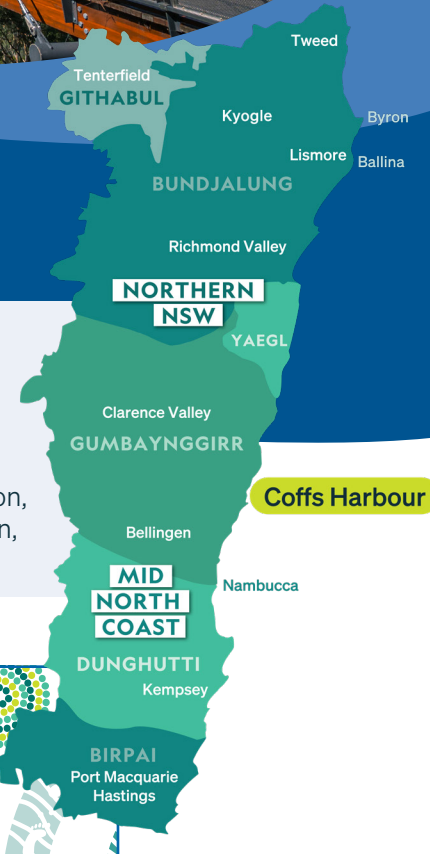







HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2025-2028

Coffs Harbour LGA

The Coffs Harbour **Local Government Area (LGA)** is on the Traditional Lands of the Gumbaynggirr Nation. Coffs Harbour LGA is part of the Mid North Coast Local Health District and Coffs Harbour SA3. It includes the major regional city of Coffs Harbour, as well as a mix of coastal, mountain, and rural communities. The region has a rich variety of habitats, from mountain ranges to the ocean, with mangrove forests, wetlands, seagrass meadows, and coastal lakes. As a key tourist destination, Coffs Harbour's economy is supported by industries such as agriculture, education, health, and construction, making it a dynamic and diverse area.



Demographics

<p>Population: 79,423, people, 15% of the North Coast population. Projected to increase by 2% by 2031 (compared to 5% increase North Coast)</p>	<p>Population density: 67 residents per km² (17 per km² North Coast)</p> 	<p>6% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (6% North Coast)</p> 
<p>7% of population born in non-English speaking countries (1% North Coast, 19% NSW, 16% Australia)</p> 	<p>Median age 44 (47 North Coast, 39 NSW)</p> 	<p>23% aged 65 years or over, projected to increase by 16% by 2031 (increase 18% North Coast and 29% NSW)</p> 

Did you know: In Woolgoolga a suburb in Coffs Harbour LGA 1 in 4 residents descend from India and has one of the largest Punjabi Sikh communities in Australia.

Children and young people's health

Nearly 1 in 4 children assessed as vulnerable in one or more areas of early childhood development.

Child immunisation rates

Full immunisation rates for children are similar to the NSW and Australian rates.



Older people

60% of people aged 65 years and over have at least one long-term health condition.

2% of the population live with dementia (2% NSW and Australia).
Expected to increase as the 65 years and over population increases.

53% of survey* respondents reported the ageing population is one of the most serious health concerns in the community.

57% of survey* respondents found accessing services for older people difficult.
Challenges included a lack of services and difficulty in organising services.

Did you know: Care finders is a free service. It exists to support vulnerable people who have no one else who can support them to learn about, apply for and set up support services.

Scan the QR code to visit the Care finders website.



Opportunity: Enhance healthy ageing strategies and targeted preventative health initiatives. Continue to work in partnership to support recruitment and retention of the healthcare workforce and enhance integration and coordination of care.

Aboriginal health and wellbeing

HNC works in partnership with Aboriginal Medical Services to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people. Galambila Aboriginal Health Service provides culturally appropriate primary healthcare services and support, and outreach to Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Pete's Place.

26% of people had an Aboriginal health check in Coffs Harbour SA3.

Connection to country and culture is key for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples social and emotional wellbeing. Programs that Aboriginal peoples identified to help keep Aboriginal communities healthy and strong:

Exercise and fitness

Women's health

Yarning circles

Art and cultural programs

Health screening services

Social determinants

69 per 1,000 people need assistance due to age or severe disability (75 per 1,000 North Coast, 58 per 1,000 NSW).

Domestic and family violence rate of **10 per 1,000** people (NSW 4 per 1,000 people).

Increased 37% from 2021, the second highest in the North Coast and higher than NSW average (4 per 1,000).

Opportunity: Through partnerships, increase and strengthen access to health supports and care for people impacted by family and domestic violence.

There is limited availability of affordable housing in the Coffs Harbour LGA. Of the **120** rental properties available **2** properties were affordable to a couple with 2 children on minimum wage receiving FTB A and B - no other properties were affordable for individuals or couples receiving benefits and pensions or on minimum wage.

Adequate access to affordable housing is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Median total weekly personal income is **\$688** (\$652 North Coast, NSW \$813).

38% single or lone households (25% NSW) and 9% group homes (4% NSW). Social isolation can increase health risks.

2% of people report very low proficiency in English (5% NSW).

Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) score **972**, (Australia 1,000).

4 in 5 survey respondents indicated housing availability as a concern in the community.

Other areas of concern are cost of living and problematic alcohol and other drug use.

Opportunity:

Enhance support by integrating services for individuals experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

Homelessness:

2 in 1,000 people experience homelessness (4 in 1,000 in North Coast and NSW, 9 in 1,000 in Australia).

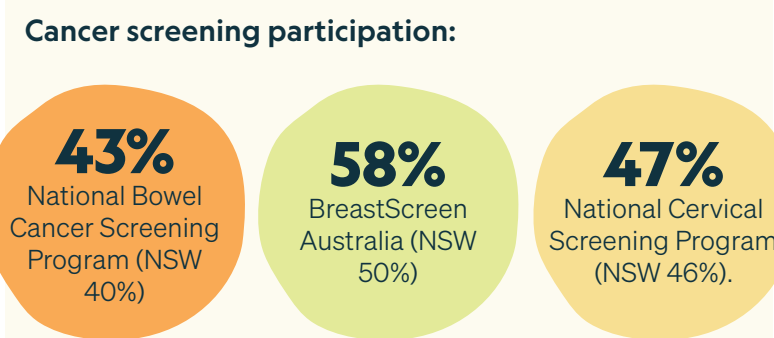
3 in 1,000 people at risk of homelessness (4 in 1,000 in North Coast and NSW, 7 in 1,000 in Australia).

624 people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness this is the second highest number in the North Coast region.

Preventative health and chronic disease

1 in 8 people have 2 or more chronic conditions.

The most common chronic conditions are anxiety and osteoarthritis.



- The most diagnosed cancers:**
1. Urogenital cancer
 2. Skin cancer
 3. Lymphohematopoietic cancer.

The cancer with the highest death rate is respiratory cancer.

Opportunity: Partner with LHDs and community organisations to strengthen preventive health programs and enhance support for vulnerable populations, including people experiencing homelessness, those with disabilities and from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Risks:

Current smoking		Alcohol consumption ²	
Coffs Harbour	NSW	Coffs Harbour	NSW
16%	12%	22%	18%
Physical activity ¹		Inadequate fruit intake	
Coffs Harbour	NSW	Coffs Harbour	NSW
79%	77%	56%	55%
Obese		Overweight (not obese)	
Coffs Harbour	NSW	Coffs Harbour	NSW
34%	31%	34%	34%

¹ aged 15 years and over, who did not meet 2014 physical activity guidelines
² estimated number of persons aged 15 years and over who consumed 5 or more standard alcoholic drinks on any day in the last 12 months at least monthly

When you were asked...

What kind of programs would you like more of, to keep you and your community healthy and strong?

- Exercise and fitness
- Health screening services
- Women's health
- Support with daily living /personal care

Which do you see as the most serious health concerns in your community?

- Mental health issues
- Ageing population
- Drug and alcohol use
- Lack of access to healthcare services

Mental health

What you have shared about your experiences with mental health:



1 in 10 people needed to access a mental health service but couldn't.



5 in 10 people reported mental health as one of the most serious health concerns in the community.



6 in 10 found it difficult to access a psychologist, counsellor or social worker.



Nearly **2 in 10** people in the Mid North Coast LHD area experience high or very high levels of psychological distress.

The top challenges to access mental health services:

- Cost
- Lack of services
- Difficult to organise appointments.

In Coffs Harbour SA3, the rate of suicide deaths 16 per 100,000 population (11 per 100,000 population NSW).

Opportunity: Strengthen preventive and treatment health programs and partnerships. Enhance integration and coordination between primary care, hospitals, and community services.

Did you know: Medicare Mental Health Centres can help you access the local mental health services and supports that are right for you. No referral needed, access by phoning 1800 595 212.

Healthcare in Coffs Harbour LGA

Coffs Harbour Health Campus is a major regional hospital providing a range of services to patients from Coffs Harbour LGA and neighbouring LGAs.

While Coffs Harbour has relatively good health infrastructure compared to more regional areas, low numbers of specialists and servicing demands of local area and nearby LGAs means availability and long wait times are challenges.

Community health centres in Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga provide various primary and allied health services.







Access to primary and community health services

Nearly **3 in 5** survey respondents found it a bit hard or very hard to see a GP when they needed.

After-hours GP attendances rate in Coffs Harbour SA3 is **4%** (Australia 17%).

Barriers to accessing primary care include:

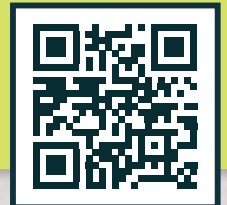
-  Long wait times
-  Cost
-  Lack of services in the area
-  Difficulty getting an appointment.

Opportunity: Enhance digital health services and education to improve inclusive access to care, particularly for vulnerable populations. Continue to work in partnership to support recruitment and retention of the healthcare workforce.

Did you know: Medicare Urgent Care Clinic in Coffs Harbour provides urgent, bulk-billed health care in a general practice setting. Address Level 1 343/345 Pacific Hwy, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450.

Did you know: If you need medical advice and care, call Healthdirect for free, 24/7 on 1800 022 222 and speak to a registered nurse. They can also connect you or your children with virtual health care services, so you can receive care from wherever you are.

Scan the QR code to go to the Healthdirect website.



Healthy North Coast commissioned services

HNC commissions a range of community-based services to address local health needs. These include:

- Aboriginal health
- Alcohol & Other Drugs
- Mental health
- Youth specific
- Integrated Team Care.

For more information about the services available in Coffs Harbour LGA, please scan the QR code:

If you have any questions please email Betterhealth@hnc.org.au

