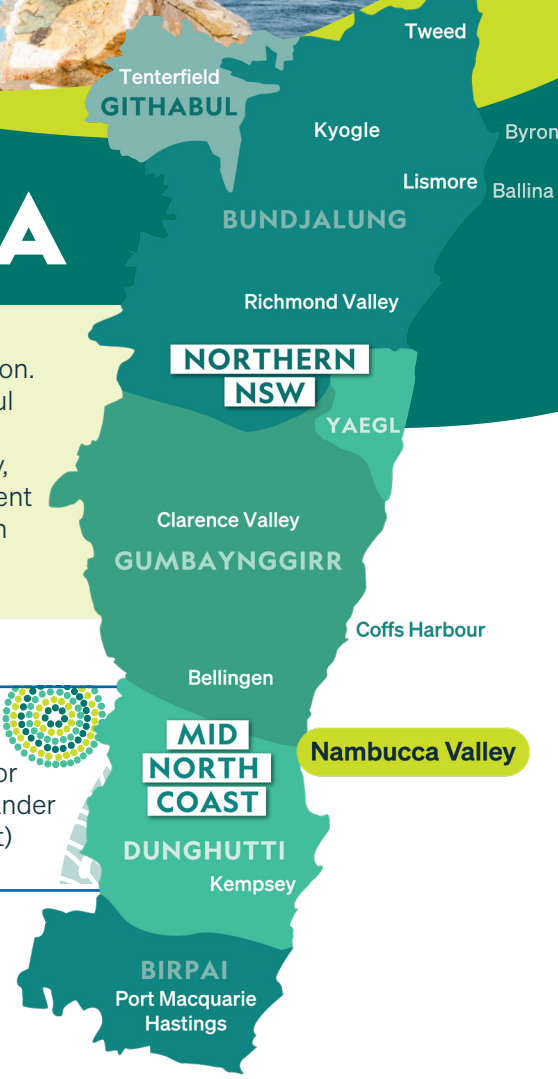




HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2025-2028

Nambucca Valley LGA

Located in the Mid-North Coast of New South Wales, Nambucca Valley **Local Government Area (LGA)** is on the Traditional Lands of the Gumbaynggirr Nation. The LGA spans an area of 2,110 square kilometres, stretching from the beautiful coastline along the Pacific Ocean to the lush hinterland and the foothills of the Great Dividing Range. Nambucca Valley neighbours Bellingen, Clarence Valley, and Macleay Valley LGAs. Although the region faces challenges with recruitment and retention of its healthcare workforce, there is an opportunity to strengthen promotion of healthy ageing strategies and chronic disease prevention and management.



Demographics

Population:

20,403 people, 4% of the North Coast population. Projected to increase by 4% by 2031 (compared to 5% increase North Coast)

Population density:

14 residents per km² (17 per km² North Coast)



8% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (6% North Coast)



Median age **52** (47 North Coast, 39 NSW)
Highest across the North Coast LGAs

30% aged 65 years or over, projected to increase by 15% by 2031 (increase 18% North Coast and 29% NSW)



Children and young people's health



Nearly **1 in 3** children assessed as vulnerable in one or more areas of early childhood development.



3 in 5 found it difficult to access a local GP for a child in their care.

Opportunity: Work in partnership to improve education, support, community and peer-based services for children and families.

Child immunisation rates

Full immunisation rates for children are below the NSW and Australian rates.

92% of 1-year-old children (94% in NSW and Australia).

89% of 2-year-old children (92% NSW and Australia).

91% of 5-year-old children (94% NSW and Australia).

Older people

61% of people aged 65 years and over have at least one long-term health condition.

3% of the population live with dementia (2% NSW and Australia).

Higher than NSW and Australia and is expected to increase as the 65 years and over population increases.

56% of survey* respondents found accessing services for older people difficult.

Challenges were lack of awareness of services and difficulty in organising services.

Opportunity: Increase support and education regarding available services for people as they age and for ageing relatives or people in their care.

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.



Aboriginal health and wellbeing

Healthy North Coast works in partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples, families and communities. Darrimba Maarra Aboriginal Health Clinic (Durri ACMS) in Nambucca Heads and Bawrunnga Medical Services in Nambucca Heads and Macksville provide services to the Aboriginal communities across the LGA and to neighbouring communities.

28% of people had an Aboriginal health check in Kempsey - Nambucca SA3.

Highest in the North Coast.

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

Training programs

Health screening services

Yarning circles

Women's health

Social determinants

93 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 **6 per 1,000** people (NSW 4 per 1,000 people).

Decreased 14% from 2021

Adequate access to affordable housing is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. There is limited availability of affordable housing. Of the **34** rental properties available:

0 were affordable to singles or couples on Jobseeker or Youth Allowance, single person on minimum wage, single or couple on Age Pension

5 were affordable by a couple with 2 children on minimum wage and receiving family tax benefits (FTB) A and B

1 was affordable by a single with 2 children on minimum wage and receiving family tax benefits (FTB) A and B and Parenting Payment

1 was affordable by a couple with 2 children on minimum wage and receiving Parenting Partnered Family Tax Benefits (FTB) A and B.

Median total weekly personal income is **\$525** (\$652 North Coast, NSW \$813).

33% single or lone households (25% NSW) and 3% group homes (4% NSW).

Social isolation can increase health risks.

Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) score **920**, (Australia 1,000).

Indicating greater disadvantage compared to the Australian average (1,000).

Opportunity: Strengthen local support services for vulnerable people in partnerships with community services and healthcare providers.

Homelessness:

2 in 1,000

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

5 in 1,000

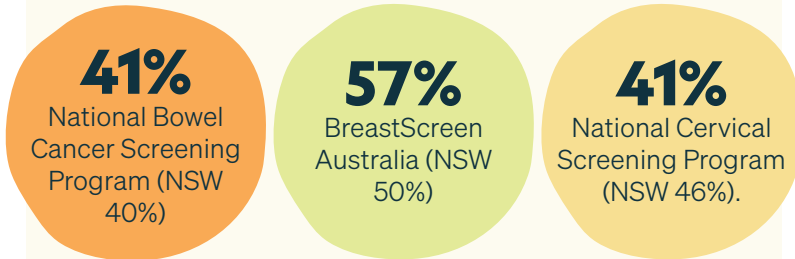
people at risk of homelessness (4 in 1,000 in North Coast and NSW, 7 in 1,000 in Australia).

Preventative health and chronic disease

Nearly 1 in every 4 people have 2 or more chronic conditions.

The most common chronic conditions are anxiety and osteoarthritis.

Cancer screening participation:



The most diagnosed cancers:

1. urogenital cancer
2. skin cancer
3. breast cancer and lymphohematopoietic cancer.

The cancer with the highest mortality rate is upper gastrointestinal cancer (39 per 100,000 people).

Risks:

Current smoking		Alcohol consumption ²	
Nambucca Valley	NSW	Nambucca Valley	NSW
25%	12%	24%	18%
Physical activity ¹		Inadequate fruit intake	
Nambucca Valley	NSW	Nambucca Valley	NSW
84%	77%	60%	55%
Obese		Overweight (not obese)	
Nambucca Valley	NSW	Nambucca Valley	NSW
35%	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

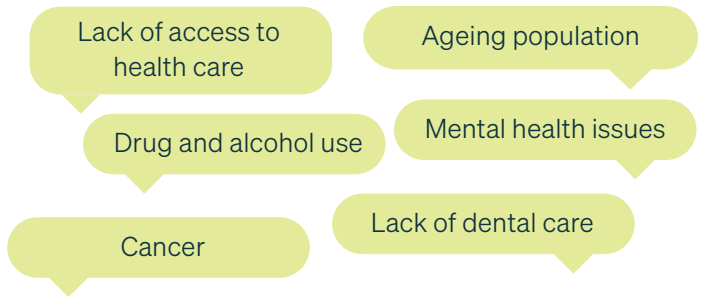
Opportunity: Strengthen and enhance preventative health programs to reduce the prevalence and impact of chronic conditions.

When you were asked...

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



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



Mental health

What you have shared about your experiences with mental health:



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



4 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.

The top challenges to access mental health services:

- cost
- lack of services.
- difficult to organise
- long distance from home

In Kempsey-Nambucca SA3, the rate of suicide deaths is 19 per 100,000 population (11 per 100,000 population NSW).

Opportunity: Explore and implement innovative approaches to strengthen prevention, treatment and mental health support programs suited to a rural/ regional area. This should include increased education and support for community members and healthcare providers, and access to digital based 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 Nambucca Valley LGA

Macksville District Hospital has a 28-bed acute inpatient unit and a 24-hour Emergency Department with medical coverage and telehealth capabilities to connect into Coffs Harbour Health Campus' Emergency Department.

Community health centres in Nambucca Heads, Bowraville, and Macksville provide various primary and allied health services and education programs.



Opportunity: Continue to work in partnership to support recruitment and retention of the healthcare workforce.

Access to primary and community health services

55% of ED presentations are for lower urgency care (52 % North Coast, 48% NSW).

After-hours GP service attendance rate for Kempsey – Nambucca SA3 is **4%** (Australia 17%).

Access to after-hours GP services remains a challenge and may contribute to higher ED admissions.

Opportunity: Enhance digital health services and education to improve inclusive access to care, particularly in rural areas.

23% of survey participants who needed to see a specialist could not see one.

Barriers to accessing primary care include:

- Difficulty getting an appointment
- Long wait time for an appointment
- Lack of general practitioners in my area
- Cost.

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 Nambucca Valley LGA, please scan the QR code:

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

