided by The Salvation Army, which has developed new programs to support people experiencing homelessness, indicating a proactive approach to addressing needs. Beyond Housing's Tenancy Support program was also highlighted. The program offers valuable tenancy support to help individuals to maintain tenancies and stay in their rental properties. These programs have potential for future capacity building activities.

### *Gaps and opportunities*

Transport access is a significant issue in the North East with limited health services and inadequate public transport options in some communities, such as Mansfield and Corryong. Improving transportation access and support is considered crucial for accessing healthcare.

Another unique challenge in the North East is the cross-border context. For example, residents in Albury and Wodonga access services interchangeably in both cities, often without any thought to program eligibility or exclusion. Due to the interstate context, collaboration, patient ineligibility and funding limitations were noted as challenges. The need for better coordination and integration of service provision and funding allocation across geographical boundaries to ensure continuity of care for people experiencing homelessness was recommended.

## References

1. Source: ABS (2021). Public data: accessible to all audiences
2. Source: AIHW (2022-23). Public data: accessible to all audiences
3. Source: AIHW (2014-23). Public data: accessible to all audiences