

1. FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this report from the *New South Wales Adult Health Survey 2003*, which provides information on health behaviours, health status, access to health services, and social capital, for people aged 16 years and over.

In 2003, the Centre for Epidemiology and Research, in partnership with the 17 area health services, conducted the first year of the New South Wales Continuous Health Survey, using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). In the continuous survey, interviews are conducted year-round with all age-groups in every area health service in NSW. Data for the *New South Wales Adult Health Survey 2003* were collected from February to December 2003.

After describing the survey methods, this report presents information on health behaviours relating to alcohol, environmental health, food handling, immunisation, injury prevention, nutrition, physical activity, and smoking. This is followed by a chapter on health status, including: self-rated health status, asthma, diabetes, adult incontinence, falls, mental health, oral health, and overweight or obesity. Next there is a chapter on health services, including: difficulties getting health care, emergency departments, community health services, and public dental services. The final chapter covers social capital, including: social reciprocity and neighbourhood connection, trust and safety, and participation in the local community.

Indicators are presented for males and females by age, socioeconomic disadvantage, and geographic location, and are compared to previous years where possible. This is a descriptive report and there is a wealth of other information in the survey dataset that may be of specific interest. For these reasons, we encourage as many people as possible to access the dataset through the Health Outcomes Information Statistical Toolkit (HOIST) or by request.

Further information can be obtained from the NSW Department of Health's Centre for Epidemiology and Research. Comments on the New South Wales Continuous Health Survey, and on this report from the *New South Wales Adult Health Survey 2003*, are welcome.

I thank all the individuals and organisations who contributed their time and expertise to assist in the development and conduct of the *New South Wales Adult Health Survey 2003*.



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