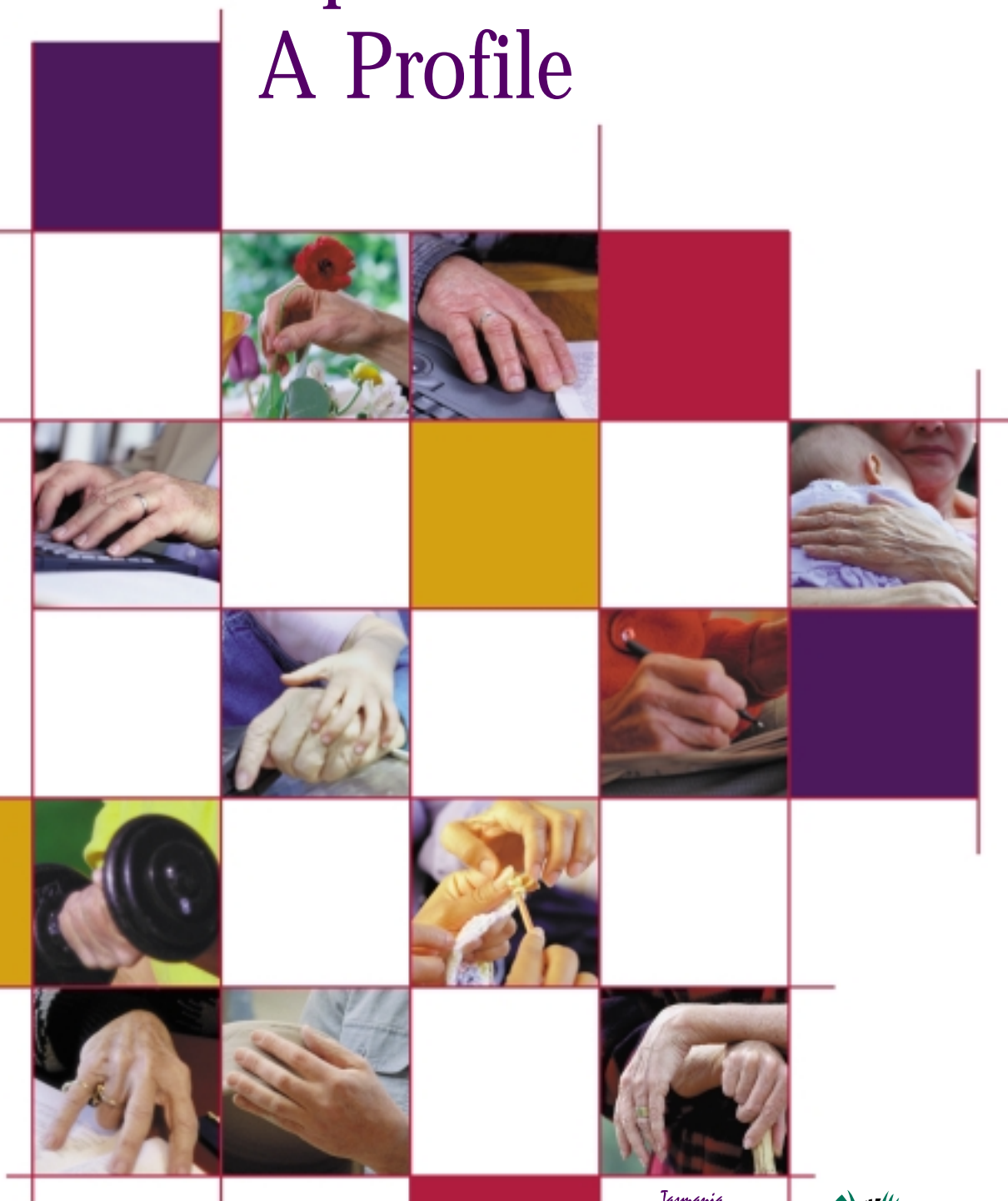


Older People in Tasmania: A Profile



towards a society for all ages
International Year of Older Persons 1999



Tasmania

DEPARTMENT of
HEALTH and
HUMAN SERVICES



Older People in Tasmania: A Profile

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Introduction

In this International Year of Older Persons questions have often been asked about the older members of our community – questions such as who are they, where do they live, what do they do and where do they work.

The *Older People in Tasmania: A Profile* is a special project of Australian Coalition '99 and the Department of Health and Human Services to mark International Year of Older Persons. It provides statistical information on a wide range of topics, including population, community participation, income, transport, housing and health and wellbeing.


A society for all ages is the key theme of the International Year of Older Persons. In planning for this society for all ages it is important to be aware of the correct information about the entire population. Too often there are negative stereotypes and inaccurate myths about the older members of our community. The majority of older Tasmanians are active, independent, healthy and are keen to continue to be involved in a diverse range of activities within their community. There are some older Tasmanians who require assistance and support in their daily activities.

As we enter the new millennium the population of older Tasmanians will continue to increase. We need to understand the ageing of our population and the challenges and opportunities provided by an increased number of older people who have a wealth of skills, knowledge and abilities.

The data presented covers the demographic characteristics of the Tasmanian population aged 60+. Most of the demographic information has been derived from the 1996 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data and the 1998 Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey.

The Healthy Communities Survey was the first comprehensive survey conducted in Tasmania, designed to measure the health and wellbeing of the adult Tasmanian population. Over 18,000 Tasmanians aged 18 years and over participated in this survey. The responses were weighted by age, sex and geographic location to produce population estimates for the entire Tasmanian population.

While *Older People in Tasmania: A Profile* provides a wide range of facts and figures, it is by no means comprehensive. The document is a presentation of specific information, not an interpretation or analysis of the implications of the information provided. The interpretation is left to you the reader to use this information for your own specific planning or projects.



This publication provides information of use to older people themselves, community groups, government policy makers and planners, students and the wider community. It will be a useful planning tool in developing policies and initiatives for, and with, the diverse population of older Tasmanians.

Myth: As you get older, you get wiser

***Fact: Wisdom is not automatic with age.
However, the accumulated experience of older people is a resource
that should not be devalued or wasted.***

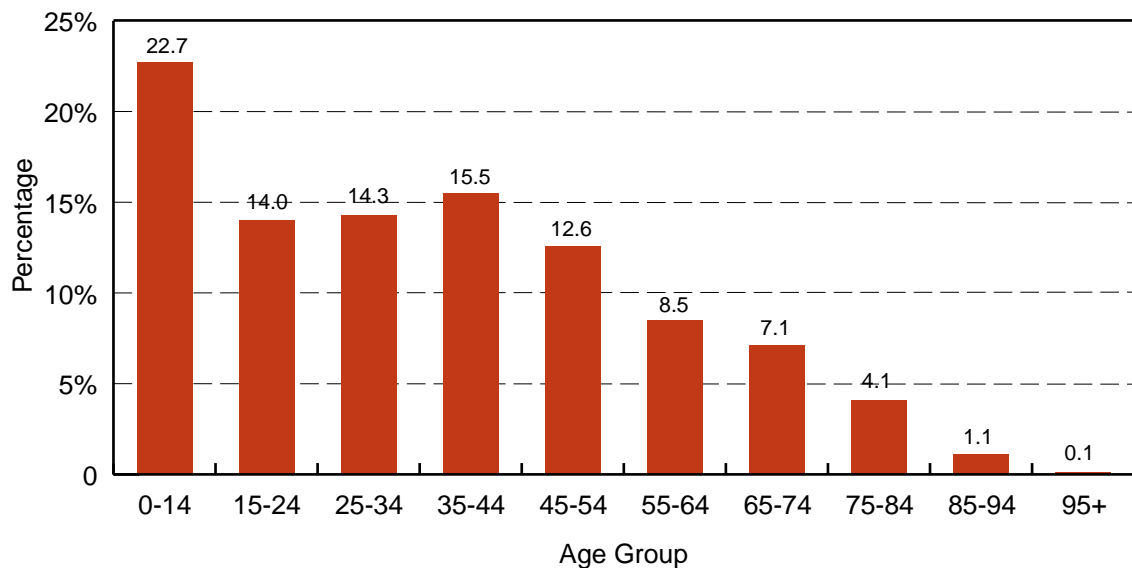
1. Population

Older people are often viewed as ‘all the same.’ The fact is that older people are at least as different from each other as are all other people. Older people are more diverse than any other age group. Each generation of older people brings its unique historical and cultural experiences with them as they age. As in the rest of society older people have different backgrounds and beliefs and want to be treated as individuals.

1.1 Age and Gender of Older Tasmanians

According to the 1996 Census of Population and Housing 16.2% of Tasmania’s total population were aged 60+. In 1996 there were 459,012 Tasmanians, 74,487 of which were aged 60+.

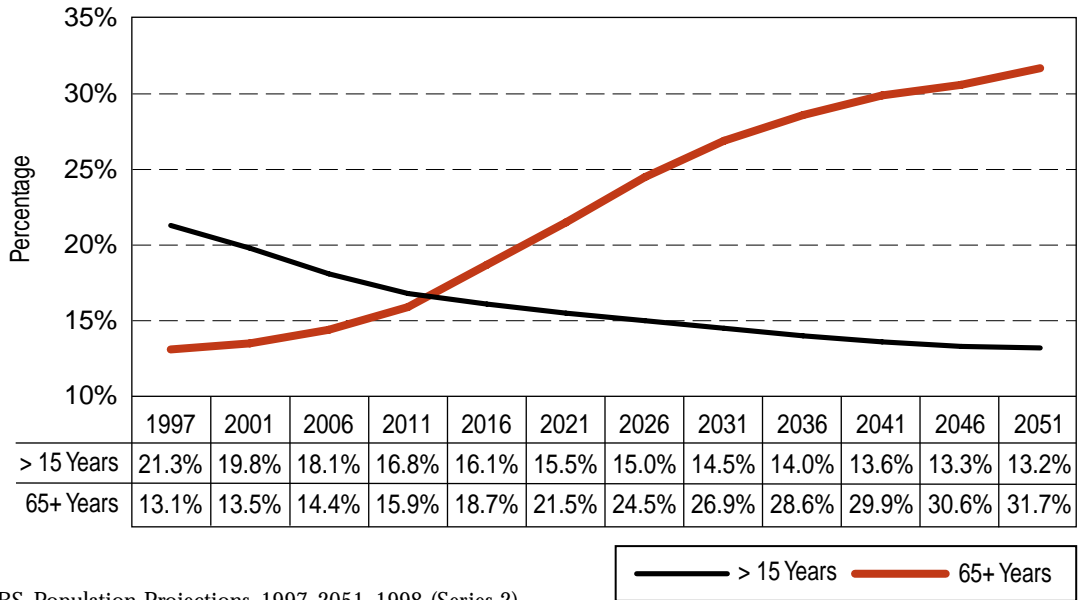
Figure 1.1 - Population Age Distribution, Tasmania 1996



ABS, Census of Population and Housing 1996

Population projections prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that the proportion of the Tasmanian population aged 65+ will increase to 24.5%, by the year 2026. At the same time the proportion of the population aged less than 15 years will decline to below 15%.

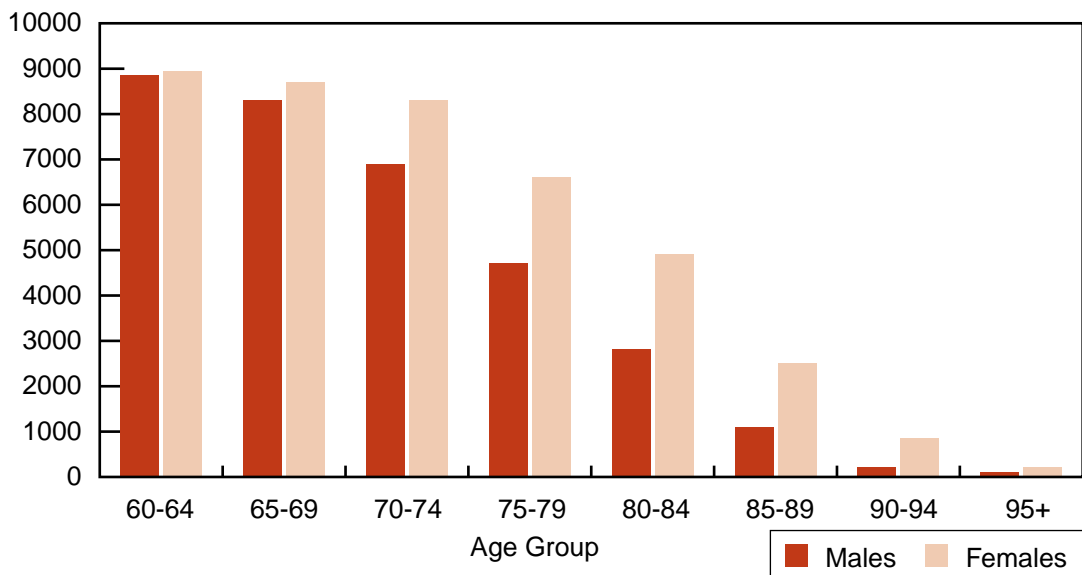
Figure 1.2 - Projected Population under 15 years and 65 years & over, Tasmania, 1997-2051



ABS, Population Projections, 1997-2051, 1998 (Series 2)

Overall, there are slightly more women in Tasmania than men. This trend has been increasing slowly in recent years. There are more men in the under 60 age group however this balance reverses dramatically in the age groups over 60. The difference grows larger as the population ages.

Figure 1.3 - Number of Older Persons in Tasmania, 1996



ABS, Census of Population and Housing 1996

1.2 Life Expectancy

The table below reflects life expectancy of Tasmanians in comparison to total Australian life expectancy. The life expectancy for men is lower than that for women. The life expectancy of Tasmanians on average is lower than the rest of Australia, by approximately the same number of years, for both men and women. This indicates that gender affects life expectancy irrespective of geographic area.

Table 1.1 - Life Expectancy in Years, at Selected Ages by Sex, Tasmania & Australia 1994-1996

	At Birth		At Age 15		At Age 65	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Tasmania	74.1	80.0	59.9	65.5	15.0	18.9
Australia	75.2	80.1	60.9	66.7	15.8	19.6

Australia's Health 1998, AIHW

1.3 Marital Status

Older men are much more likely to be married than older women. For example, 44.6% of men aged 85+ are married in comparison to 12.3% of women in the same age group.

Table 1.2 - Marital Status of Older Population Groups by Gender, Tasmania and Australia 1994-1996

		Age %				Total
		60-64	65-74	75-84	85 +	
Female	Married	70.1	57.4	33.8	12.3	50.1
	De Facto	0.9	0.5	0.1		0.4
	Separated	1.9	1.3	0.8	0.6	1.2
	Divorced	9.5	5.5	2.6	1.2	5.2
	Widowed	13.3	29.7	54.9	72.0	36.5
	Single	2.6	3.4	4.5	6.1	3.7
Male	Married	81.1	80.8	70.9	44.6	77.3
	De Facto	3.3	1.2	0.6	0.4	1.6
	Separated	2.1	1.5	0.9		1.5
	Divorced	5.9	4.3	3.0	1.1	4.3
	Widowed	2.4	6.5	17.6	42.7	9.3
	Single	3.0	3.5	3.6	4.8	3.4

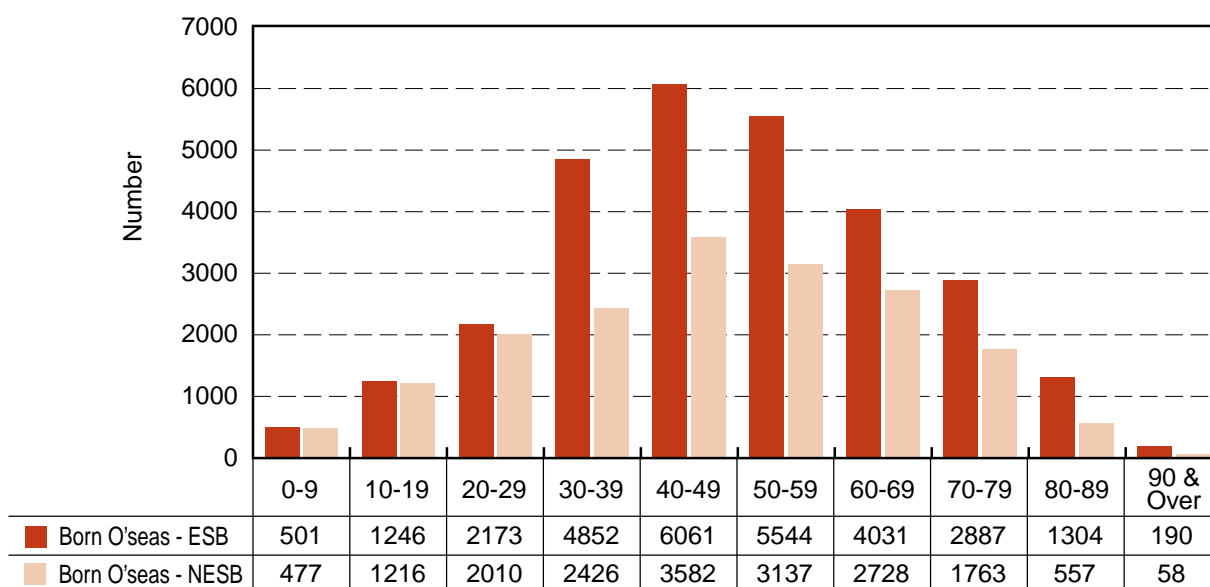
Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

As depicted in Table 1.2 on page 8, there is a high proportion of widowed females in all age groups. For example 72% of women 85+ are widowed, in comparison to 42.7% of men. Lower male life expectancy is a major contributing factor to high numbers of widowed females.

1.4 Number of Older Tasmanians Born Overseas

Figure 1.4 below shows the number of Tasmanian residents born overseas by age. Approximately 10% of the total population have been born overseas. This includes people from English speaking countries (28,189) and non-English speaking countries (17,954).

Figure 1.4 - Population Born Overseas by Age, Tasmania 1996



ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 1996.

Note: NESB = Non-English Speaking Background; ESB = English Speaking Background

Changes in federal migration policy over the last few decades, have resulted in substantial migration from overseas in the post war years until the 1970s. There has been limited migration into Australia since 1980.

The percentage distribution of persons born in non-English speaking countries show highest proportions in age groups 50-79, as shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 - Persons Born in Non-English Speaking Countries as a Proportion of Total Population by Age, Tasmania 1996

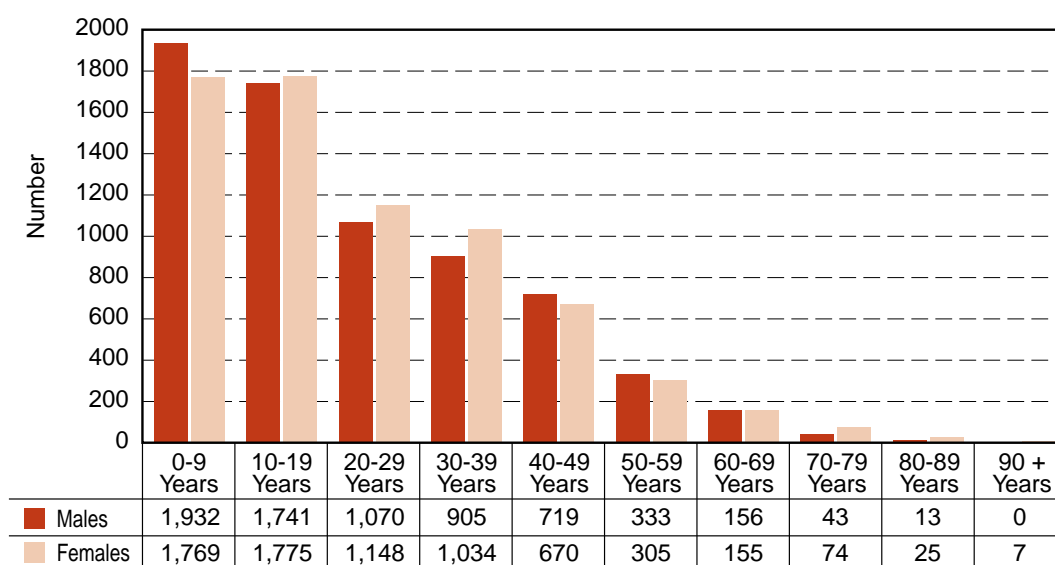
Age	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+	Total
%	0.7%	1.8%	3.2%	3.4%	5.3%	6.7%	7.8%	6.6%	4.9%	3.8%	3.9%

ABS Census of Population and Housing, 1996

1.5 Number of Tasmanians who Identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

There were 13,874 people who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Tasmania in 1996 (3% of the total Tasmanian population). 6,912 were males and 6,962 were females (ABS Census 1996).

Figure 1.5 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders by Age and Gender, Tasmania 1996



ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 1996. (Custom Data)

There are significantly smaller proportions of people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in older age groups compared with younger age groups. Of a total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders population of 13,874 in Tasmania, only 473 persons (3.4%) were 60 years of age or older, well below the total Tasmanian proportion of 16.2% aged 60+.

Table 1.4 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population as a Proportion of Total populations by Age Group, Tasmania 1996

Age	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+	Total
Male	5.5%	4.9%	3.4%	2.6%	2.1%	1.4%	0.9%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	3.1%
Female	5.3%	5.2%	3.6%	2.8%	2.0%	1.3%	0.9%	0.5%	0.3%	0.6%	2.9%

ABS, Census of Population and Housing 1996, Custom Data

1.6 Where Tasmania's Older People Live

Table 1.5 and Figure 1.6 over the page indicate where older people live in Tasmania. 15.97% of the total population in the North West is 60+. 16.77% of the total population of the North is 60+ and 16.04% of the total population of the south is aged 60+.

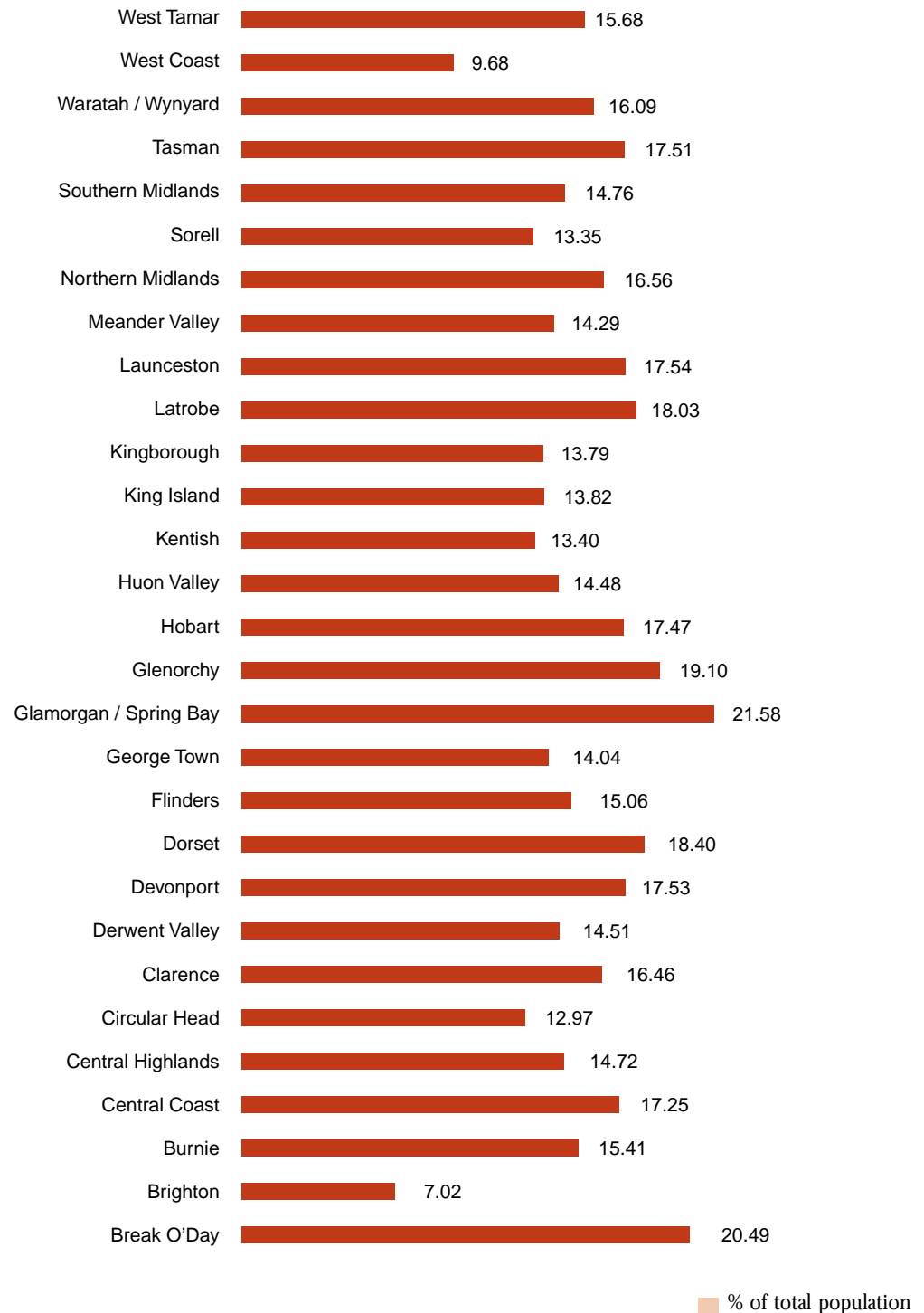
**Table 1.5 - Percentage of Tasmanian Population Aged 60+
by Local Government Area**

LGA	Age								Total 60+	Total Pop	% of Total Population
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	95+			
NORTH WEST											
North West											
Burnie	722	673	626	441	312	148	38	12	2972	19283	15.41
Circular Head	258	232	258	146	106	41	8	3	1052	8108	12.97
King Island	114	60	56	47	51	22	9	3	362	1795	20.17
Waratah/Wynyard	539	531	417	334	206	85	25	10	2147	13347	16.09
West Coast	219	171	81	73	47	13	9	0	613	6335	9.68
East North West											
Central Coast	826	791	725	519	373	209	55	18	3516	20377	17.25
Devonport	951	911	903	681	446	200	67	15	4174	23813	17.53
Kentish	215	162	150	88	44	35	15	6	715	5335	13.40
Latrobe	357	331	299	200	111	60	14	3	1375	7626	18.03
Total North West	4201	3862	3515	2529	1696	813	240	70	16926	106019	15.97
NORTH											
North											
Launceston	2292	2327	2202	1784	1363	677	244	61	10950	62437	17.54
Meander Valley	597	593	494	373	221	84	25	10	2397	16772	14.29
Northern Midlands	506	473	369	268	184	94	21	4	1919	11368	16.88
West Tamar	785	750	646	395	221	125	30	7	2959	18870	15.68
North East											
Break O'Day	317	282	246	145	111	42	11	3	1157	5646	20.49
Dorset	322	334	266	181	123	54	20	6	1306	7097	18.40
Flinders	34	28	28	25	18	3	3	0	139	923	15.06
George Town	251	273	183	109	71	29	18	0	934	6653	14.04
Total North	5104	5060	4434	3280	2312	1108	372	91	21761	129766	16.77
SOUTH											
South East											
Clarence	1845	1852	1624	1172	781	362	136	39	7811	47461	16.46
Glamorgan/Spring Bay	259	188	176	125	78	28	11	6	871	4036	21.58
Sorell	374	386	278	177	82	41	10	3	1351	10117	13.35
Tasman	136	96	69	41	35	12	3	3	395	2256	17.51
South											
Hobart	1559	1624	1678	1387	1097	582	184	45	8156	46674	17.47
Huon Valley	545	481	330	249	150	80	22	12	1869	12907	14.48
Kingborough	944	861	712	565	376	182	51	10	3701	26835	13.79
South/Central											
Brighton	295	201	147	94	77	39	17	5	875	12470	7.02
Central Highlands	110	85	85	33	38	21	3	0	375	2547	14.72
Derwent Valley	401	343	266	186	115	58	12	3	1384	9539	14.51
Glenorchy	1777	1854	1857	1330	844	397	143	25	8227	43066	19.10
Southern Midlands	222	203	141	121	70	25	0	3	785	5319	14.76
Total South	8467	8174	7363	5480	3743	1827	592	154	35800	223227	16.04
Total Tasmania	17772	17096	15312	11289	7751	3748	1204	315	74487	459012	16.23

ABS, Census of Population and Housing 1996

Glamorgan/Spring Bay and Break O'Day local government areas have the highest percentages of older persons, with 21.58% and 20.49% respectively of the total population aged 60+.

Figure 1.6 - Percentage of Tasmanian Population Aged 60+ by Local Government Area



ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 1996

1.7 Level of Education

People in the 65-74 age group, and those 75+ have lower levels of education than those aged 64 and below. For 27.2% of females aged 65-74 and 25.1% of males the highest level of schooling reached was Primary. For those aged 75+, 33.2% of females and 30.8% of males received a primary education. This is in comparison to the 18-24 year age group, where 0.1% ceased education at the primary level.

Table 1.7 - Highest Level of Education by Age and Gender, Tasmania 1998

	Age %						Total
	18-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	
Female							
Primary	0.1	0.5	1.5	6.7	27.2	33.2	6.9
Some Secondary	0.9	7.5	22.3	32.8	28.5	26.7	15.7
Year 10	12.0	27.6	24.6	21.6	10.0	5.1	20.7
Year 11	7.9	6.2	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.4	4.3
Year 12	18.0	6.3	4.9	5.2	6.0	6.3	7.4
Some TAFE	10.7	11.4	8.2	5.1	2.9	1.9	8.4
TAFE	14.3	14.7	11.5	8.2	5.3	2.9	11.4
Some Univ/CAE	14.4	4.5	4.1	5.0	3.2	3.6	5.5
University/CAE	14.9	12.2	7.8	4.3	3.1	2.0	9.1
Some Postgraduate	2.0	1.5	1.3	1.5	0.7	0.4	1.4
Postgraduate	2.2	4.5	5.8	1.9	1.2	0.2	3.4
Don't Know		0.2	0.4	0.5	0.9	2.6	0.5
Other	1.1	1.4	2.6	2.2	2.2	1.2	1.7
Male							
Primary	0.1	0.2	2.0	8.9	25.1	30.8	5.7
Some Secondary	1.4	9.7	23.7	28.0	22.2	20.9	15.2
Year 10	13.1	21.0	15.5	12.5	6.4	3.9	15.6
Year 11	6.5	2.6	1.7	1.9	1.6	1.1	2.7
Year 12	17.8	6.2	4.8	4.3	5.7	5.7	7.2
Some TAFE	14.5	13.6	10.7	7.9	5.3	4.8	11.2
TAFE	19.1	21.2	16.0	14.9	15.2	8.5	17.9
Some Univ/CAE	14.4	4.8	5.6	4.0	3.5	3.6	6.0
University/CAE	8.3	8.1	7.3	6.5	4.8	3.3	7.2
Some Postgraduate	1.1	2.8	2.8	1.7	0.6	1.0	2.1
Postgraduate	1.0	5.4	6.7	4.5	2.0	1.8	4.4
Don't Know	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.8	1.7	0.4
Other	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.0	1.6	2.3	0.9

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

2. Community Participation

The majority of older people lead independent lives and many are actively involved in the workforce, voluntary work, sport and physical activity and travelling. Older people, like other members of the community, have a wide range of interests and commitments and their involvement with their families and friends continues throughout their lives.

Myth: Older people do not contribute usefully and productively at work

Fact: Research shows that the productivity of older workers compares favourably with younger age groups, especially in jobs not requiring physical effort. Older workers contribute increased experience and skills and have better attendance, job turnover and workplace accident records. They are likely to be committed to quality, able to get on with their co-workers, have solid experience in their job or industry and be emotionally stable.

2.1 Participation in the Workforce

Table 2.1 illustrates the work force participation rates for Tasmanians aged 18+ and for Tasmanians aged 60+. For those aged 65-74 95.6% do not participate in the work force. A closer look at the 60-64 age group indicates that 77.9% do not participate in the work force. 12.2% work fulltime, 6.3% parttime, and 3.6% are employed on a casual basis.

Table 2.1 - Workforce Participation by Age, Tasmania 1998

	Age %						
	18-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Total
Full Time	38.1	46.5	44.3	21.2	2.3	0.4	34.4
Part Time	5.9	13.1	13.3	7.6	1.3	0.3	9.5
Casual	12.1	9.3	8.6	5.5	0.8	0.2	7.6
All other	43.9	31.1	33.8	65.7	95.6	99.1	48.5

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

2.2 Occupation of Older Tasmanians

In 1998 the most common occupational groups for persons aged 60+ in the Tasmanian work force were: Manager/Administrator, Professional and Trades.

Table 2.2 - Occupation of Persons Aged 60+ Currently in the Workforce, Tasmania 1998

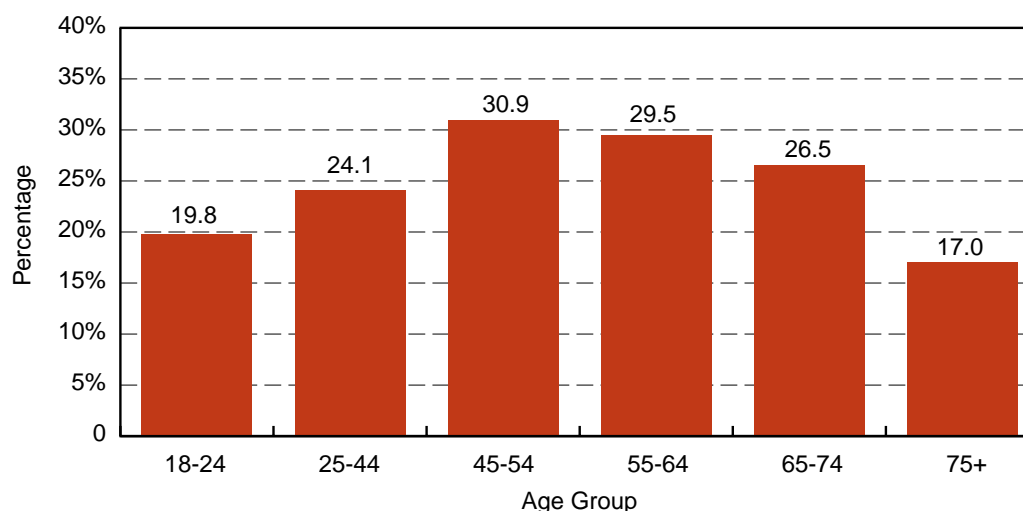
	Current Occupation Categorised											
	Manager Administrator	Professional	Technician	Trades	Clerical	Sales/Services	Plant/Machine	Labourer or Related	Other	Not Sure	Never Had Job	Total
Full Time	5.8	2.6	0.9	1.4	0.9	0.7	0.5	1.1			0.2	14.9
Part Time	1.1	1.9	0.6	0.9	0.9	1.2	0.2	0.5	0.4		0.0	8.0
Casual	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.7	0.1		0.1	4.6

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

2.3 Voluntary Work

Information from the Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey indicates that participation by people aged 55-74, in voluntary work is higher than participation by those aged 18-44. The participation rate of males and females is very similar.

Figure 2.1 - Voluntary Work Performed during the Last Month by Age, Tasmania 1998



Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

2.4 Sport and Physical Activities

The participation rate in sport and physical activities decreases with age, with 33.4% of those aged 65+ participating in physical activity in comparison with 75.4% of people aged 18-24. The total participation rate for all Tasmanian age groups was close to or above the rate for Australia, with the rate for Tasmanians aged 65+ well above the Australian average. Males participated at a higher rate than females.

Table 2.3 - Tasmanian Participants, Sport and Physical Activities

	Males		Females		Total	
	Tas	Aust	Tas	Aust	Tas	Aust
18-24	83.0	77.8	67.2	63.5	75.4	70.8
25-34	70.7	69.0	49.6	54.8	60.2	61.9
35-44	56.8	55.4	51.9	46.1	54.3	50.7
45-54	49.0	44.2	37.2	39.7	43.1	42.0
55-64	46.8	34.2	25.7	31.5	36.2	32.9
65+	35.5	24.6	31.7	19.1	33.4	21.6
Total	57.2	52.6	43.9	43.0	50.4	47.8

Participation in sport and physical activities 1997-98, ABS

Myth: You can't teach an old dog new tricks

Fact: Learning is a life long pursuit.
 Older people continue to learn from life and
 to pursue their interests.
 Older people benefit from continuous training
 and retraining to the same extent as younger people.

Frequency of participation in exercise for those aged 67-74 and 75+ is outlined in Table 2.4 below. The participation rate in daily exercise for men is greater than that for women, especially in the 75+ age group.

Table 2.4 - Frequency of Exercise by Gender and Age, Tasmania 1998

Age		Gender %		Total %
		Female %	Male %	
65-74	Not at all	19.0	15.0	17.1
	Less than once a week	9.4	7.6	8.5
	1-2 times a week	18.6	15.8	17.3
	3 times a week	13.2	13.4	13.3
	more than 3 times	13.7	16.8	15.2
	daily	20.7	27.5	23.9
75+	Not at all	38.0	27.8	34.2
	Less than once a week	8.6	7.1	8.1
	1-2 times a week	17.5	14.6	16.4
	3 times a week	6.6	9.5	7.7
	more than 3 times	6.6	12.0	8.6
	daily	14.6	22.5	17.6

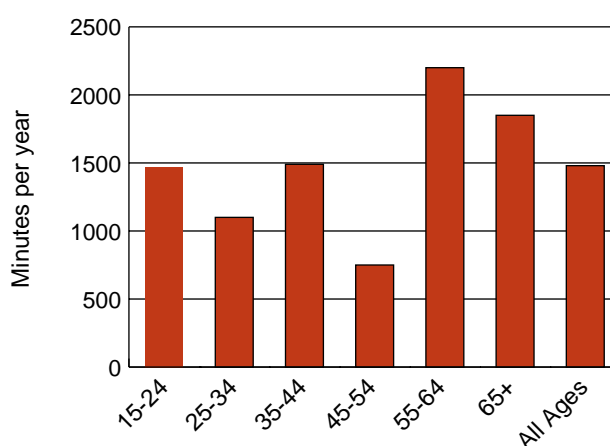
Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

The most popular sport and physical recreational activities for older persons are walking, lawn bowls, fishing and golf.

2.5 Travel and Tourism

As people retire from paid employment they tend to have increased leisure time, some of which they spend travelling. In Australia, people in the 55-64 and 65+ age group spend more time on holiday travel per year, in comparison with other age groups.

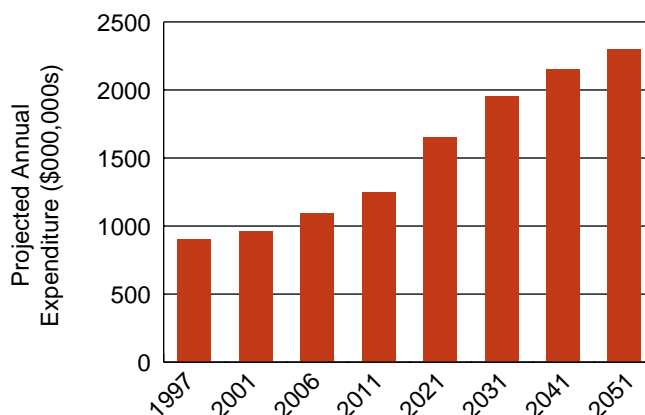
Figure 2.2 - Time Spent on Holiday
Average Time Spent on Holiday Travel (including driving for pleasure);
Minutes Per Year by Age



ABS, Time Use Survey, 1997

The Australian Bureau of Statistics population projections indicate that the amount older persons will spend on travel will increase significantly as we move towards the year 2011 and beyond.

Figure 2.3 - Travel Expenditure Growing
Increasing Expenditure on Travel by Seniors; Projections from 2001 to 2051



ABS, Population Projections, 1997; ABS Australian Social Trends, 1997;
ABS, Household Expenditure Study, 1997

2.6 Concern about Environment

The table below shows the age breakdown of those Tasmanian adults who express a 'great deal of concern' about the impact of environmental issues on the health of their communities. The percentage of Tasmanians who express a 'great deal of concern' increases with age, but declines slightly after age 75. Younger Tasmanians aged 18-44 years are less likely to show a 'great deal of concern' on all issues.

Table 2.5 - Great Deal of Concern about Impact of Environment on Health by Age, 18+, Tasmania 1988

Great Deal of Concern	18-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Pesticides in food	19.4	32.5	42.2	48.3	49.9	46.1
Germs, bacteria or virus in food	25.5	32.6	38.4	45.5	48.2	44.9
Germs, bacteria or virus in drinking water	26.6	32.8	38.5	44.1	46.9	44.9
Pesticides in drinking water	26.9	34.3	40.6	45.2	48.2	44.4
Air pollution	23.0	27.4	31.3	35.9	39.1	37.1
Industry located close to where I live	14.9	16.8	20.9	22.4	22.0	22.0

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

2.7 Contact with Family

A total of 32.7 % of females and 24.8% of males aged 60+ spend time with their relatives several times a week. In contrast, 6.2% of females and 9.8% of males rarely or never spend time with relatives.

**Table 2.6 - Time Spent with Relatives by Older Populations and Gender
Tasmania 1998**

	60-64	65-74	Age % 75-84	85 +	Total
Female					
Every day	7.6	7.5	7.4	9.6	7.6
Several times a week	32.6	35.0	30.5	28.3	32.7
2 or 3 times a month	27.9	22.6	22.5	14.3	23.2
Once a month	7.6	9.0	6.5	5.3	7.7
3 monthly	4.3	4.6	3.5	1.8	4.0
6 monthly	4.0	3.1	1.8	2.7	2.9
Rarely	4.4	5.2	4.8	4.8	4.9
Never	1.3	1.1	1.0	4.3	1.3
Male					
Every day	6.6	5.2	6.2	5.1	5.8
Several times a week	21.9	27.7	22.5	25.1	24.8
2 or 3 times a month	29.2	26.7	23.3	16.1	26.2
Once a month	12.4	10.0	11.9	5.5	10.9
Once in 3 months	6.2	5.0	5.0	6.2	5.4
Once in 6 months	5.2	4.0	2.8	2.1	4.0
Rarely	7.5	8.3	7.9	7.2	8.0
Never	2.2	1.5	1.8	3.0	1.8

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

2.8 Contact with Friends

A total of 26.7% of females and 18.3% of males aged 60+ have contact with friends several times a week. In contrast 9.9% of females and 12.8% of men aged 60+ rarely or never spend time with friends.

**Table 2.7 - Time Spent with Friends by Older Populations and Gender
Tasmania 1988**

	Age %				
	60-64	65-74	75-84	85 +	Total
Female					
Every day	2.7	3.2	3.6	1.0	3.1
Several times a week	23.6	29.6	26.2	21.6	26.7
2 or 3 times a month	36.1	29.7	25.0	23.3	29.3
Once a month	13.5	13.9	10.3	7.3	12.3
Once in 3 months	4.9	3.7	2.4	3.2	3.5
Once in 6 months	2.1	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.6
Rarely	8.2	6.4	9.5	10.9	8.0
Never	0.8	1.1	2.5	7.3	1.9
Male					
Every day	2.8	2.9	2.7	5.6	2.9
Several times a week	15.7	20.5	17.6	13.1	18.3
2 or 3 times a month	33.1	30.4	27.4	20.8	30.1
Once a month	19.5	17.5	15.7	12.8	17.4
Once in 3 months	6.6	6.4	4.2	5.2	5.9
Once in 6 months	3.7	1.9	1.9	1.6	2.3
Rarely	10.6	9.7	11.8	11.2	10.5
Never	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.3

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

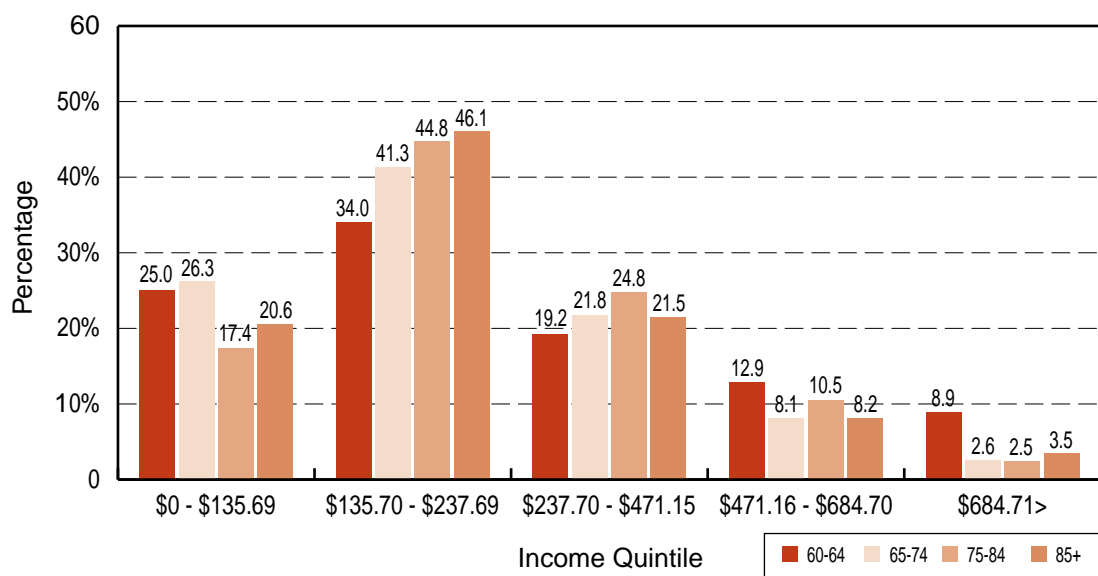
3. Income and Expenditure

Income and financial security are important elements in the lives of all people, irrespective of age. Most older people rely on the age pension as their major source of income and very few have superannuation. The availability of concessions is of great importance to many older people. The Tasmanian Seniors Card provides discounts and concessions to the majority of older Tasmanians.

3.1 Income Distribution

The table below illustrates the income distribution of all people in Tasmania aged 60+. The incomes of older persons are skewed toward the lower end of the income distribution scale. More than 40% of older people have an income of between \$135-237 per week, compared with only 19.8% of the total estimated Tasmanian population.

Figure 3.1 - Gross Weekly Income Quintile Distribution among Older Populations, Tasmania 1998

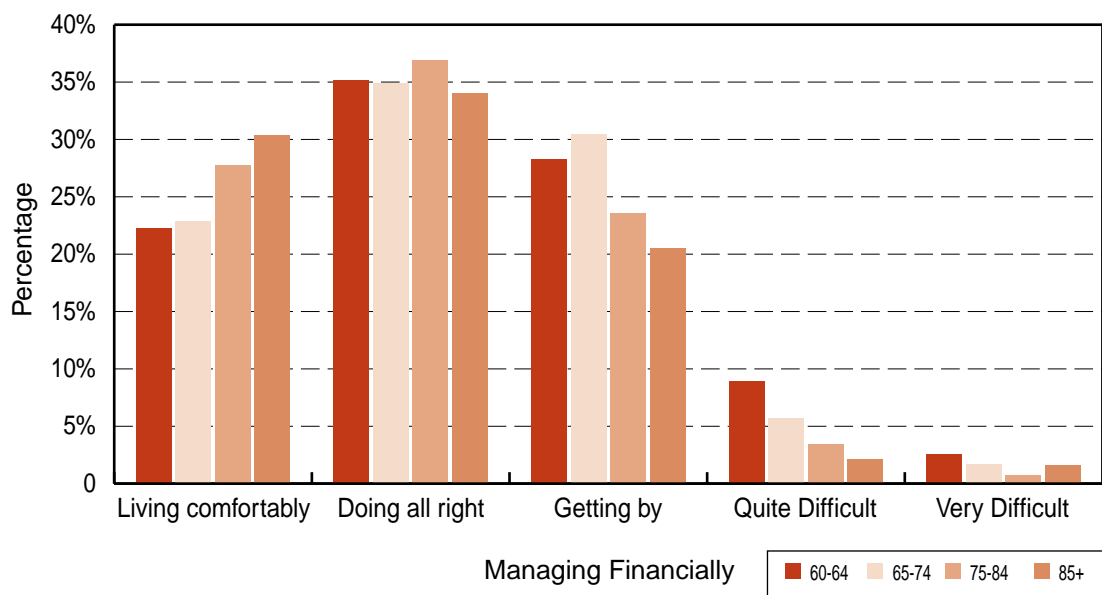


Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

3.2 Managing Financially

The Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey asked respondents to report on how well they are managing financially. The majority of respondents aged 60+ reported that they are 'doing all right.' The survey found that people who are 'living comfortably' financially report the highest self-assessed health status, and people who are 'finding it financially difficult' report the lowest health status.

Figure 3.2 - Managing Financially, Older Populations, Tasmania 1998



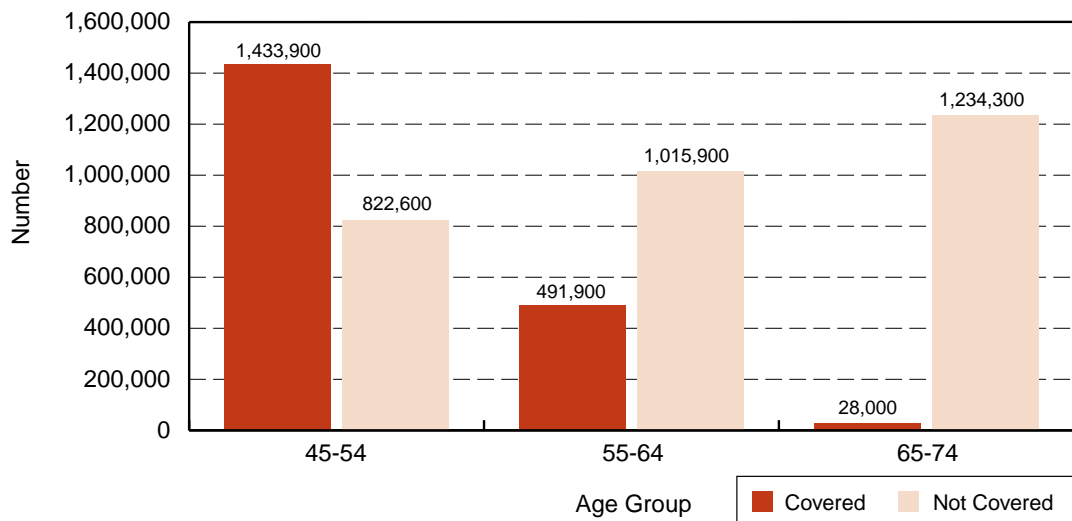
Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

Almost a quarter of respondents aged 75+ who are 'financially living comfortably' report 'excellent' or 'very good' health (23.2%). Of the respondents aged 75+ who report that they financially 'find it very difficult,' 89.2% report 'fair' or 'poor' health, and none report 'excellent' or 'very good health'.

3.3 Superannuation

In 1995 only 28,000 (2.2%) of 1,262,300 Australian people aged 65-74 were covered by superannuation. Of those aged 45-54, 1,433,900 of 2,256,500 (63.5%) were covered by superannuation. This demonstrates the extension of superannuation coverage over the past 20 years.

Figure 3.3 - Total Number of Persons Covered by Superannuation by Age, Australia 1995



ABS, Superannuation Australia 1995, Table 2

3.4 Pension Recipients

Age Pension is the main source of income for Tasmanians aged 60+. The full or part Age Pension is paid to 44,695 people or 60% of the Tasmanian population aged 60+.

Table 3.1 – Age Pension Recipients as at 1 July 1997

LGA	Number of Age Pension Payments	% of Total Age Pension Payments in Tasmania	Population 60+ Years, 1996 (Census)	Age Pension Payments as a % of Population 60+ Years
NORTH WEST				
Burnie	2372	5.3	2972	79.81%
Circular Head	587	1.3	1052	55.80%
King Island	106	0.2	362	29.28%
Waratah/Wynyard	935	2.1	2147	43.55%
West Coast	387	0.9	613	63.13%
Subtotal	4387	9.8	7146	62.39%
East North West				
Central Coast	2338	5.2	3516	66.50%
Devonport	2766	6.2	4174	66.27%
Kentish	421	0.9	715	58.88%
Latrobe	821	1.8	1375	59.71%
Subtotal	6346	14.2	9780	64.89%
Total North West	10733	24.0	16926	63.41%
NORTH				
North				
Launceston	7619	17.0	10950	69.58%
Meander Valley	1254	2.8	2397	52.32%
Northern Midlands	1110	2.5	1919	57.84%
West Tamar	1084	2.4	2959	36.63%
Subtotal	11067	24.8	18225	60.84%
North East				
Break O'Day	595	1.3	1157	51.43%
Dorset	867	1.9	1306	66.39%
Flinders	82	0.2	139	58.99%
George Town	594	1.3	934	63.60%
Subtotal	2138	4.8	3536	60.46%
Total North	13205	29.5	21761	60.68%

Table 3.1 – continued

LGA	Number of Age Pension Payments	% of Total Age Pension Payments in Tasmania	Population 60+ Years, 1996 (Census)	Age Pension Payments as a % of Population 60+ Years
SOUTH				
South East				
Clarence	4526	10.1	7811	57.94%
Glamorgan/Spring Bay	415	0.9	871	47.65%
Sorell	908	2.0	1351	67.21%
Tasman	226	0.5	395	57.22%
Subtotal	6075	13.6	10428	58.26%
South				
Hobart	3902	8.7	8156	47.84%
Huon Valley	1193	2.7	1869	63.83%
Kingborough	2109	4.7	3701	56.98%
Subtotal	7204	16.1	13726	52.07%
South/Central				
Brighton	594	1.3	875	67.89%
Central Highlands	219	0.5	375	58.40%
Derwent Valley	933	2.1	1384	67.41%
Glenorchy	5246	11.7	8227	63.77%
Southern Midlands	486	1.1	785	61.91%
Subtotal	7478	16.7	11646	64.21%
Total South	20757	46.4	35800	57.98%
Total Tasmania	44695	100.0	74487	60.00%

Department of Social Security 1 July 1997

Note: Age pensions are available to males aged 65 years and over and, since July 1997 to females 61 years and over



3.5 Seniors Card

The Seniors Card is available to Tasmanians aged 60+ who are not in paid employment of more than 20 hours per week. An annual directory is produced that lists business discounts and government concessions. As at 16 November 1999 there were 65,000 Tasmanians with a Seniors Card and over 230 participating business providers.

In 1998 ACNielson conducted a survey of a small sample of Tasmanian Seniors Cardholders. A total of 864 people responded to the survey and provided the following information:

- 94% of respondents found the card useful, with more than half looking actively for Seniors Card signs when shopping.
- 69% of respondents believed that travel is an important factor in maintaining health and wellbeing. More than half of respondents took trips within Tasmania during 1998, with the average of four trips taken during the year. 76% of those surveyed indicated they intended taking a trip in the future.
- 15% of respondents indicated that they owned a home computer, while only 9% had accessed the Internet.

Myth: Older people are a financial burden on society

Fact: *Older people contribute to society in many positive ways. Older people are more likely to provide financial and practical assistance to families than to receive it. A study carried out by the Institute of Family Studies in 1992 found that older people assisted their adult children in the following ways:*

- *67% provided child minding*
- *40% provided financial help with major purchases, including contributing towards the deposit for a home loan.*
- *27% provided help with their children's tertiary education.*

The economic impact of higher numbers of retired people is likely to be less severe than commonly thought for several reasons, including decreased public expenditure on children because of their lower numbers and more people partly or wholly self-funding their retirement.

4. Transport

Transport is an important factor for older persons, as access to services and shops are often dependent on transport. Access to transport also enables older persons to visit family and friends, and participate in social, cultural and recreational activities.

4.1 Access to Transport

As part of the Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey respondents rated their level of satisfaction with transport. The results for those aged 60+ are detailed in Table 4.1 below.

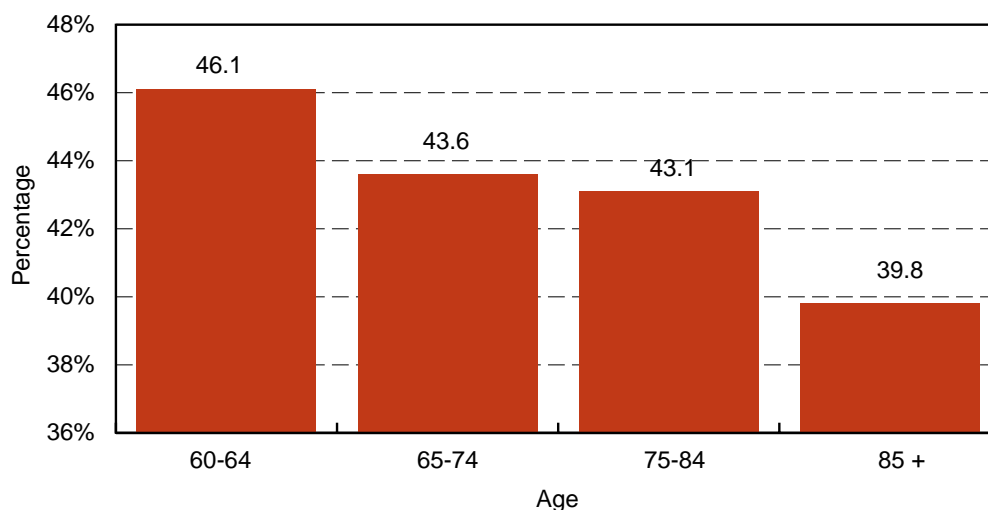
Table 4.1- Satisfaction with Access to Transport by Age, Tasmania 1998

	Age %				Total
	60-64	65-74	75-84	85+	
Not Satisfied	3.0	3.3	4.3	3.2	3.5
2	1.9	3.3	2.6	3.7	2.8
3	9.2	10.3	8.5	8.7	9.4
4	18.5	15.9	14.5	10.0	15.8
Very Satisfied	46.1	43.6	43.1	39.8	43.9
N/A	10.7	10.2	9.1	13.1	10.2

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

Figure 4.1 indicates that as people age they become less satisfied with their access to transport. Of those people aged 60-64, 46% are very satisfied with their access to transport whilst 39.8 % of those aged 85+ are very satisfied with their access to transport.

Figure 4.1 - Very Satisfied with Access to Transport, Older Populations, Tasmania 1998

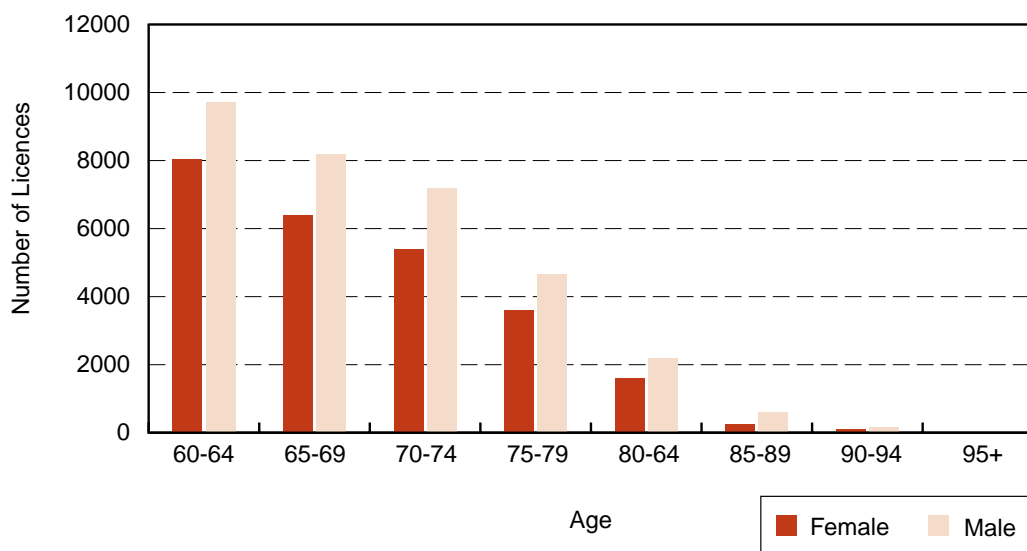


Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

4.2 Drivers Licences

As at 1 September 1999, a total of 57,897 people aged 60+ held a Tasmanian drivers licence. This is approximately 77.7% of the population of people aged 60+ or 18.5% of all Tasmanian drivers. As outlined in Figure 4.2 below, the number of older persons who hold a current drivers licence reduces with age. Approximately 57% of Tasmanian drivers over the age of 60 are men and 43% are women.

Figure 4.2 - Drivers Licence Holders Aged 60+, Tasmania 1999



Department Infrastructure Energy and Resources - Transport Division 1999

5. Housing

Access to good housing has a major impact on an individual's quality of life. Feeling comfortable with your physical environment is of great importance to older people. The vast majority of older Tasmanians prefer to remain in their own home.

5.1 Type of Dwelling

The vast majority of older Tasmanians live in their own home with approximately 77% either owning or purchasing their home. Only about 5% of Tasmanians aged 60+ live in nursing homes or hostels.

Currently in Tasmania about one third of all public housing tenants are aged 60+.

Retirement villages offer another housing option for older people, although only about 3% of older Australians live in retirement communities.

5.2 Type of Housing Tenure

As detailed in Table 5.1 below, 72.3% of persons aged 60+ in Tasmania own their own home.

Table 5.1 - Type of Housing of Older Populations, Tasmania 1998

	Age %				Total
	60-64	65-74	75-84	85+	
Fully Owned	75.4	74.9	68.6	55.3	72.3
Being purchased	7.1	3.4	2.2	0.5	3.8
Purchase rent/buy	0.8	1.0	0.5	0.2	0.8
Rented	9.4	8.1	10.4	15.4	9.4
Rent free	0.9	1.0	1.4	3.1	1.2
Life tenure	0.1	1.0	2.0	2.0	1.1
Other	0.1	0.7	2.3	8.2	1.4

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

5.3 Number of Persons Living Alone

Table 5.2 indicates that approximately 42% of people aged 65+ live alone. Women are more likely to live by themselves with 21.8% of the Tasmanian female population aged 65-74 living alone. Only 11% of the adult male population aged 65-74 live alone. The number of females living alone increases dramatically for those aged 75+ where 33.4% of females live alone in comparison to 12.2% of men.

Table 5.2 - Lives Alone by Gender by Age, Tasmania 1998

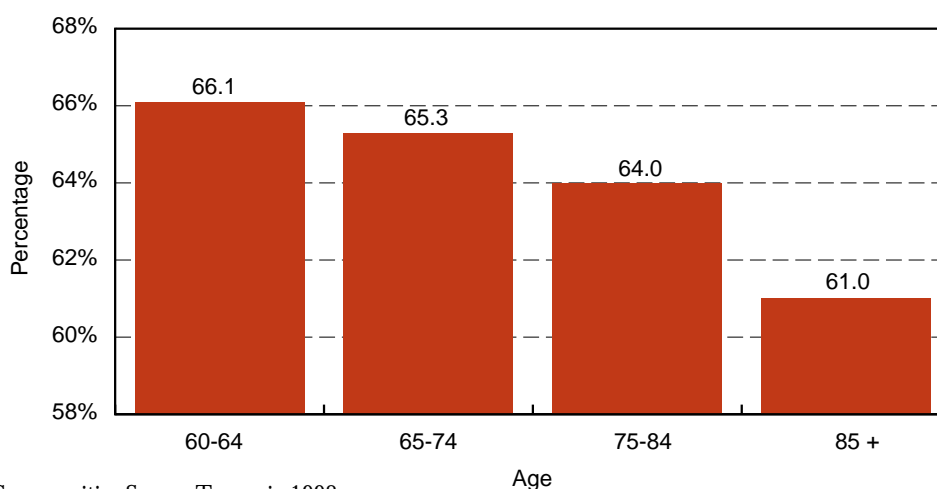
	Male (Percentage of Tasmanian Adults)	Female (Percentage of Tasmanian Adults)	Total (Percentage of Tasmanian Adults)
18-24	10.4	5.6	7.6
25-44	36.5	14.9	24.1
45-54	17	10.3	13.1
55-64	13	14.1	13.6
65-74	11	21.8	17.2
75+	12.2	33.4	24.3

Australia's Health 1998, AIHW

5.4 Level of Satisfaction with Dwelling

Of the Tasmanian population aged 60+, 64.9% rate themselves as very satisfied with their dwelling. In comparison only 0.6% of that group indicate that they are not at all satisfied with their dwelling. The graph shows that satisfaction with housing decreases slightly with age.

Figure 5.1 - Very Satisfied with Housing, Older Population Groups, Tasmania 1998

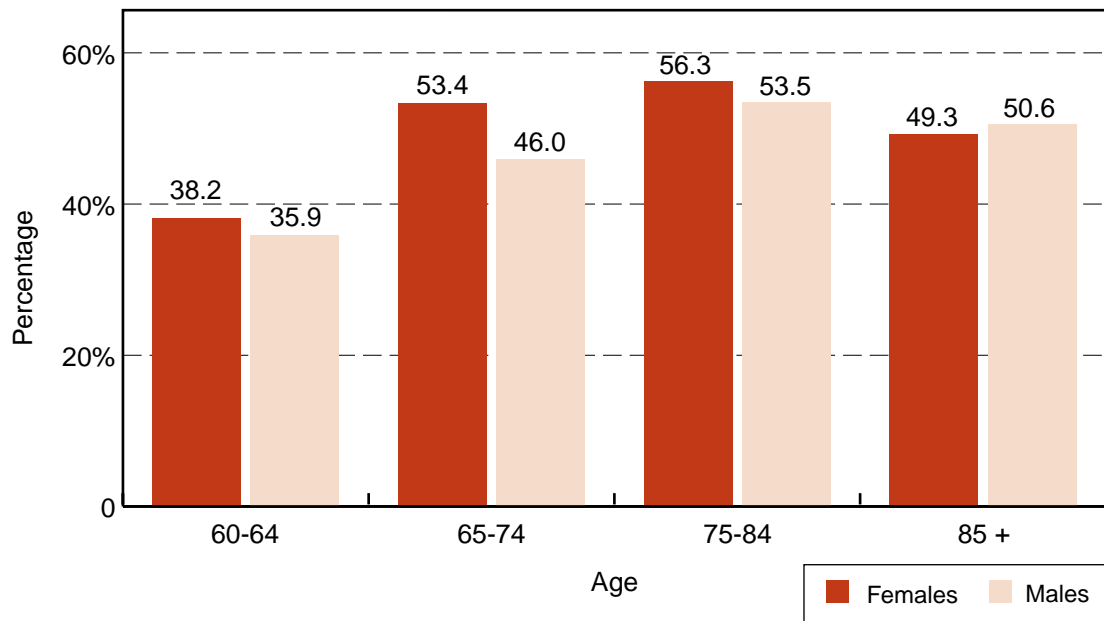


Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

5.5 Neighbourhood

The Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey asked people to rate whether they agreed or disagreed with statements about their neighbourhood. The graph below indicates the percentage of people aged 60+ who would be sorry to move away from their present neighbourhood.

Figure 5.2 - Strongly Agree Would be Sorry to Move Away from Neighbourhood, Population Aged 60+, Tasmania 1998



Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

In addition to the above, 37.9% of older females and 33.6% of older males strongly agreed that people within their neighbourhood were willing to help each other out.

Results from the survey also indicated that 55% of females and 52.4% of males strongly agreed with the statement that 'I generally trust my neighbours to look out for my property.'

Sadly however as indicated in the table below, only 19.3% of females and 30.3% of males strongly agreed that it was safe to walk around the neighbourhood at night. In fact, 19.4% of females and 8.7% of men aged 60+ strongly disagreed that it was safe to walk around their neighbourhood at night.

Table 5.3 - It is Safe to Walk Around the Neighbourhood at Night

Gender	Age %				Total
	60-64	65-74	75-84	85+	
Female					
Strongly disagree	16.0	19.5	21.3	21.4	19.4
2	9.1	10.7	8.1	7.0	9.3
3	22.5	21.8	17.7	14.8	20.2
4	18.6	13.7	10.6	10.0	13.6
Strongly agree	22.4	20.0	18.3	9.3	19.3
N/A	4.5	6.3	7.3	12.8	6.6
Male					
Strongly disagree	7.5	8.2	10.5	13.5	8.7
2	4.9	6.9	6.1	5.8	6.1
3	23.5	21.2	20.8	13.2	21.4
4	29.2	24.6	16.8	14.9	23.6
Strongly agree	29.5	31.3	29.9	27.7	30.3
N/A	1.9	2.7	4.5	5.3	3.0

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

Myth: Older people are the biggest victims of crime

Fact: National studies on crime report that older Australians are the least likely age group to be victims of personal crime, including robbery and assault.

People aged 65 and over are 20 times less likely to be a victim of assault than someone aged 24-34 years.

6. Health and Wellbeing

A wide range of factors and conditions determine a person's health and wellbeing. These determinants do not act in isolation of each other, they interact in a complex way to impact on health and wellbeing. Some key determinants of health and wellbeing include: income, social status, social support networks, education, employment, housing, social environments, physical environments, genetic inheritance, personal behaviours, and coping skills as well as access to services, gender and culture.

6.1 Quality of Life

People not only desire to be healthy, they also aspire to have a high, or at least reasonable 'quality of life.' Health is but one component of quality of life and while it is important, it is not sufficient to ensure a high level of wellbeing. In general, it is more likely that people who report a high level of wellbeing also report reasonable health.

Research indicates that men and women and people of different ages tend to evaluate various aspects of their lives differently, and that quality of life evaluations do vary over the course of the life cycle.

Results from the Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey found that people aged 60+ rated the following quality of life items as very important:

- their relationship with their partner
- their relationship with their children
- their health
- their ability to perform daily living activities and
- living in a clean environment.

Myth: You lose your memory as you age

Fact: *We all suffer from memory lapses from time to time. They occur throughout life and are more accurately associated with depression and anxiety, general health, nutrition, some common medicines, and alcohol rather than with age. Although complaints about poor memory increase with older age, research shows that a person's memory is often better than they believe it to be.*

6.2 Self Assessed Health Status

Significant evidence exists that individuals are good judges of their own health, discomfort or distress. Results from the 1995 National Health Survey indicate that self-assessed health is strongly related to illness experience and constitutes a useful indicator of general physical and mental health. In addition, there is evidence that self assessed health has good predictive value with regard to mortality risks and health service usage. It is also a predictor of mortality in people aged 60 and over.

The majority of older people rate their own health to be good. The results of the Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey 1998 indicate a strong relationship between self-assessed health and age. Table 6.1 below shows that younger people are much more likely to assess their health as 'excellent' or 'very good', and less likely to assess their health as 'fair' or 'poor.' Ratings of 'excellent' and 'very good' self assessed health status decline with older age, although ratings of good health increase with age up to 64 -75 years.

Table 6.1 - Self Assessed Health Status by Age, 18 Years and Over, Tasmania 1998

Self Assessed Health Status	Age%					
	18-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Excellent	19.9	16.8	11.3	7.1	3.5	2.7
Very Good	39.4	38.3	32.7	26.8	19.6	12.1
Good	33	33.1	37.1	39.3	40.5	36
Fair	6.3	9.7	14.4	21.8	28.6	36.8
Poor	0.9	1.4	3.7	4.2	6.7	11.1

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

The majority of older people rate their health as being 'good' or better than good. A total of 63.6% of respondents aged 65-74 and 50.8% of those aged 75+ assess their health as either 'good', 'very good', or 'excellent.'

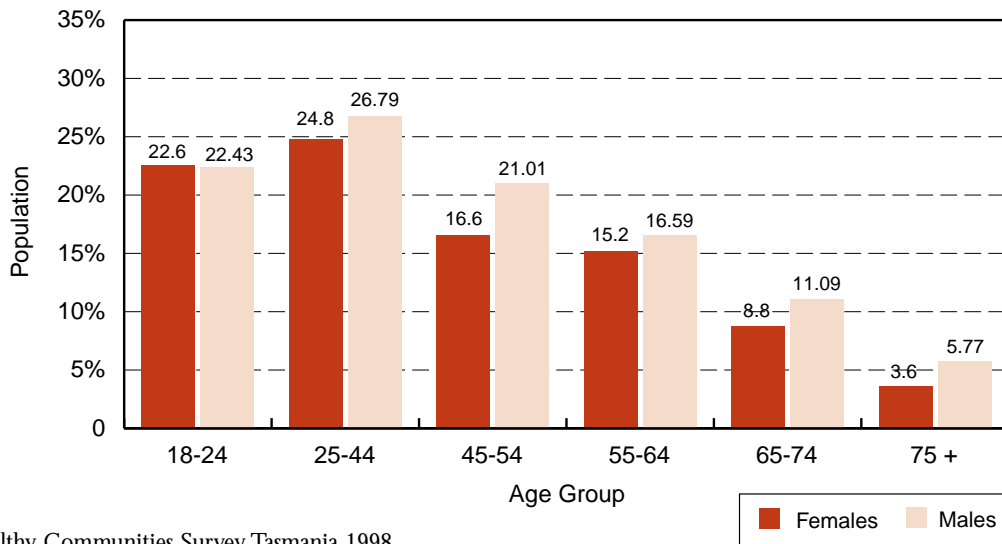
Myth: All older people become 'senile'

Fact: *The majority of older people are not, and do not become 'senile.' Alzheimers disease and other dementias affect less than 2% of people in their sixties. This figure only increased markedly for people in their eighties. Of those over 85 years, around 30% suffer from dementias, therefore 70% do not.*

6.3 Smoking

Of the Tasmanian adult population, 18.6% of females and 21.3% of males smoke daily. As indicated in Figure 6.1 below, of those adults who smoke daily, adults aged 75+ smoke the least.

Figure 6.1 - Daily Smoking by Age and Gender, Tasmania 1998

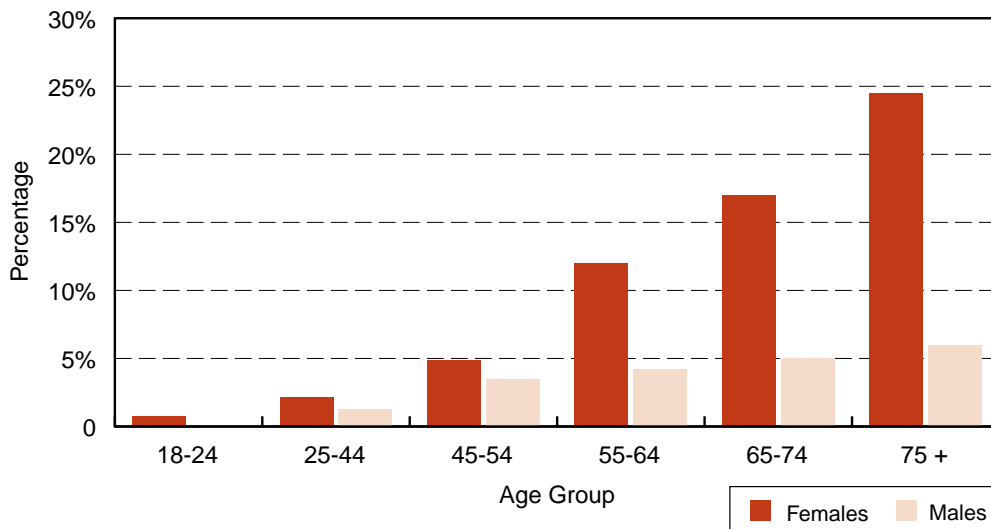


Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

6.4 Osteoporosis

Figure 6.2 below highlights that women are much more likely to experience or be diagnosed with osteoporosis than men. The post-menopausal female population experiences the highest incidence of osteoporosis.

Figure 6.2 - Osteoporosis Experienced and Diagnosed by Age, 18 Years and Over, Tasmania 1998

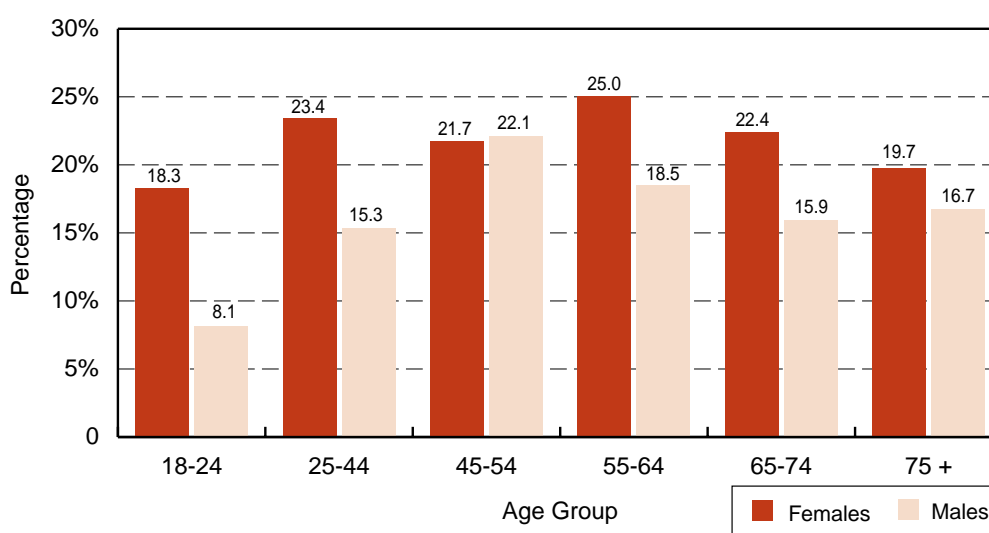


Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

6.5 Anxiety

The 1998 Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey asked respondents whether they had experienced anxiety or depression in the previous twelve months. Respondents were also asked whether either of these conditions had been formally diagnosed. Feelings of anxiety are common amongst Tasmanians. The graph below shows that 25% of women 55-64 experienced anxiety.

Figure 6.3 - Anxiety Experienced and Diagnosed by Gender and Age, 18+, Tasmania 1998



Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

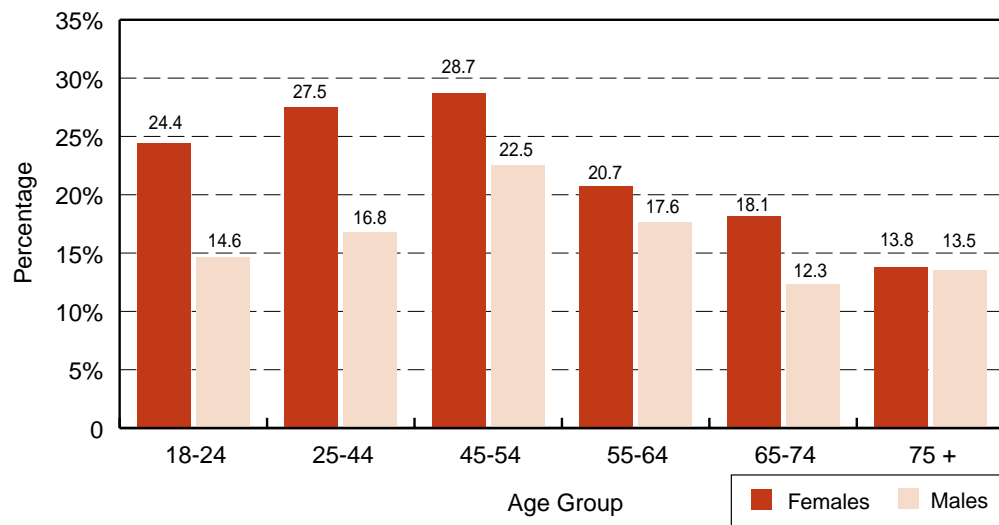
Myth: Ageing means physical decline

Fact: While it is true that chronic disease and moderate-to-severe disability are more common after the mid seventies, physical decline begins early, with the greatest decline occurring between age 30 and 40. Physical ageing is a slow, gradual, life-long process. Decline in muscle strength and exercise capacity is not an inevitable part of ageing and many health problems experienced by older people respond positively to physical exercise and changes to diet, lifestyle and environment.

6.6 Depression

Figure 6.4 demonstrates that overall older persons experience less depression than younger persons. The 75+ age group experiences the least amount of depression with little difference between males and females. Overall males aged 65-74 experience the least amount of depression. It is concerning however to note the extent of depression experienced by Tasmanians.

Figure 6.4 - Depression Experienced and Diagnosed by Gender and Age, 18 Years and Over, Tasmania 1998



Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

6.7 Physical Activity

Table 6.2 indicates that as people age, the extent to which physical ability limits a person's moderate activity increases. Of the Tasmanian community aged 75+, 34% of persons indicate that moderate types of activities are limited by their physical ability. Females in most age categories are more likely see themselves as limited by physical ability than their male counterparts.

**Table 6.2 - Extent to which Health Limits Moderate Activities
by Age and Gender**

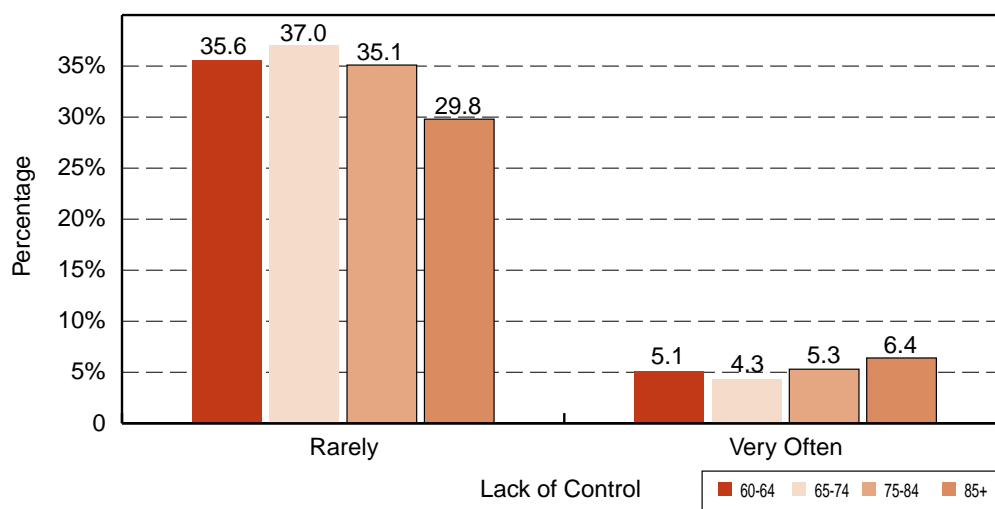
	Age	Female %	Male %	Total %
Limited a lot	18-24	3.3	2.3	2.8
Limited a little		8.7	5.3	7.0
Not limited at all		86.5	89.2	87.9
Limited a lot	25-44	3.9	3.1	3.5
Limited a little		12.3	9.4	10.9
Not limited at all		82.3	83.5	82.9
Limited a lot	45-54	6.7	8.2	7.5
Limited a little		22.3	16.6	19.4
Not limited at all		68.3	72.4	70.4
Limited a lot	55-64	9.8	11.3	10.6
Limited a little		33.4	27.6	30.5
Not limited at all		53.7	58.4	56.1
Limited a lot	65-74	18.2	14.9	16.7
Limited a little		41.5	39.7	40.7
Not limited at all		37.0	42.2	39.4
Limited a lot	75+	37.2	30.1	34.6
Limited a little		40.1	41.1	40.5
Not limited at all		18.7	24.3	20.8

Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

6.8 Control over Life

Current research indicates that quality of life is influenced by the extent of control a person has over their life. Figure 6.5 illustrates that only a small proportion of older persons generally feel that they lack control over their lives.

Figure 6.5 - Lack of Control over Life in General Among Older Populations, Tasmania 1998



Healthy Communities Survey, Tasmania 1998

Myth: Lack of interest in and capacity for sex

Fact: Evidence indicates that older age does not mean the loss of the capacity for or interest in, sexual expression.

Opportunities may decrease due to widowhood and in older age physical disability and/or the living situation also limit opportunities.

Social expectations which may be shared by the older person, can limit sexual expression.

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