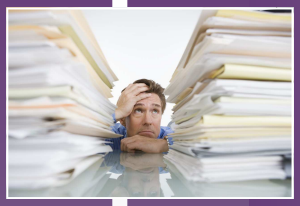

FACT SHEET 7

Statistics : Acquired Brain Injury

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates that the Australian population amounts to just under 19 million people. Of those 19 million Australians, the 1998 ABS study on *Disability, Ageing and Carers* estimated that there were 3.6 million people with a disability (19% of the total population) [1].

The 1999 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) study on *The definition, incidence and prevalence of acquired brain injury in Australia*, estimated that there were 338,700 Australians (1.9% of the total Australian population) who had a disability related to acquired brain injury. Of these, 160,200 were severely or profoundly affected by acquired brain injury and needed daily support.

This figure can be compared with the AIHW estimate of 328,000 people with in intellectual disability (1.86% Australians). Of these people 178,000 people required daily assistance [2].

The AIHW's *acquired brain injury prevalence* figures for the States and Territories are:

- 113,300 NSW residents (1.8% of the NSW population)
- 72,700 Victorian residents (1.9% of the Victorian population),
- 74,300 QLD residents (2.6% of the QLD population),
- 29,200 WA residents (2% of the WA population),
- 33,600 SA residents (2.2% of the SA population),
- 7,800 Tasmanian residents (1.8% of the Tasmanian population),
- 4,700 ACT residents (2.3% of the ACT population),
- 3,100 NT residents (3.6% of the NT population).

The AIHW study acknowledges that its estimated prevalence figure of people with an acquired brain injury is likely to be an under-estimate since prevalence is usually calculated by reference to population surveys which rely on self-reported information.

The *definition* study suggested there were 2,714 people were diagnosed with an alcohol related brain injury (ARBI).

The estimate of the number of people with ARBI is likely to be a severe underestimate as only a minor number of cases of ARBI are diagnosed before the person dies. Also, because of the stigma attached to ARBI individuals maybe less willing to identify as having ARBI and thus their condition may not be recognised.

Overseas figures state that of those people who experience traumatic brain injuries 68% have a history of substance misuse [3]; 14% develop an alcohol and drug problem after a head injury[4]; and 60-80% of clients in alcohol treatment will show some form of cognitive impairment. [5] Australia has higher rates of ARBI than other Western countries.[6]

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

(Footnotes)

1 Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999.
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6 Darton-Hill, I., & Truswell, A.S. (1990). Thiamine Status of a sample of homeless clinic attenders in Sydney. *The Medical journal of Australia*, 152, 5-9. See also, Wodak, A., Richmond, R., & Wilson, A. (19900. Thaimine fortification and alcohol. *The Medical Journal of Australia,* 152, 97-99.

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