

A problem worth solving:

The rising cost of musculoskeletal conditions in Australia

Produced by Arthritis and Osteoporosis Victoria based on analysis by Deloitte Access Economics

Background

In 2013 Arthritis and Osteoporosis Victoria produced the report 'A Problem Worth Solving' based on analysis completed by Deloitte Access Economics.

The purpose of the report was to identify the impact of arthritis and other chronic musculoskeletal conditions in Australia.

The conditions considered in this report include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis and back problems. These are the four most prevalent conditions within the 'arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions' National Health Priority Area.

Prevalence in Australia

In 2012, there were an estimated 6.1 million cases of arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions in Australia (26.9% of the population), including 2.9 million people with back problems, 1.9 million people with osteoarthritis, 0.8 million people with osteoporosis and 0.5 million people with rheumatoid arthritis.

In general, these conditions are more common in women than men, and more than half of those Australians with musculoskeletal conditions (58.4%) are of prime working age (25 to 64 years).

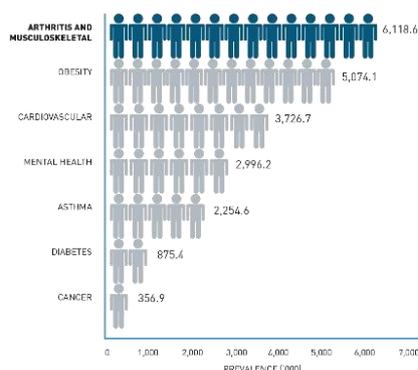
Arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions are more prevalent than any other National Health Priority Area condition including heart disease, cancer or diabetes. As our population ages over the next two decades, the number of people living with a musculoskeletal condition will rise substantially. By 2032, it is estimated that the number of cases will increase by 43% to 8.7 million, affecting 30.2% of the population.

Osteoarthritis is estimated to increase by 58% or 1.1 million people (affecting 3 million people); back problems to increase by 31% or 0.9 million people (affecting 3.8 million people); osteoporosis to increase by 50% or 0.4 million people (affecting 1.2 million people); and rheumatoid arthritis to increase by 40% or 0.2 million people (affecting 0.7 million people).

The age group with the most cases of arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions is currently 55-64 years, however this will change to the 75+ age group by 2032.

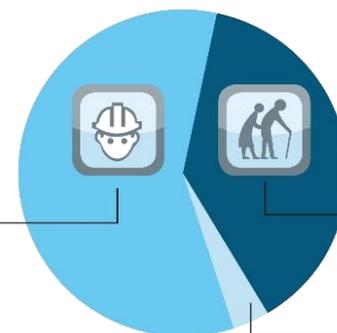
MSK CONDITIONS AFFECT LOTS OF PEOPLE

MORE THAN **ANY** OTHER NATIONAL HEALTH PRIORITY AREA



NOT JUST OLDER PEOPLE

58.4%
PRIME WORKING AGE (25-64)



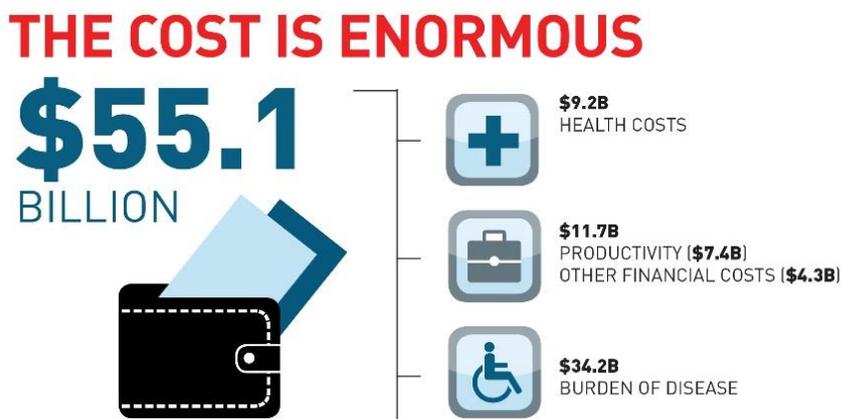
38.0%
OLDER

3.6%
YOUNGER



Cost impact

The total cost of arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions in Australia was estimated as \$55.1 billion in 2012, with the largest elements being in direct health costs associated with treating musculoskeletal conditions, productivity costs and burden of disease.



Key areas for intervention

To tackle the enormity of this problem, a comprehensive strategic response is needed. The evidence in the report 'A Problem Worth Solving', together with data from the Global Burden of Disease 2010 study¹ highlights the current impact on direct health costs, productivity costs, linkages with pain, disability and other chronic diseases (such as cardiovascular, diabetes and mental health), as well as the future impact on the aged care system as key areas for intervention.

A Problem Worth Solving

You can find out more about the rising cost of arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions in Australia by reading the [full report](#).

Find out how Arthritis and Osteoporosis Victoria can help

Access our range of services and programs for people with arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions:

- Talk with one of our nurses. They can help you if you have a musculoskeletal condition and would like to find out more about it; if you need assistance navigating the complex health, disability and social services systems; or if you need information on community resources in your area. Call 1800 263 265 weekdays, or email mksk@arthritisvic.org.au.
- Join a peer support group and meet with people who understand what you are going through. Go to the Arthritis Map - <http://www.arthritismap.com.au> - to find the details of groups in Victoria.
- Visit our website and keep up to date on issues important to people with musculoskeletal conditions: www.arthritisvic.org.au.
- Enrol in a course, seminar or webinar to learn practical ways to live with a musculoskeletal condition. Visit our website for more information: <http://www.arthritisvic.org.au/Courses-and-Events>
- Check out our library. We have resources to help you live well with a musculoskeletal condition – including information on pain management, exercise, getting a good night sleep and nutrition. Access the library catalogue to see what the library has available - <http://www.arthritisvic.org.au/Useful-Information/Our-Services/Library>.

Reference

1. Vos T, Flaxman AD, Naghavi M, et al. Years lived with disability (YLDs) for 1160 sequelae of 289 diseases and injuries 1990-2010: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2010. *Lancet* 2013;380:2163-96.

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