



# Ear and hearing health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2021

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## Citation

### AIHW

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This is the inaugural national report on the ear and hearing health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and adults. Indigenous Australians experience excessive rates of ear and hearing problems which can have profound impacts on overall health and quality of life. This report brings together information on the prevalence of ear and hearing problems among Indigenous Australians along with insights on key protective and risk factors.

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## Findings from this report:

- In 2018–20, there were 9,400 ear or hearing-related emergency presentations by Indigenous children aged 0–14
- In 2018–19, more than 2 in 5 (43%) Indigenous Australians aged 7 and over presented with hearing loss
- Almost 7,000 hospitalisations took place for Indigenous Australians for ear or hearing problems in 2018–20
- 2018-19 hearing loss in Indigenous children was higher in Remote and very remote than Major cities (40% and 23%)

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## Summary

This is the inaugural Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) national report on the ear and hearing health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and adults.

Indigenous Australians experience excessive rates of ear and hearing problems which can have profound impacts on overall health and quality of life. These problems may limit opportunities for education, work, personal relationships and wider community engagement. Problems affecting children can have ongoing impacts, affecting speech, language, cognitive and behavioural development. Importantly, ear and hearing problems affect the passing of Indigenous cultural knowledge and immersion in culture. Much ear disease and hearing loss affecting Indigenous Australians, particularly children and younger adults, is preventable.