



PRIORITY AREA: UNDERSTANDING CANCER DISPARITIES

Australian Cancer Atlas

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Viertel Cancer
Research Centre

Research shows a clear link between people's health and where they live. This connection may arise from individuals with similar characteristics living in the same areas or from the unique attributes of those areas, such as remoteness, access to healthcare, or socioeconomic factors. To better understand the link between Australian cancer outcomes and where people live, a collaboration between Cancer Council Queensland and Queensland University of Technology was initiated and led to the launch of the Australian Cancer Atlas (<https://atlas.cancer.org.au>) in 2018 and the 2.0 updated version in 2024. The Australian Cancer Atlas provides an unparalleled, high-resolution visualisation of spatial and geographical variation and disparities in cancer incidence and cancer survival across Australia.

What is the study?

The Australian Cancer Atlas 2.0 uses de-identified data sourced from population-based cancer registries across Australia, hospital admissions, Medicare and the National Health Survey. The Australian Cancer Atlas 2.0 applies complex statistical models to these data to estimate how the impact of cancer varies by geographical location across the country, and how this variation has changed over time. Indicators included in the Australian Cancer Atlas 2.0 covers cancer risk factors, cancer screening or testing, cancer diagnosis, hospital-treatment and survival. Modelled estimates are reported through a custom-built interactive online platform to enable users to assess how the impact of cancer varies across Australia. Work is continuing to expand the range of measures included in the Australian Cancer Atlas and update the platform with the most recent information available.

Why is this project important?

If we are to improve cancer-related health equitably and reduce widening health disparities, we must first understand what the impact of cancer is and where it is greatest. The Australian Cancer Atlas allows us to do this. Next steps will be to explore why these disparities exist, and to then use this information to force policy and practice change that will in turn lead to cancer prevention, early diagnosis and better management.



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