

***Northern Territory
Midwives Collection***

**Mothers and Babies
2000–2002**

A report for the
Northern Territory Perinatal Information Management Group

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**Acute Care Information Services
Health Gains Planning
Department of Health and Community Services
Northern Territory
2005**

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
DHCS	Department of Health and Community Services, Northern Territory
g	Gram
n	Number
NPSU	National Perinatal Statistics Unit
NT	Northern Territory
%	Percent
SCN	Special Care Nursery

Executive summary

Mothers

- ◆ In 2000, 3604 babies were born to 3558 mothers in the Northern Territory. In 2001, 3771 babies were born to 3727 mothers and in 2002, 3722 babies were born to 3675 mothers.
- ◆ The crude birth rate was 18 births per 1000 population in the year 2000 and 19 births per 1000 population in 2001 and 2002. This compared with a crude birth rate for the whole of Australia in 2002, of 13 per 1000 population.
- ◆ Indigenous women made up 28% of the Northern Territory female population of child-bearing age. However, 38% (4240) of all babies (11 097) born from 2000 to 2002 were born to Indigenous mothers.
- ◆ The proportion of mothers from 2000 to 2002 who were born in a country other than Australia was 14%.
- ◆ The average age for Indigenous mothers was 23.3 years in 2000 and 23.5 years in 2001 and 23.7 in 2002. The average age for non-Indigenous mothers was 28.6 years in 2000, 28.7 years in 2001 and 29.0 in 2002.
- ◆ Nearly two thirds of all Indigenous mothers were aged less than 25 years, in 2000 (61%), 2001 (59%) and in 2002 (63%). Nearly two thirds of all non-Indigenous mothers were aged between 25 and 34 years, in 2000 (60%), 2001 (62%) and in 2002 (59%).
- ◆ Between 40% and 50% of mothers from 2000 to 2002 gave birth to their first child.

The antenatal period

- ◆ Over 95% of mothers in each year had at least one antenatal visit.
- ◆ Eighty-three percent of mothers had at least one ultrasound during their pregnancy in 2002.
- ◆ Over a third of Indigenous mothers and approximately one fifth of non-Indigenous mothers reported smoking in the first trimester of pregnancy for each year covered in this report.
- ◆ About one in ten Indigenous mothers and just less than one in ten non-Indigenous mothers reported alcohol consumption during the first trimester of pregnancy.
- ◆ Decreased intakes of both tobacco and alcohol were reported by the third trimester of pregnancy.

- ◆ Maternal medical conditions such as anaemia, sexually transmitted diseases other than syphilis, urinary tract infections, cardiac disease and syphilis disproportionately affected Indigenous mothers.
- ◆ The most common identified complications of pregnancy for Indigenous mothers were gestational diabetes, pre-term rupture of membranes and intra-uterine growth retardation, and for non-Indigenous mothers were gestational diabetes, pre-eclampsia, pre-term rupture of membranes and ante-partum haemorrhage.

Birthing

- ◆ During the 2000–2002 period, labour commenced spontaneously for 67% of mothers, while 21% were induced and 12% had no labour.
- ◆ The most common pain relief interventions received by mothers who had a labour were nitrous oxide, intra-muscular narcotics and epidural anaesthesia.
- ◆ The most common complications of childbirth were meconium stained liquor, other complications, fetal distress and post-partum haemorrhage.
- ◆ Ninety-nine percent of mothers gave birth in hospital in 2000, 97% in 2001 and 98% in 2002.
- ◆ The majority (70%) of births were normal vaginal births. The remainder were caesarean sections (23%), assisted vaginal births (6.4%) and vaginal breech births (0.5%).

Babies

- ◆ In the Northern Territory, there were 3604 babies born in 2000, 3771 born in 2001 and 3722 born in 2002.
- ◆ Of the babies born in 2000, 37% were born to Indigenous mothers. In 2001, 40% of babies had Indigenous mothers and in 2002 the proportion was 38%.
- ◆ Just over fifty percent of the babies born each year were boys.
- ◆ Of women giving birth in the Northern Territory, 99% had a single birth and 1% had a multiple birth.
- ◆ Fourteen percent of Indigenous babies had low birthweight (less than 2500 grams).
- ◆ Six to seven percent of non-Indigenous babies had low birthweight (less than 2500 grams).
- ◆ Fourteen percent of all babies born to mothers aged less than 20 years were of low birthweight. Of all babies born to mothers aged 20 years or more, 8% were of low birthweight.

- ◆ In 2000, 73% of low birthweight babies were born pre-term. In 2001, 67% of low birthweight babies were born pre-term and in 2002, 73% of low birthweight babies were born pre-term. Less than a third of low birthweight babies were born at full term and 2 were born post-term.
- ◆ At least 10% of all babies born from 2000 to 2002 were pre-term (less than 37 weeks gestation). A higher proportion of Indigenous than non-Indigenous babies were born pre-term.
- ◆ There were 33 fetal deaths (stillbirths) and 25 neonatal deaths (death in 28 days) in 2000, 27 fetal deaths and 24 neonatal deaths in 2001, and 28 fetal deaths and 19 neonatal deaths in 2002.
- ◆ The fetal death rates and neonatal death rates from 2000 to 2002 were higher for Indigenous than non-Indigenous babies.
- ◆ The perinatal death rate for Indigenous babies was lower in each consecutive year. In 2000 the rate was 24.7 per 1000 births, in 2001 was 19.4 per 1000 births and in 2002 was 18.5 per 1000 births.
- ◆ The perinatal death rate for non-Indigenous babies also fell in each consecutive year, from 11.0 per 1000 births in 2000 to 9.7 per 1000 births in 2001 and 9.1 per 1000 births in 2002.
- ◆ All babies born before 37 weeks gestation had significantly higher perinatal death rates than term babies. Indigenous babies born from 33 to 36 weeks gestation had more than double the perinatal death rate of non-Indigenous babies born at the same gestational age.

Introduction

Northern Territory Midwives Collection

The Northern Territory Midwives Collection is a population-based census of all births in public and private hospitals, as well as home and other non-hospital births in the Northern Territory. All live births and stillbirths of at least 20 weeks gestation or with a birthweight of at least 400 grams are included.

The main purposes of the collection are:

- ◆ To inform and encourage community discussion regarding the health of women and their babies.
- ◆ To promote evidence-based optimal clinical management of women and newborns.
- ◆ To assist in the evaluation of the impact of the Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS) and other programs aimed at improving the health and welfare of mothers and babies in the Northern Territory.

Information collected includes demographic characteristics of mothers as well as details of their pregnancy, labour, delivery, and perinatal health. The data are captured through direct entry into the computer based Hospital Information Systems CareSys Birthing Suite Module. All five Northern Territory public hospitals are included. A paper-based form was used to collect midwives data for the Darwin Private Hospital. In 2002 an electronic data collection system was introduced for births that occurred at Darwin Private Hospital, home, community health centres and Indigenous community controlled birthing services.

This report presents information on the health of mothers and their babies for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002. This information will assist policy makers and health planners to provide better services for the community. In addition, the report will provide feedback to midwives, Indigenous Health Workers, community health nurses and medical practitioners involved in maternal and child health.

Northern Territory Perinatal Information Management Group

In June 1999, the Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS) Executive approved the formation of the Northern Territory Perinatal Information Management Group. This committee has responsibility for managing perinatal data in the Northern Territory. The management group reports on perinatal data to the Executive of DHCS, through the Chief Health Officer. Secretariat services to support the work of the Management Group are currently provided by DHCS Acute Care Information Services.

Data quality

The Northern Territory Midwives Collection includes data for all births during the years from 2000 to 2002.

All information was entered into the database by Northern Territory midwives, regardless of the practitioner who managed the antenatal period or assisted at the delivery. The collection has one data manager and a system of security measures to ensure the privacy of individual mothers and babies. Most midwives are trained in the use of the Hospital Information Systems CareSys Birthing Suite Module (Acute Care Information Systems). The DHCS publishes a self-directed learning package and reference guide for midwives, known as the *Maternity Unit Module*.

A set of validation rules exists for scrutinising the data at management level. Birth figures, including stillbirths and neonatal deaths are cross-checked with the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages each year, to ensure completeness. Data from the Northern Territory Midwives Collection are supplied to the National Perinatal Statistics Unit at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

Due to data validation, editing and subsequent updates in the Northern Territory Midwives Collection, the figures in this report may differ slightly from the *Australia's Mothers and Babies 2000* report published by the AIHW National Perinatal Statistics Unit.¹

Specific data quality issues

Missing data were excluded from most tables in the report, except where they were listed as an 'unknown' category.

Information on the antenatal period was the least reliable, as it was usually collected retrospectively at the time of confinement. For this reason the distribution of mothers, according to Indigenous status and self-reported smoking and alcohol consumption during pregnancy, differed slightly from the total number of mothers in 2001 and 2002.

Due to the monthly updating of Business Object, data extracted at the later stage of the report may slightly differ from the data extracted at the earlier stage of the report. The age distribution of mother was extracted from the collection some time after the initial extraction of major data items. During the period between initial extraction and subsequent extraction the Indigenous status of mothers was redistributed resulting in a few number difference in the total number of mothers for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Information relating to home births during the year 2000 was incomplete.

Mothers

Summary

Table 1 Mothers, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

MOTHERS	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Total mothers</i>	3558		3727		3675	
Indigenous	1325	37.2	1484	39.8	1388	37.8
non-Indigenous	2233	62.8	2243	60.2	2287	62.2
<i>General Fertility Rate</i>						
Indigenous	87	n/a	96	n/a	91	n/a
non-Indigenous	57	n/a	58	n/a	59	n/a
Total GFR	66	n/a	69	n/a	68	n/a
<i>Country of Birth</i> *						
Australia	3074	86.4	3186	85.5	3211	87.4
Overseas	465	13.1	487	13.1	368	10
Unknown	18	0.5	54	1.4	96	2.6
<i>Age of mother</i>						
Less than 20 years of age						
Indigenous	437	12.3	444	11.9	420	11.4
non-Indigenous	120	3.4	121	3.2	123	3.3
20 years of age or more						
Indigenous	888	25	1040	27.9	968	26.3
non-Indigenous	2113	59.4	2122	56.9	2164	58.9
Median age						
Indigenous	22.1	n/a	22	n/a	22	n/a
non-Indigenous	28.2	n/a	28.4	n/a	28.7	n/a
Average age						
Indigenous	23.3	n/a	23.5	n/a	23.7	n/a
non-Indigenous	28.6	n/a	28.7	n/a	29	n/a
<i>Antenatal visits</i>						
At least one visit	3397	95.5	3640	97.5	3495	95.1

MOTHERS	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Self-reported smoker (at first antenatal visit)</i>						
Indigenous	458	34.6	577	38.9	486	35
non-Indigenous	420	18.8	436	19.4	467	20.4
<i>Self-reported alcohol consumption (at first antenatal visit)</i>						
Indigenous	123	9.3	166	11.2	135	9.8
non-Indigenous	176	7.9	159	7.1	198	8.6
<i>Onset of labour *</i>						
Spontaneous	2452	68.9	2479	66.5	2424	66
Induced	724	20.4	787	21.1	759	20.7
No labour	381	10.7	461	12.4	492	13.3
<i>Place of birth *</i>						
Hospital	3502	98.5	3613	96.9	3594	97.8
Non-Hospital	55	1.5	114	3.1	81	2.2
<i>Method of birth *</i>						
Normal vaginal	2543	71.5	2570	69	2519	68.5
Assisted vaginal						
Vaginal breech						
Caesarean Section	761	21.4	874	23.4	932	25.4

* One missing value encountered in 2000

Births

In the Northern Territory, in the years 2000, 2001 and 2002, a total of 11,097 babies were born to 10,960 mothers.

Crude birth rate

Crude birth rate is a measure of fertility that reports the number of births for every thousand members of a population, including all ages and sexes.

The crude birth rate in the Northern Territory was 18 births per 1000 population in the year 2000 and 19 births per 1000 population in 2001 and 2002.

This compared with a crude birth rate for the whole of Australia in 2002, of 13 per 1000 population.³

The crude birth rate for Northern Territory Indigenous women in 2002 (25 births per 1000 population) was almost twice the national rate.

Table 2 Number of births and crude birth rate by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Indigenous status	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Indigenous	1337	24	1498	26	1405	25
non-Indigenous	2267	16	2273	16	2317	16
Total	3604	18	3771	19	3722	19

1. Crude birth rate is expressed as total births per 1000 population
2. Resident population estimates for the Northern Territory 2000–2002 are available in Appendix B

General fertility rate

General fertility rate (GFR) is a measure of fertility that reports the number of births for every 1000 women of reproductive age (15–49 years). Births to women who are younger than 15 or older than 49 are included in the youngest and oldest category, respectively, as their numbers tend to be few.

The number of births per 1000 females aged 15–49 in the Northern Territory was 66 in 2000, 69 in 2001 and 68 in 2002. The rate was higher for Indigenous than for non-Indigenous women.

Table 3 Number of births and general fertility rate by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Indigenous status	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Indigenous	1337	87	1498	96	1405	91
non-Indigenous	2267	57	2273	58	2317	59
Total	3604	66	3771	69	3722	68

1. General fertility rate is expressed as total births per 1000 women aged 15-49 years of age
2. Resident population estimates for the Northern Territory 2000–2002 are available in Appendix B

Total fertility rate

Total fertility rate (TFR) reports the number of live births a woman would have throughout her reproductive years if the current level and age pattern of fertility were maintained.

Total fertility rate is a widely used hypothetical measure. It is independent of the age structure of the population and allows comparison of populations with different age structures, such as Indigenous and non-Indigenous women in the Northern Territory.

In 2002, the TFRs for Northern Territory Indigenous (2.7 per woman) and non-Indigenous women (1.9 per woman) were both higher than the overall rate for Australian women (1.75 per woman).⁴

Indigenous women had higher TFRs than non-Indigenous women, across all regions of the Northern Territory, except Darwin Urban in 2000, and Darwin Rural in all years (see figures 1, 2 and 3).

Table 4 Age-specific fertility rate and total fertility rate by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Age group	2000		2001		2002	
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous
10-14	10.2	0.2	5.5	0.6	7.2	0.2
15-19	138.0	28.1	141.6	28.0	134.1	28.7
20-24	136.2	85.5	159.9	81.2	172.8	82.1
25-29	106.4	106.7	135.4	107.6	107.0	107.7
30-34	75.7	96.4	76.9	105.0	75.6	104.2
35-39	26.4	47.4	28.9	43.5	37.4	54.6
40-44	3.9	10.9	8.7	11.0	5.5	11.2
45-49	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.8	0.6
TFR	2.5	1.9	2.8	1.9	2.7	1.9

1. Age-specific fertility rate is expressed as number of births per 1000 women per age group
2. Total fertility rate is expressed as number of births per one woman

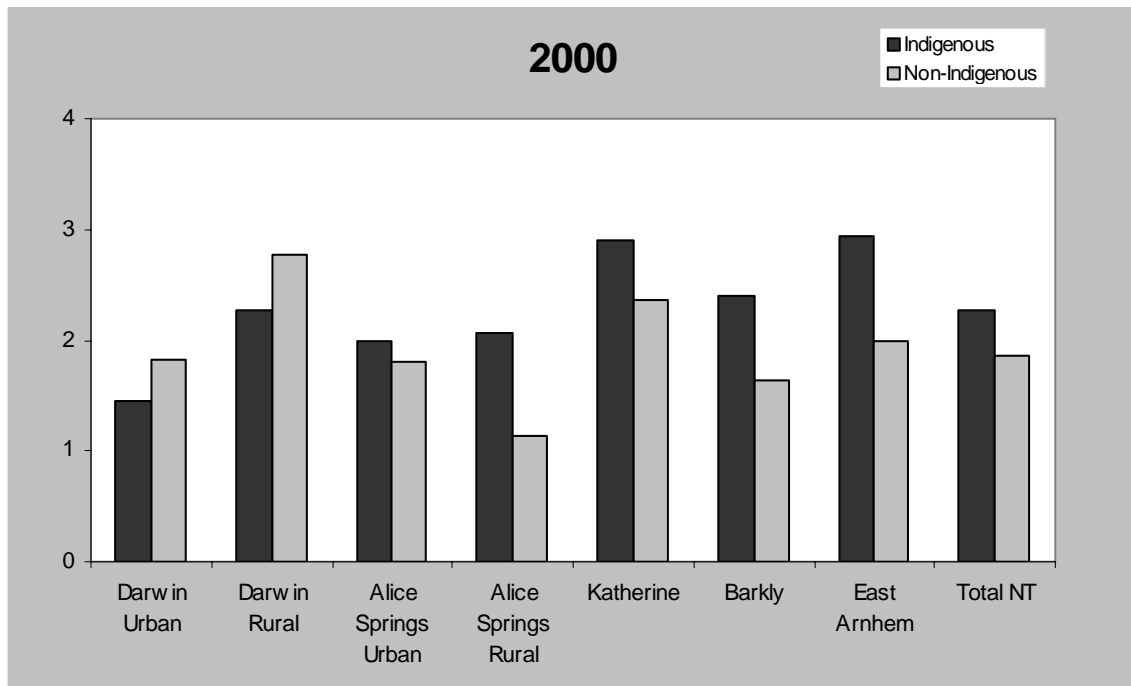


Figure 1 Total fertility rate by district, Northern Territory, 2000

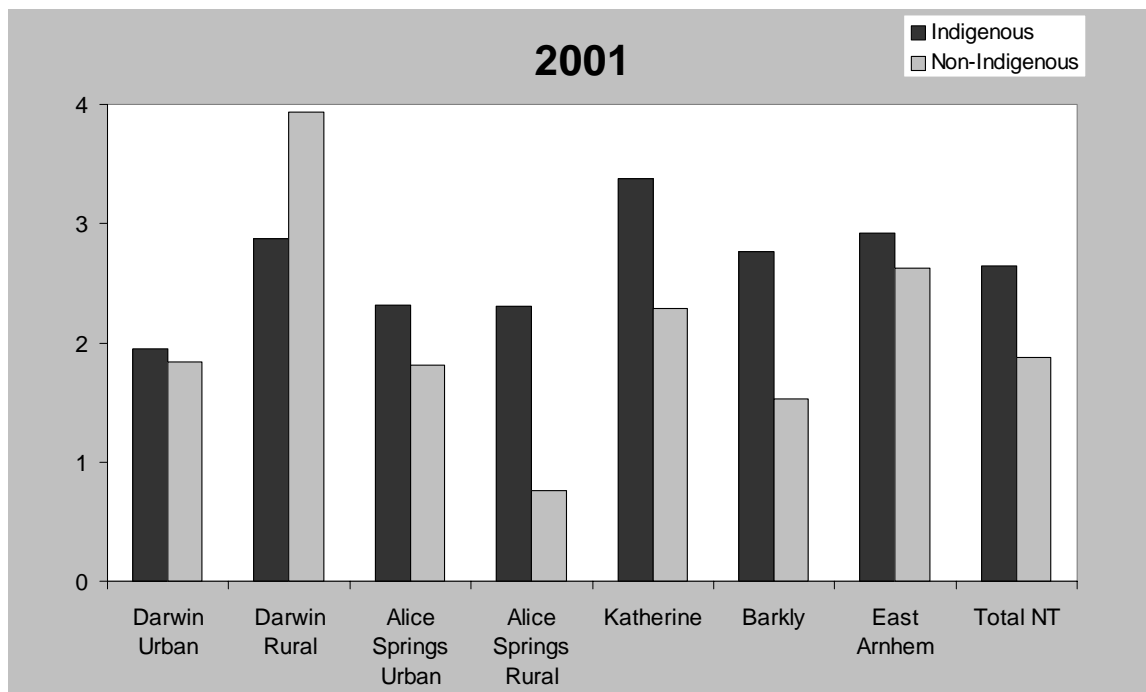


Figure 2 Total fertility rate by district, Northern Territory, 2001

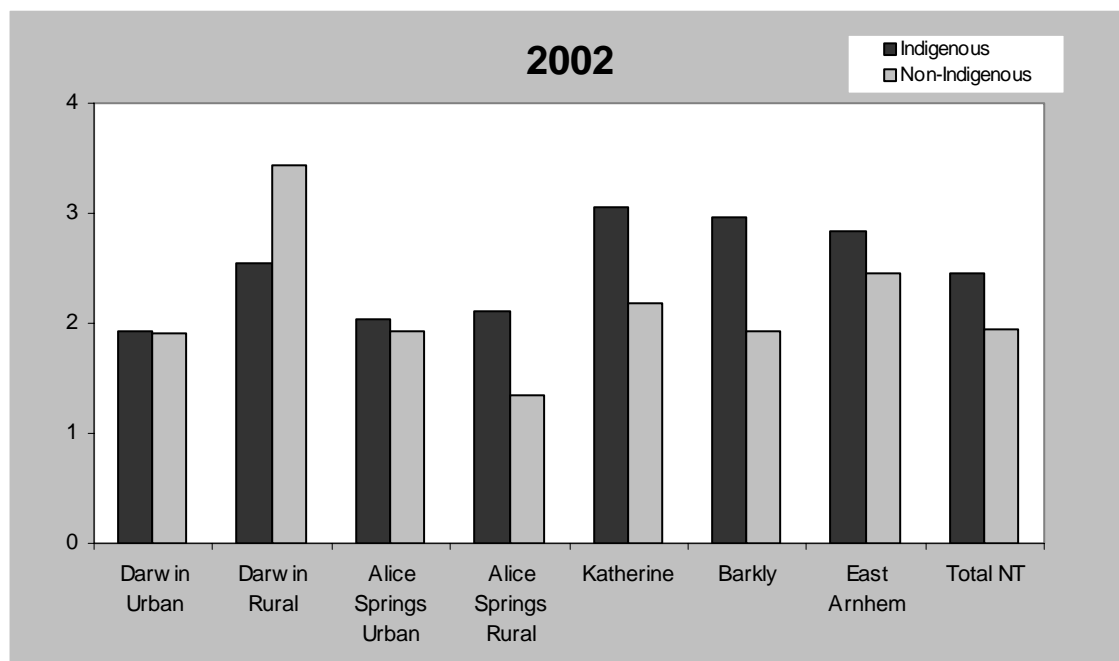


Figure 3 Total fertility rate by district, Northern Territory, 2002

Indigenous status

Indigenous status is determined by a person’s self-identification. Indigenous women make up 28% of the Northern Territory female population of child-bearing age. However, 38% (4240) of all babies (11 097) born from 2000 to 2002 were born to Indigenous mothers.

Table 5 Number and percentage distribution of mothers by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Indigenous status	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Indigenous	1325	37.2	1484	39.8	1388	37.8
non-Indigenous	2233	62.8	2243	60.2	2287	62.2
Total	3558		3727		3675	

District of usual residence

The majority of non-Indigenous mothers (81.4%) lived in the Darwin and Alice Springs Urban areas, while the majority of Indigenous mothers (80.6%) lived in rural or remote areas of the Northern Territory.

Table 6 Number and percentage distribution of mothers by district of usual residence and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

District	2000				2001				2002			
	Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Darwin Urban	141	10.6	1484	66.5	187	12.6	1502	67	179	12.9	1526	66.7
Darwin Rural	206	15.5	72	3.2	271	18.3	78	3.5	228	16.4	81	3.5
Alice Springs Urban	96	7.2	331	14.8	112	7.5	323	14.4	98	7.1	340	14.9
Alice Springs Rural	183	13.8	34	1.5	198	13.3	23	1	185	13.3	35	1.5
Katherine	229	17.3	167	7.5	278	18.7	165	7.4	241	17.4	157	6.9
Barkly	80	6	31	1.4	86	5.8	27	1.2	91	6.6	34	1.5
East Arnhem	259	19.5	73	3.3	256	17.3	94	4.2	242	17.4	88	3.8
Interstate *	131	9.9	41	1.8	96	6.5	31	1.4	124	8.9	26	1.1
Total	1325		2233		1484		2243		1388		2287	

n = number % = percentage

* Mothers who usually reside interstate but gave birth in the Northern Territory during the period 2000-2002

Country of birth

The country of birth refers to the country in which the mother was born.⁵ Eighty six percent of mothers who gave birth in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002, were born in Australia.

Table 7 Number and percentage distribution of mothers by country of birth, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Country of birth	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Australia	3074	86.4	3186	85.5	3211	87.4
Oceania (excluding Australia)	83	2.3	75	2	26	0.7
South-East Asia	146	4.1	177	4.7	135	3.7
North-West Europe	105	3	113	3	101	2.7
Americas	34	1	37	1	32	0.9
Southern and Eastern Europe	30	0.8	30	0.8	23	0.6
North Africa and Middle East	25	0.7	9	0.2	3	0.1
North-East Asia	23	0.6	15	0.4	19	0.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	10	0.3	17	0.5	17	0.5
Southern and Central Asia	9	0.3	14	0.4	12	0.3
Unknown	18	0.5	54	1.4	96	2.6
Total	3557*		3727		3675	

* One missing value was encountered for 2000

Age

Maternal age is a major influence on perinatal outcomes.¹ Adverse outcomes for mother and baby are more likely to occur with younger and older mothers.

Age distribution

Nearly two thirds of all Indigenous mothers were aged less than 25 years, with 61% in 2000, 59% in 2001 and 63% in 2002.

By contrast nearly two thirds of all non-Indigenous mothers were aged between 25 and 34 years with 60% in 2000, 62% in 2001 and 59% in 2002.

Table 8 Number and percentage distribution of mothers by age group and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Age (years)	2000		2001				2002					
	Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Less than 20	438	33	120	5.4	443	29.8	121	5.4	412	30	127	5.5
20-24	368	27.8	430	19.3	432	29.1	404	17.9	449	32.7	405	17.6
25-29	289	21.8	705	31.6	359	24.2	682	30.3	263	19.2	664	28.8
30-34	171	12.9	624	27.9	177	11.9	704	31.3	169	12.3	705	30.7
35-39	52	3.9	294	13.2	60	4	269	12	70	5.1	330	14.3
40 and over	8	0.6	60	2.7	14	0.9	71	3.2	9	0.7	71	3.1
Total	1326*		2233		1485*		2251*		1372*		2302*	

n = number % = percentage

* The data for this table were extracted at the later stage of the report and the sum maybe slightly different from the other tables due to monthly update of Business Object.

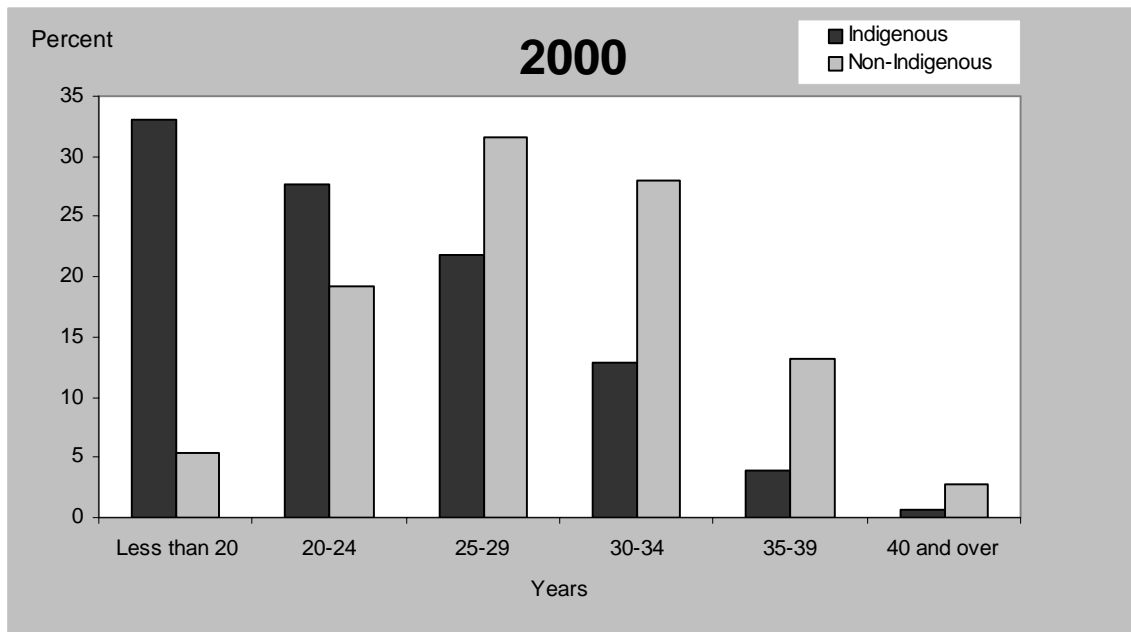


Figure 4 Age of mother, Northern Territory, 2000

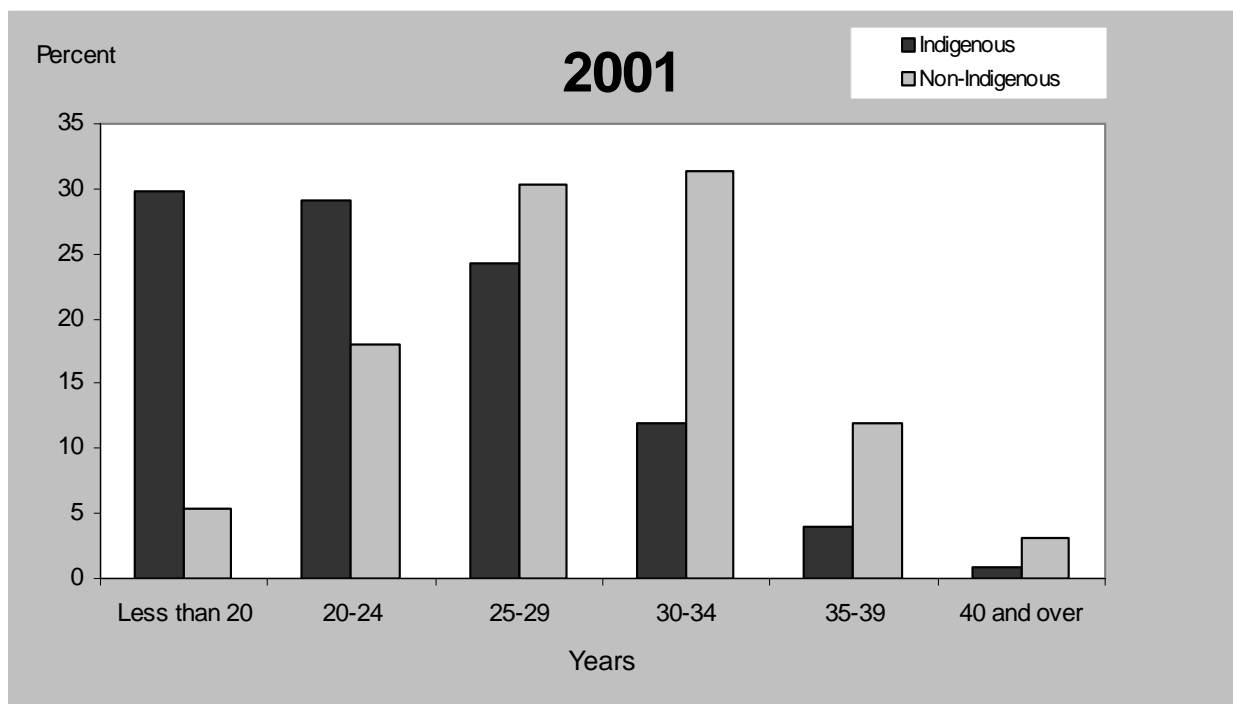


Figure 5 Age of mother, Northern Territory, 2001

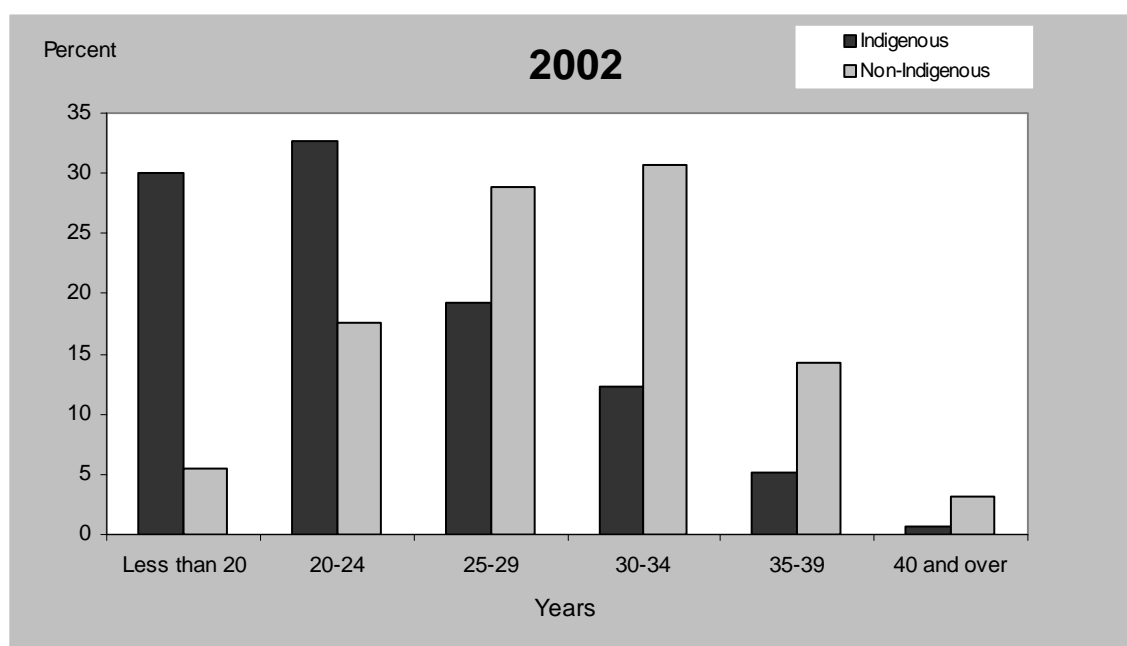


Figure 6 Age of mother, Northern Territory, 2002

Average age and median age

For the three years of 2000 to 2002, the average age of Indigenous mothers was between 23.3 and 23.7 years, and for non-Indigenous mothers from 28.6 to 29.0 years.

The median age for Indigenous mothers in the Northern Territory was 22.1 years in 2000 and 22.0 years in 2001 and 2002. The median age for non-Indigenous mothers in the Northern Territory was 28.2 years in 2000, 28.4 years in 2001 and 28.7 in 2002.

The median age for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Northern Territory mothers was between two to three years younger than their national Indigenous (25 years) and non-Indigenous (30 years) counterparts.⁴

Parity

Parity refers to the total number of previous pregnancies (of at least 20 weeks gestation) a mother has had before the current pregnancy.

A primipara is a pregnant woman who has not had a previous pregnancy of at least 20 weeks gestation. A multipara is a pregnant women who has had one or more previous pregnancies of at least 20 weeks gestation.⁵

Between 40% and 50% of women who gave birth from 2000 to 2002 were primipara (first time mothers).

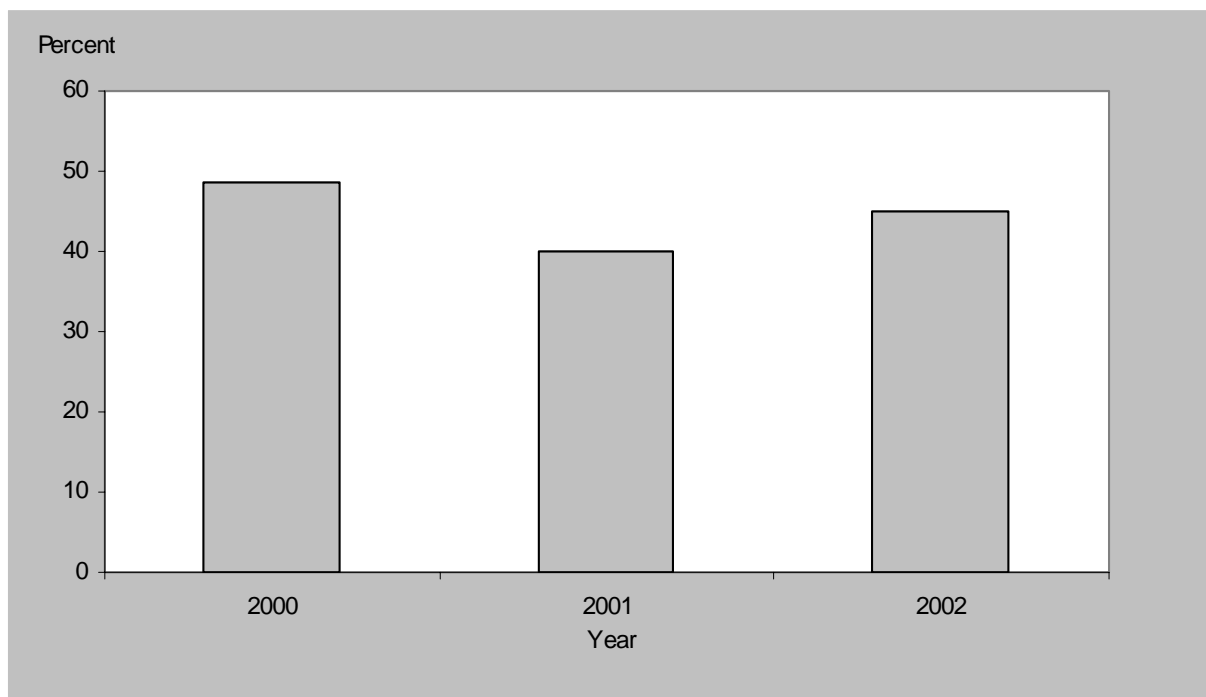


Figure 7 First time mothers, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

The antenatal period

The goal of antenatal care is to optimise health outcomes for the mother and baby through identification and management of risk factors and complications, monitoring progress and providing information and support.²

Up until 2001, antenatal data from the NT Midwives Collection was considered to be too incomplete, and there was no reporting of antenatal service provision. In 2001, the Northern Territory Perinatal Information Management Group decided to investigate ways to improve the capture and quality of antenatal information. As part of this effort the group reviewed data management systems and data entry practices to increase the reliability of antenatal data. This was achieved by employment of a specified data manager who provided education to midwives throughout the Northern Territory and took responsibility for the data collection.

Antenatal visits

An antenatal visit involves a pregnant woman using services supplied by a health care provider or health care facility during the antenatal period.⁵

From 2000 to 2002, 95% to 98% of Northern Territory mothers were recorded to have had one or more antenatal visit during their pregnancy. Less than one percent of mothers had no antenatal visits. Of these mothers, most were Indigenous.

Indigenous mothers had an average of 8.6 antenatal visits during their pregnancy, compared with an average of 10.3 antenatal visits for non-Indigenous mothers.

Table 9 Number and percentage distribution of antenatal visits, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Antenatal visits	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
One or more visits	3397	95.5	3640	97.5	3495	95.1
Unknown	141	4	74	2	158	4.3
No visits	19	0.5	18	0.5	21	0.6
Total	3557*		3732*		3674*	

* The total numbers of mothers in this table were slightly different from the total numbers of mothers from summary table due to data quality issue as mentioned in the limitation.

Ultrasound investigation

An ultrasound is a diagnostic procedure used to estimate the expected date of birth and to detect fetal and placental anomalies.²

Eighty-three percent of all mothers in 2002 had at least one ultrasound during their pregnancy.

Table 10 Number and percentage distribution of ultrasound investigations done during pregnancy, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Ultrasound	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	3262	91.7	2804	75.1	3038	82.7
No	295 [†]	8.3	928 [†]	24.9	636 [†]	17.3
Total	3557*		3732*		3674*	

* The total numbers of mothers in this table were slightly different from the total numbers of mothers from summary table due to data quality issue as mentioned in the limitation

† Includes unknown data

Gestational age at first ultrasound

The majority (82%) of first recorded ultrasounds were performed by 22 weeks gestation. The peak gestational age for the first recorded ultrasound is 18 weeks.

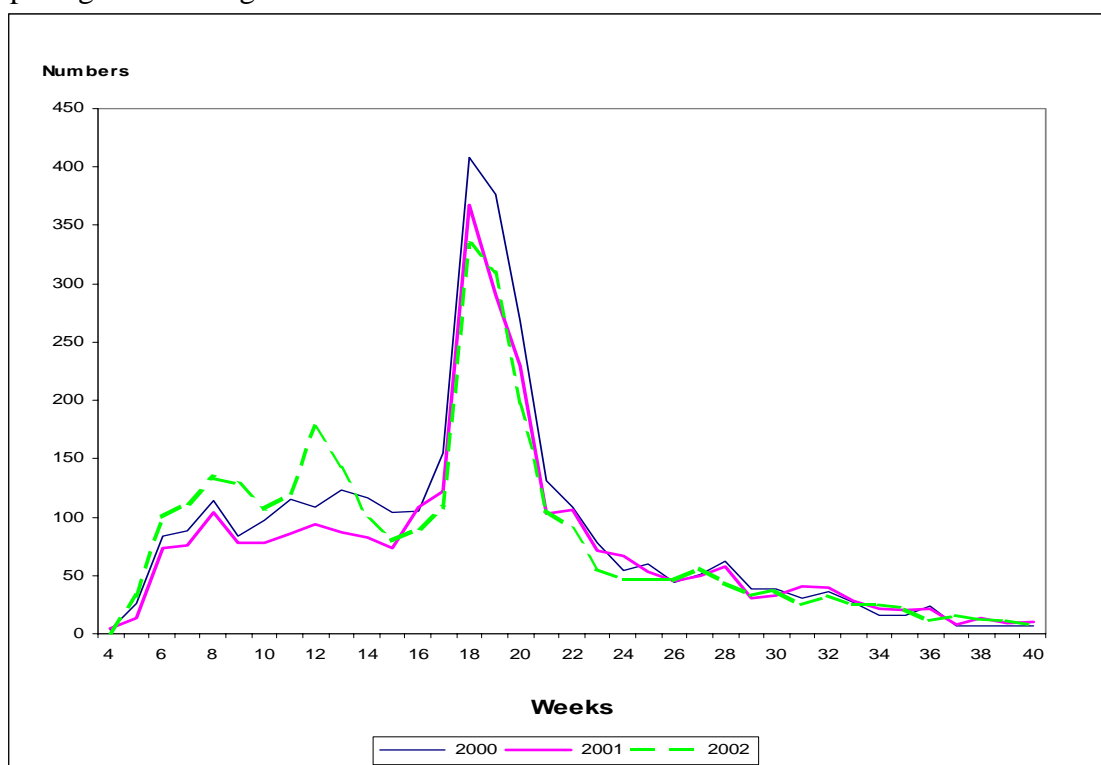


Figure 8 Gestational age at first ultrasound investigation, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Self-reported smoking status and alcohol consumption

Self-reported smoking status and alcohol consumption provide an indication of the level of these harmful behaviours during pregnancy. Women were asked about smoking and alcohol consumption during the first antenatal visit in the first trimester, and during the third trimester of pregnancy. The proportion of mothers using tobacco and alcohol during pregnancy declined from the 1st trimester to the 3rd trimester.

Self-reported smoking status

For each year of this report, over a third of Indigenous mothers reported smoking during the first trimester of pregnancy. This comprised 35% of Indigenous mothers in 2000, 39% in 2001 and 35% in 2002. The self-reported proportion of Indigenous women smoking during the third trimester of pregnancy declined to 28% in 2000, 31% in 2001, and 28% in 2002.

For each year of this report, approximately one fifth of non-Indigenous mothers reported smoking during the first trimester of pregnancy. This comprised 19% of non-Indigenous mothers in 2000, 19% in 2001 and 20% in 2002. The self-reported proportion of non-Indigenous women smoking during the third trimester of pregnancy declined to 14% in 2000, 15% in 2001, and 13% in 2002.

There was also a substantial proportion of mothers in each year for which there was no record of self-reported smoking status. Thus the self-reported rates of smoking may substantially underestimate the true status.

Table 11 Number and percentage distribution of self-reported smoking during pregnancy by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Smoking status	2000		2001				2002					
			non-				non-				non-	
	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous	Indigenous
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1st trimester												
Smoker	458	34.6	420	18.8	577	39	436	19.4	486	35.4	467	20.3
Non-smoker	599	45.2	1596	71.5	629	42	1674	74.5	596	43.4	1663	72.2
Unknown	268	20.2	217	9.7	278	19	138	6.1	290	21.1	172	7.5
3rd trimester												
Smoker	373	28.2	317	14.2	454	31	326	14.5	385	28.1	304	13.2
Non-smoker	616	46.5	1550	69.4	639	43	1594	70.9	591	43.1	1513	65.7
Unknown	336	25.4	366	16.4	391	26	328	14.6	396	28.9	485	21.1
Total	1325		2233		1484		2248*		1372*		2302*	

n = number % = percentage

* The total numbers of mothers in this table were slightly different from the total numbers of mothers from summary table due to data quality issue as mentioned in the limitation.

Self-reported alcohol consumption

For each year of this report, approximately one in ten Indigenous mothers reported alcohol consumption during the first trimester of pregnancy. This comprised 9% of Indigenous mothers in 2000, 11% in 2001 and 10% in 2002. The self-reported proportion of Indigenous women consuming alcohol during the third trimester of pregnancy dropped to 5% in 2000, 7% in 2001, and 6% in 2002.

For each year of this report, less than one tenth of non-Indigenous mothers reported alcohol consumption during the first trimester of pregnancy. This comprised 8% of non-Indigenous mothers in 2000, 7% in 2001 and 9% in 2002. The self-reported proportion of non-Indigenous women consuming alcohol during the third trimester of pregnancy dropped to 4% in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Similarly to self-reported smoking status, there was also a substantial proportion of mothers for whom there was no information, and therefore the proportion of women with self-reported alcohol consumption may substantially underestimate the true status.

Table 12 Number and percentage distribution of self-reported alcohol consumption during pregnancy by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Alcohol consumption	2000		2001				2002					
			non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1st trimester												
Alcohol	123	9.3	176	7.9	166	11.2	159	7.1	135	9.8	198	8.6
No alcohol	898	67.8	1772	79.4	987	66.5	1880	84	895	65	1868	81.1
Unknown	304	22.9	285	12.8	331	22.3	209	9.3	342	25	236	10.3
3rd trimester												
Alcohol	72	5.4	93	4.2	108	7.3	83	3.7	85	6.2	90	3.9
No alcohol	880	66.4	1706	76.4	942	63.5	1814	81	836	61	1668	72.5
Unknown	373	28.2	434	19.4	434	29.2	342	15.3	451	33	544	23.6
Total	1325		2233		1484		2239*		1372*		2302*	

n = number % = percentage

* The total numbers of mothers in this table were slightly different from the total numbers of mothers from summary table due to data quality issue as mentioned in the limitation.

Maternal medical conditions

Maternal medical conditions are defined as those already existing or arising during the pregnancy. They are not directly attributable to the pregnancy but may significantly affect care during the pregnancy and/or pregnancy outcomes.⁵

During the combined three-year period (2000–2002) 74% of maternal medical conditions were experienced by Indigenous mothers, who make up 38% of all Northern Territory mothers, compared with 26% by non-Indigenous mothers. This situation reflects the higher burden of disease endured by Indigenous people throughout the Northern Territory.

During this period the most common medical conditions affecting Indigenous and non-Indigenous mothers were anaemia, sexually transmissible infections other than syphilis, urinary tract infections and cardiac disease. Ten percent of Indigenous mothers were anaemic, 7% tested positive for a sexually transmissible infection other than syphilis, 5% experienced a urinary tract infection and 5% were diagnosed with cardiac disease.

The percentage distributions of maternal medical conditions experienced by non-Indigenous mothers were lower for all conditions. Two percent of non-Indigenous mothers were anaemic, 2% experienced a urinary tract infection, 1% tested positive for a sexually transmissible infection other than syphilis, and less than 1% were diagnosed with cardiac disease.

Table 13 Number and percentage distribution of maternal medical conditions by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, during the combined three-year period 2000–2002

Type of maternal medical condition	Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Anaemia	404	9.6	141	2.1
Cardiac disease	190	4.5	60	0.9
Epilepsy	36	0.9	45	0.7
Other sexually transmissible infections	283	6.7	66	1
Pre-existing diabetes	89	2.1	29	0.4
Pre-existing hypertension	70	1.7	50	0.7
Renal disease	93	2.2	39	0.6
Syphilis	179 [†]	4.3	14 [†]	0.2
Urinary tract infection	212	5.1	103	1.5
Total	1556*		547*	
Total mothers	4197		6763	

* Mothers may have more than one maternal medical condition

[†]Syphilis count and percentage distribution may be elevated due to a higher propensity to treat pregnant women presenting with a positive syphilis screening result

Pregnancy complications

Pregnancy complications arise during a pregnancy. They are directly attributable to the pregnancy and may significantly affect the pregnancy outcomes.⁵

During the combined three-year period (2000–2002) more than half (54%) of all pregnancy complications affected Indigenous mothers who made up 38% of all mothers. By comparison, 46% of pregnancy complications affected the 62% of all mothers who were non-Indigenous.

The most common pregnancy complications affecting Indigenous and non-Indigenous mothers were ‘other complications’, gestational diabetes, pre-term rupture of membranes, intra-uterine growth retardation and pre-eclampsia.

Sixteen percent of Indigenous mothers and 9% of non-Indigenous experienced ‘Other’ complications. The next most frequently recorded complication was gestational diabetes with 6% of Indigenous mothers and 4% of non-Indigenous diagnosed with this complication.

A higher proportion of Indigenous mothers (5%) experienced pre-term rupture of membranes than non-Indigenous mothers (2%) while the opposite trend occurred with ante-partum haemorrhage. Ante-partum haemorrhage was a complication for 2% of non-Indigenous mothers and 1% of Indigenous.

Table 14 Number and percentage distribution of pregnancy complications by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, during the combined three-year period 2000–2002

Type of complication	Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ante-partum hemorrhage	52	1.2	101	1.5
Fetal death in utero	27	0.6	22	0.3
Gestational diabetes	264	6.3	248	3.7
Intra-uterine growth retardation	170	4.1	98	1.4
Other	686	16.3	575	8.5
Pre-eclampsia	117	2.8	178	2.6
Pre-term rupture of membranes	209	5	102	1.5
Total	1525*		1324*	
Total mothers	4197		6763	

* Mothers may have more than one pregnancy complication.

Onset of labour

The onset of labour is associated with the method of birth and maternal and perinatal morbidity. Induction rates vary in relation to maternal and fetal risk factors.⁵

Labour was induced for 21% of Northern Territory mothers from 2000 to 2002. Labour commenced spontaneously for 67% of mothers and 12% of mothers had no labour.

Table 15 Number and percentage distribution of labour onset types, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Type of onset	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Spontaneous	2452	68.9	2479	66.5	2424	66
Induced	724	20.4	787	21.1	759	20.7
No labour	381	10.7	461	12.4	492	13.3
Total	3557*		3727		3675	

* One missing value was encountered for 2000

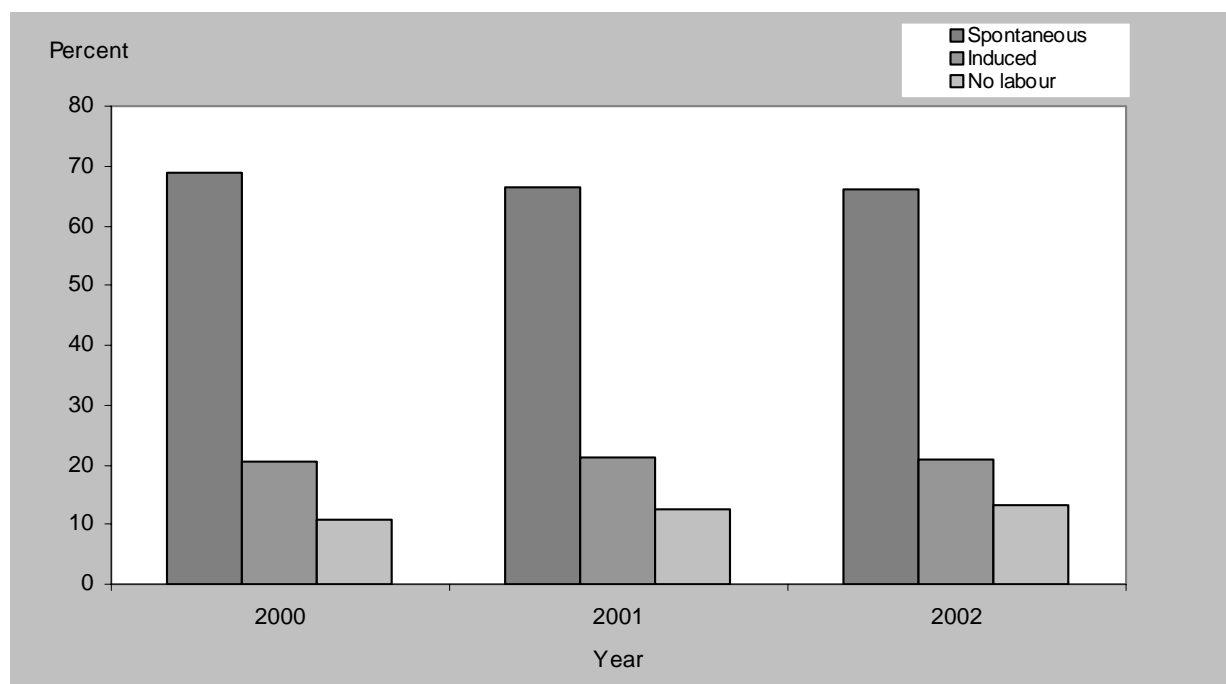


Figure 9 Onset of labour, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Pain relief during labour

Pain relief during labour may influence the length of the labour and affect the health of the mother or baby.⁵

From 2000 to 2002 in the Northern Territory, 56% of women who had a labour received nitrous oxide, 35% received intra-muscular narcotics and 17% epidural anaesthesia.

Of all women having an epidural or spinal anaesthetic during labour, almost half went on to have a vaginal birth.

Table 16 Number and percentage distribution of pain relief during labour, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Type of pain relief	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bath or shower	240	7.6	351	10.8	482	15.1
Epidural anaesthesia	539	17	571	17.5	514	16.1
Intra-muscular	1161	36.6	1189	36.5	987	31
Nitrous oxide	1764	55.5	1852	56.8	1786	56.1
Other methods	219	6.9	311	9.5	422	13.3
Spinal anaesthesia	47	1.5	42	1.3	47	1.5
Total	3970*		4316*		4238*	
Total mothers	3176†		3260†		3183†	

* Individual woman may have received one or more methods of pain relief

† Excludes women who did not have a labour

Table 17 Number and percentage distribution of birth methods following epidural or spinal anaesthesia during labour, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Method of birth	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Caesarean	327	55.8	324	52.9	308	54.9
Vaginal	259	44.2	289	47.1	253	45.1
Total	586		613		561	

State of the perineum

During birth the perineum may be subject to laceration (tear), or the perineum and vagina may be cut to avoid a tear (episiotomy). These outcomes may cause significant maternal morbidity in the postnatal period.⁵

Almost two thirds of all women giving birth in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 had an intact perineum following delivery. This includes all women who gave birth by caesarean section.

Eight percent of women had first-degree perineal tears and 13% had second-degree tears. Only 1.3% of all women giving birth over the three years had third-degree or fourth-degree perineal tears. A further 8.2% of all women had an episiotomy and 3.4% had a combined tear and episiotomy.

Table 18 Number and percentage distribution of the state of the perineum, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

State of the perineum	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Intact perineum	2242	63	2451	65.8	2412	65.6
First-degree tear	254	7.1	307	8.2	367	9.28
Second-degree tear	487	13.7	470	12.6	468	12.7
Third-degree tear	46	1.3	43	1.2	43	1.2
Fourth-degree tear	3	0.1	1	0	1	0
Episiotomy	338	9.5	304	8.2	256	7
Combined tear and episiotomy	165	4.6	113	3	94	2.6
Other	23	0.6	38	1	34	0.9
Total	3558		3727		3675	

Complications of childbirth

Complications of childbirth include both medical and obstetric complications that necessitate intervention. They arise after the onset of labour and before the completed delivery of the baby and placenta. Complications of childbirth affect the health of the mother or baby or both.⁵

The most common complications of childbirth in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 meconium stained liquor, 'other' complications, fetal distress and post-partum haemorrhage.

Twelve percent of mothers were recorded as having experienced meconium stained liquor, 12% having an 'other' complication, 10% as having a baby with fetal distress and 7% as having a post-partum haemorrhage.

The presence of meconium in the liquor often results from intra-uterine hypoxia and is an indicator of fetal distress.

Table 19 Number and percentage distribution of childbirth complications, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Type of complication	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ante-partum haemorrhage	55	1.5	57	1.5	74	2
Cord prolapse	4	0.1	7	0.2	7	0.2
Fetal distress	364	10.2	389	10.4	349	9.5
Hypertension	112	3.1	114	3.1	97	2.6
Meconium stained liquor	466	13.1	468	12.6	406	11
Obstructed labour	138	3.9	157	4.2	164	4.5
Other	385	10.8	448	12	466	12.7
Post partum haemorrhage	241	6.8	247	6.6	250	6.8
Pre-eclampsia	66	1.9	67	1.8	53	1.4
Retained placenta	57	1.6	72	1.9	63	1.7
Total	1888*		2026*		1929*	
Mothers (with at least one complication)	1442	40.5	1527	41	1442	39.2
Total mothers	3558		3727		3675	

* Some women had more than one complication of childbirth

Place of birth

Place of birth indicates whether a baby was born in a hospital or non-hospital setting such as a community health centre, home or other place.

Ninety-eight percent of all women who gave birth in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 did so in a hospital setting.

Table 20 Number and percentage distribution of place of birth, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Place of birth	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hospital	3503	98.5	3613	96.9	3594	97.8
Non-hospital	55	1.5	114	3.1	81	2.2
Total	3558		3727		3675	

Table 21 Number and percentage distribution of birth facilities, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Type of facility	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Royal Darwin Hospital	1563	43.9	1657	44.5	1550	42.2
Alice Springs Hospital	800	22.5	771	20.7	806	21.9
Darwin Private Hospital	576	16.2	634	17	689	18.7
Katherine Hospital	319	9	370	9.9	343	9.3
Gove District Hospital	203	5.7	144	3.9	167	4.5
Tennant Creek Hospital	41	1.2	37	1	39	1.1
Community Health Centres	35 [†]	1	54	1.4	39	1.1
Home	8 [†]	0.2	39	1	35	1
Other	12 [†]	0.3	21	0.6	7	0.2
Total	3557[*]		3727		3675	

* One missing value encountered for 2000

† Data for births in non-hospital facilities in 2000 are incomplete

Birth attendant

Babies are delivered in the Northern Territory by a range of different professionals including obstetricians, other doctors, midwives, nurses and other health workers with midwifery skills. In some training locations, student midwives or medical students may deliver babies with the supervision of qualified professionals.

Qualified health personnel attended 84% of all births in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002. Midwives delivered the highest percentage of babies, followed by consultant obstetricians and registrars. Student midwives and medical students attended four percent of births.

There was also a significant percentage (12%) of births for which the birth attendant was not reported in the 2000 to 2002 data.

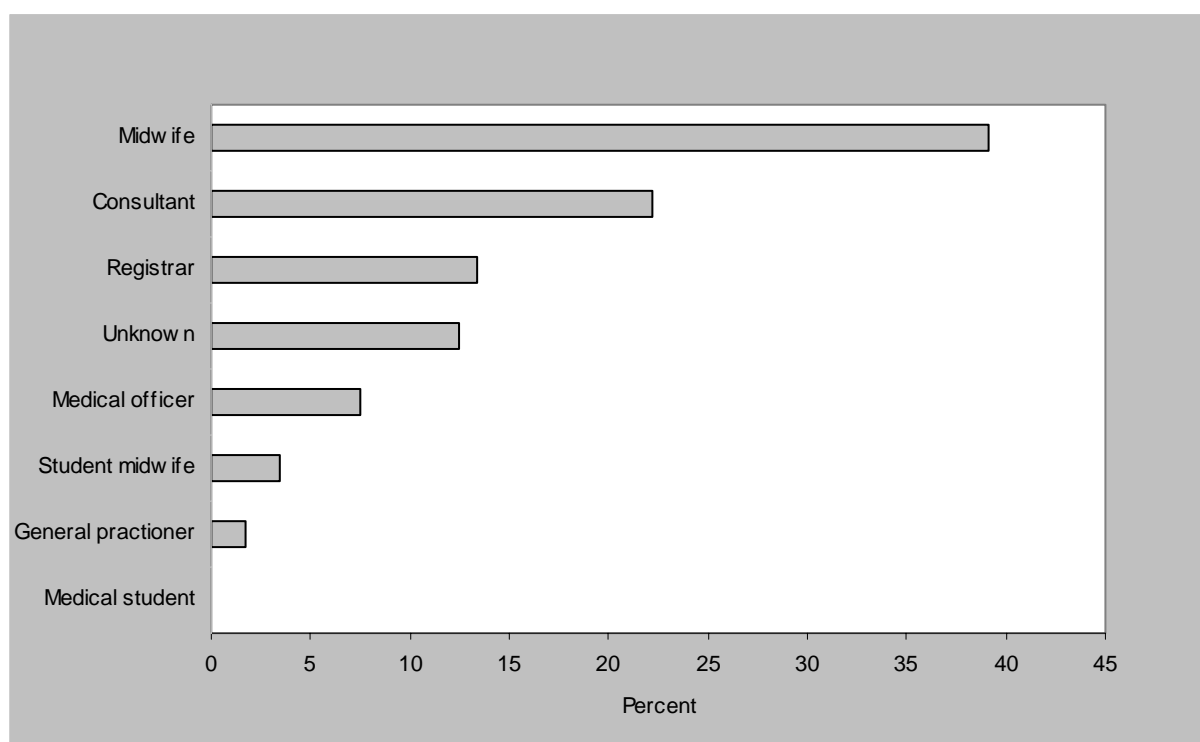


Figure 10 Type of birth attendant, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Method of birth

The method of birth may be normal vaginal delivery, assisted vaginal delivery and caesarean section. The method of birth may affect the health status of the mother and/or the baby at birth and during the post-partum period.⁵

Seventy percent of all births in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 were normal vaginal births. Six percent were assisted vaginal cephalic births and less than one percent were vaginal breech births. Twenty-three percent of all births were by emergency or elective caesarean section.

There was a slight increase in the proportion of caesarean sections and a slight decrease in the proportion of normal vaginal births from 2000 to 2002.

The World Health Organisation recommends 15 in 100 births as a reasonable national rate for caesarean section.¹ In the Northern Territory, 21% of births in 2000, 23% of births in 2001 and 25% of births in 2002 were by either emergency or elective caesarean section.

Table 22 Number and percentage distribution of birthing methods, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Method of birth	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Normal vaginal	2543	71.5	2570	69	2519	68.5
Emergency caesarean	464	13	534	14.3	518	14.1
Elective caesarean	297	8.3	340	9.1	414	11.3
Vacuum extraction	119	3.3	138	3.7	103	2.8
Forceps	115	3.2	124	3.3	106	2.9
Vaginal breech	19	0.5	21	0.6	15	0.4
Total	3557*		3727		3675	

* One missing value encountered for 2000

† Only one method of birth recorded for each mother

The proportion of caesarean sections that were elective increased from 2000 to 2002 with a similar decrease in the proportion of caesarean sections that were emergencies.

Table 23 Number and percentage distribution of emergency and elective caesarean sections, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Type of caesarean	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Emergency	464	61	534	61.1	518	55.6
Elective	297	39	340	38.9	414	44.4
Total	761		874		932	

Table 24 Number and percentage distribution of caesarean sections by maternal age, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Age (years)	2000				2001				2002			
	Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
10-14	5	1.7	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.2	5	1.5	0	0
15-19	80	27.9	12	2.5	80	24.2	16	2.9	72	21.1	19	3.2
20-24	84	29.3	64	13.4	91	27.6	63	11.6	101	29.6	75	12.7
25-29	58	20.2	135	28.4	79	23.9	167	30.7	80	23.5	171	28.9
30-34	47	16.4	162	34	49	14.8	190	34.9	48	14.1	202	34.2
35-39	11	3.8	83	17.4	24	7.3	80	14.7	31	9.1	98	16.6
40-44	2	0.7	20	4.2	6	1.8	23	4.2	4	1.2	24	4.1
45-49	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.7	0	0	2	0.3
Total	287*		476*		330		544		341		591	

n = number % = percentage

* The data for this table were extracted at the later stage of the report and the sum maybe slightly different from the other tables due to monthly update of Business Object.

Babies

Summary

Table 25 Babies, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

BABIES	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Total babies</i>	3604		3771		3722	
Indigenous	1337	37.1	1498	39.7	1405	37.7
non-Indigenous	2267	62.9	2273	60.3	2317	62.3
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	1839	51	1968	52.1	1920	51.6
Female	1764	48.9	1799	47.7	1802	48.4
Indeterminate	1	0.1	2	0.1	0	0
Unknown	0	0	2	0.1	0	0
<i>Plurality</i>						
Single Birth	3514	98.8	3688	98.9	3630	98.8
Multiple Birth (set)	45	1.2	41	1.1	46	1.2
Unknown	0	0	2	<0.1	0	0
<i>Birthweight</i>						
<i>Less than 2500g</i>						
Indigenous	186	5.2	196	5.2	196	5.2
non-Indigenous	161	4.5	148	3.9	135	3.6
<i>2500g or more</i>						
Indigenous	1151	31.9	1302	34.5	1209	32.5
non-Indigenous	2106	58.4	2125	56.4	2182	58.6
<i>Gestational age</i>						
Pre-term	385	10.7	385	10.2	402	10.8
Term	3170	88	3326	88.2	3247	87.2
Post-term	49	1.4	60	1.6	73	2
<i>Birth status</i>						
Live births	3571	99.1	3744	99.3	3694	99.2
Stillbirths (Fetal Deaths)	33	0.9	27	0.7	28	0.8
<i>Perinatal death rate (and neonatal deaths per 1000 total births)</i>						
Indigenous	24.7		19.4		18.5	
non-Indigenous	11		9.7		9.1	

Number and sex of babies

During 2000 there were 3604 babies born in the Northern Territory, in 2001 there were 3771 and in 2002 there were 3722.

Just over 50% of all babies were boys.

Table 26 Number and percentage distribution of babies by sex and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Sex of baby	2000		2001		2002							
	non-Indigenous		non-Indigenous		non-Indigenous							
	n	%	n	%	n	%						
Male	699	52.3	1140	50.3	792	52.9	1176	51.8	714	50.8	1206	52.1
Female	638	47.7	1126	49.7	703	47.0	1096	48.2	691	49.2	1111	47.9
Indeterminate	0		1		2		0		0		0	
Unknown	0		0		1		1		0		0	
Total	1337		2267		1498		2273		1405		2317	

Birthweight

Birthweight refers to the first weight of the baby obtained after birth, measured to the nearest 5 grams. The World Health Organisation classifies low birthweight into the following categories.

Extremely low birthweight: less than 1000 grams

Very low birthweight: less than 1500 grams

Low birthweight: less than 2500 grams ⁵

Low birthweight is associated with long-term poor health and developmental outcomes. Low birthweight may be associated with fetal growth retardation or a pre-term birth.

Birthweight by Indigenous status

Almost one in ten babies born in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 was born with a low birthweight (less than 2500g). Indigenous babies were more likely to have a low birthweight (13.6%) than their non-Indigenous counterparts (6.5%).

Table 27 Number and percentage distribution of babies by birthweight and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Birthweight	2000				2001				2002			
	Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Less than 2500g	186	13.9	161	7.1	196	13.1	148	6.5	196	14	135	5.8
2500g or more	1151	86.1	2106	92.9	1302	86.9	2125	93.5	1209	86	2182	94.2
Total	1337		2267		1498		2273		1405		2317	
Average birthweight (grams)	3104		3332		3125		3339		3101		3376	

Birthweight and maternal age

Fourteen percent of all babies born to mothers aged less than 20 years had a low birthweight. Of all babies born to mothers aged 20 years or more, 8% had a low birthweight.

Table 28 Number and percentage distribution of birthweight by maternal age group, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Birthweight	Less than 20 years		20-39 years		40 years or over	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 2500g	225	13.5	772	8.4	19	8.2
2500g or more	1445	86.5	8407	91.6	214	91.8
Total	1670*		9179*		233*	

* Total of 15 missing values encountered in this table including 6 low birthweight babies.

Birthweight and gestational age

Just over two thirds of low birthweight babies (67% to 73%) were born pre-term. Less than a third of low birthweight babies were born full term and only 2 low birthweight babies in 2001 and 2002 were born post-term.

Table 29 Number and percentage distribution of low birthweight babies (less than 2500 grams) by gestational age, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Gestational age of low birthweight babies	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 33 weeks	99	28.5	89	25.9	104	31.6
33-36 weeks	155	44.7	140	40.7	135	41
37-41 weeks	93	26.8	113	32.8	88	26.7
42 weeks or more	0	0	2	0.6	2	0.6
Total	347		344		329*	

* Total of 2 missing values encountered in this table for 2002

Birthweight by district

Approximately eighty percent of Indigenous mothers in the Northern Territory live in rural and remote areas. The higher likelihood of these women having a baby of low birthweight is reflected in the geographic distribution of babies with low birthweight.

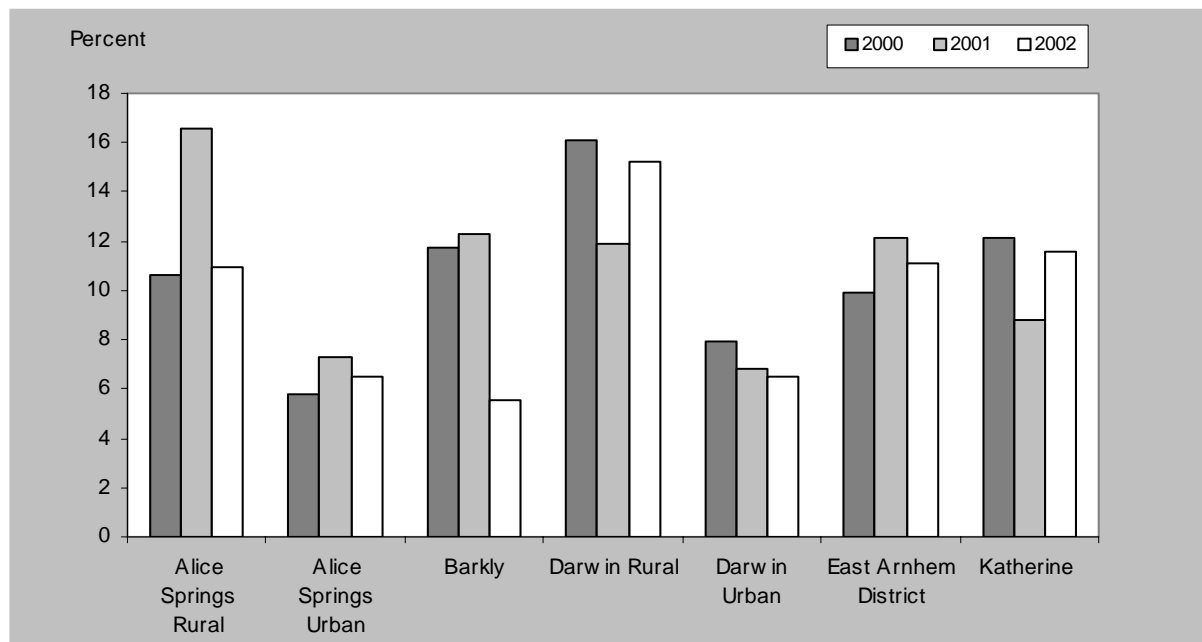


Figure 11 Low birthweight by district, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Gestational age

Gestational age is expressed in completed days or completed weeks after the onset of the last normal menstrual period. Gestational age is related to neonatal health outcomes. The World Health Organisation classifies gestational age into the following categories.

Pre-term: less than 37 completed weeks of gestation

Term: from 37 completed weeks to less than 42 completed weeks of gestation

Post-term: 42 completed weeks or more of gestation⁵

At least 10% of babies born in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 were pre-term. Just under 90% were term and about 2% were post-term. The proportions of pre-term, term and post-term births were fairly constant over the three years.

A higher percentage of Indigenous babies were born pre-term than non-Indigenous babies.

Table 30 Number and percentage distribution of babies by gestational age at birth, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Gestational age	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Pre-term	385	10.6	385	10.2	402	10.8
Term	3170	88	3326	88.1	3247	87.2
Post-term	49	1.4	60	1.6	73	2
Total	3604		3771		3722	

Table 31 Number and percentage distribution of babies by gestational age at birth and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Gestational age	2000				2001				2002			
	Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Pre-term	194	14.5	191	8.4	199	13.3	186	8.2	225	16	177	7.6
Term	1123	84	2047	90.3	1278	85.3	2048	90.1	1152	82	2095	90.4
Post-term	20	1.5	29	1.3	21	1.4	39	1.7	28	2	45	1.9
Total	1337		2267		1498		2273		1405		2317	

Apgar scores

An Apgar score is a numerical score used to evaluate the condition of a baby at one, five and ten minutes following birth. Apgar scores are clinical indicators of the condition of live born infants. The scores are based on the following five physical signs: heart rate, respiration, muscle tone, reflex and colour. Each component is assigned a score of 0, 1 or 2. The component scores are then summed to produce an Apgar score out of ten. A low Apgar score indicates a poor condition and a high Apgar score indicates a relatively healthy newborn.⁵

Three percent of all babies born in the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 had an Apgar score of less than 7, five minutes after birth.

Table 32 Number and percentage distribution of babies with Apgar score less than 7 (five minutes after birth) by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Indigenous status	2000		2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Indigenous	44	43.1	61	56.5	63	54.8
non-Indigenous	58	56.9	47	43.5	52	45.2
Total	102	2.8*	108	2.9*	115	3.1*
Total babies	3604		3771		3722	

* Proportion of total babies with Apgar score less than 7 among all livebirths

Resuscitation at birth

Resuscitation at birth involves active measures taken immediately after birth to establish independent respiration and normal heart rate, or to treat depressed effort and to correct metabolic disturbances.⁵ After delivery, most newborns start breathing spontaneously. Others require some assistance. This may range from tactile stimulation and suction of mucus from the oral and nasal cavities to endo-tracheal ventilation and cardiac massage. The primary purpose of these interventions is to reduce the risk of hypoxia-related complications.¹

In general, Indigenous babies were more likely to require resuscitation at birth than non-Indigenous babies. Suction was the most commonly used resuscitation method followed by oxygen therapy and intermittent positive pressure ventilation.

Table 33 Number and percentage distribution of babies by number of resuscitations and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Resuscitation required	2000				2001				2002			
	Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Nil	557	41.7	1142	50.4	646	43.2	1158	51	643	45.8	1199	51.7
At least one resuscitation	780	58.3	1123	49.6	852	56.9	1115	49	762	54.2	1118	48.3
Total	1337		2265*		1498		2273		1405		2317	

* Total of 2 missing values encountered in this table for 2000

Table 34 Number and percentage distribution of babies by type of resuscitation method and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Resuscitation method	2000				2001				2002			
	Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous		Indigenous		non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Suction	686	51.3	965	42.6	717	48	957	42.1	613	43.6	901	38.9
Oxygen therapy	510	38.1	647	28.5	504	34	547	24.1	426	30.3	509	22
Intermittent Positive Pressure Ventilation	162	12.1	190	8.4	212	14	189	8.3	158	11.2	179	7.7
Tactile stimulation	88	6.6	160	7.1	165	11	251	11	193	13.7	274	11.8
Endo-tracheal intubation and ventilation	35	2.6	32	1.4	33	2.2	31	1.4	42	3	21	0.9
External cardiac massage and ventilation	7	0.5	5	0.2	11	0.7	7	0.3	12	0.9	5	0.2
Total	1488*		1999*		1642*		1982*		1444*		1889*	
Babies (with at least one form of resuscitation)	780	58.3	1123	49.5	852	57	1115	49.1	762	54.2	1118	48.3
Total babies	1337		2267		1498		2273		1405		2317	

* Some babies required more than one resuscitation method

Special Care Nursery

A newborn baby may require an elevated level of clinical care. This is indicated by admission to the Special Care Nursery (SCN).

In the Northern Territory from 2000 to 2002 Indigenous babies were more likely to be admitted to Special Care Nursery than non-Indigenous babies. This is consistent with the higher percentage of Indigenous babies who were born pre-term and/or with a low birthweight.

Table 35 Number of live births and percentage distribution of Special Care Nursery admissions by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Indigenous status	2000			2001			2002		
	Live births	Special Care Nursery	%	Live births	Special Care Nursery	%	Live births	Special Care Nursery	%
	n	n	%	n	n	%	n	n	%
Indigenous	1319	353	26.7	1483	384	25.9	1391	347	25
non-Indigenous	2252	403	17.9	2261	381	16.9	2303	363	15.8
Total	3571	756	21.2	3744	765	20.4	3694	710	19.2

Table 36 Number of term babies and percentage distribution of Special Care Nursery admissions[†] by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Indigenous status	2000			2001			2002		
	Term babies	Special Care Nursery	%	Term babies	Special Care Nursery	%	Term babies	Special Care Nursery	%
	n	n	%	n	n	%	n	n	%
Indigenous	1123	215	19.2	1278	234	18.4	1152	207	18
non-Indigenous	2047	260	12.7	2048	253	12.4	2095	230	11
Total	3170	475	15	3326	487	14.7	3247	437	13.5

[†] Only includes admissions directly from the birthing suite

Perinatal death

A fetal death (stillbirth) is a death that occurs after at least 20 weeks gestation or when the birthweight is at least 400 grams.¹ The fetal death rate is defined as the number of fetal deaths in a year for every 1000 births (still and live births) in that same year.

A neonatal death is a death that occurs in the first 28 days after birth. The neonatal death rate is defined as the number of neonatal deaths in a year for every 1000 live births in that same year.

Perinatal deaths include both fetal and neonatal deaths. The perinatal death rate is defined as the sum of fetal deaths and neonatal deaths in a year for every 1000 births (still and live births) in that same year.

The fetal death rates and neonatal death rates from 2000 to 2002 in the Northern Territory were higher for Indigenous than non-Indigenous babies. This is consistent with the high proportion of pre-terms births and low birthweight babies in this population.

The perinatal death rate for Indigenous babies born less than 33 weeks gestation was similar to non-Indigenous babies of the same gestational age. For babies born from 33 weeks gestation the differential widened with the perinatal death rate for Indigenous babies of this gestational age more than double that of non-Indigenous babies.

The perinatal death rate for Indigenous babies fell each year from 24.7 deaths per 1000 births in 2000 to 19.4 in 2001 and 18.5 in 2002. The perinatal death rate also fell consistently for non-Indigenous babies from 11.0 deaths per 1000 births in 2000 to 9.7 in 2001 and 9.1 in 2002.

Babies born before 37 weeks gestation had significantly higher perinatal death rates than term babies. There was, however, a considerable decline in the perinatal death rate of pre-term babies over the three-year period while the death rate of term babies remained constant.

Table 37 Number of fetal, neonatal and perinatal deaths by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Type of death	2000		2001		2002	
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous
Fetal (stillbirths)	18	15	15	12	14	14
Neonatal	15	10	14	10	12	7
Perinatal	33	25	29	22	26	21

Table 38 Fetal, neonatal and perinatal death rates by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000-2002

Type of death	2000		2001		2002	
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous
Fetal (stillbirths)	13.5	6.6	10	5.3	10.1	6
Neonatal	11.4	4.4	9.4	4.4	8.6	3
Perinatal	24.7	11	19.4	9.7	18.5	9.1

1. Fetal death rate is expressed as total fetal deaths per 1000 births
2. Neonatal death rate is expressed as total neonatal deaths per 1000 live births
3. Perinatal death rate is expressed as sum of fetal and neonatal deaths per 1000 births

Table 39 Perinatal death rates by gestational age and Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Gestational age (weeks)	2000		2001		2002	
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Indigenous	non-Indigenous
Less than 33	386.0	355.6	301.9	340.9*	303.0*	290.9*
33–36	44.4	20.5	34	13.9*	12.3*	0.0*
37 or over	4.4	2.9	6.2	1.9*	3.4*	2.3*

* The denominators used to construct the death rates in this table were extracted subsequent to redistribution of Indigenous status. Consequently the non-Indigenous death rates by gestational age are slightly under-reported in 2001 and 2002, and the Indigenous death rate by gestational age is slightly elevated in 2002

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4. <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0004395.html>. Crude birth and death rates for selected countries. Access Date: 30 May 2004.
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Glossary

Anaemia

A maternal haemoglobin value below 11.5 g/dL in the first trimester or below 10.5 g/dL in later pregnancy. The World Health Organisation recommends that the haemoglobin concentration should not fall below 11.0 g/dL at any time during pregnancy.

Ante-partum haemorrhage

Bleeding from the birth canal in the period from the 20th week of gestation to the birth of the baby.

Birthweight

Birthweight refers to the first weight of a baby obtained after birth, measured to the nearest 5 grams.

Extremely low birthweight: less than 1000 grams

Very low birthweight: less than 1500 grams

Low birthweight: less than 2500 grams

Caesarean section

Delivery of the baby through an abdominal incision.

Elective: A caesarean section (planned or unplanned) performed before the onset of labour.

Emergency: A caesarean section performed after the onset of labour, whether or not the onset of labour was spontaneous.

Caesarean section rate

The number of caesarean sections divided by the total number of births.

Confinement

A pregnancy resulting in at least one birth. Note that with a multiple pregnancy, one confinement will result in more than one birth.

Cord Prolapse

Following the rupture of the membranes, the umbilical cord is expelled before the baby. Subsequent pressure on the umbilical cord vessels is likely to occur.

District of usual residence

The district in which a mother usually resides.

Eclampsia

A clinical state characterized by convulsions, not attributable to cerebral conditions such as epilepsy or cerebral haemorrhage, and usually superimposed on preceding pre-eclampsia.

Episiotomy

An incision of the perineum and vagina that enlarges the introitus and lessens the curve of the birth canal.

Fetal death (stillbirth)

Death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception of 20 or more completed weeks of gestation or of a birthweight of 400g or more.

Fetal death (stillbirth) rate

The number of fetal deaths (20 or more completed weeks of gestation or 400g or more birthweight) in a year per 1000 total births in that same year.

Fetal distress

An intra-uterine state in which the fetus is compromised. Potential exists for adverse fetal outcomes without intervention. Fetal distress is often indicated by a change in fetal heart rate that is unrelated to uterine contractions.

Forceps delivery

Assisted birth using a metallic obstetric instrument (forceps) .

Gestational age

The duration of a pregnancy in completed weeks, calculated from the date of the first day of a woman's last menstrual period to her baby's date of birth.

Gravid

Pregnant

Hypertension

A blood pressure of 140/90 or above, or a rise of 15-20 systolic and 10-15 diastolic. Chronic hypertension is diagnosed when hypertension is known to be present before or during early pregnancy.

Infant Death

The number of infant deaths during the first year of life (including neonatal deaths) per 1000 live births during that year. The rate is usually 5-10 per 1000 live births in developed countries.

Instrumental delivery

Vaginal birth by forceps or Ventouse (vacuum extractor).

Labour

The process by which the products of conception are expelled from the uterus via the birth canal.

Live birth

The complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a baby, irrespective of duration of pregnancy, which after separation shows signs of life.

Meconium stained liquor

The presence of the baby's stool in the amniotic fluid.

Neonatal death

Death during the first 28 days after birth.

Obstructed labour

There is no descent of the presenting part of the baby in the presence of strong contractions.

Parity

The total number of births a mother has had before the current pregnancy. This includes all live births and stillbirths.

Perinatal death rate

The sum of fetal deaths (stillbirths) and neonatal deaths in a year per 1000 total births in that same year.

Perineal laceration (tear)

First-degree: A perineal laceration or tear involving one of the following: the fourchette, hymen, labia, skin, vagina or vulva.

Second-degree: A perineal laceration or tear involving the pelvic floor or perineal muscles or the vaginal muscles.

Third-degree: A perineal laceration or tear involving the anal sphincter or recto-vaginal septum, but which does not extend to the rectal mucosa.

Fourth-degree: A third-degree perineal laceration or tear which also involves the anal mucosa or the rectal mucosa.

Plurality

The number of births resulting from a pregnancy.

Post-partum haemorrhage

Loss of blood in excess of 500 mls from the birth canal, during the third stage of labour or during the 24 hours following.

Post-term infant

An infant born after 41 completed weeks of gestation.

Pre-eclampsia

Pregnancy induced hypertension with the addition of significant proteinuria (greater than 300 mg/24 hours), in the absence of a urinary tract infection, chronic renal disease or contamination of the urine.

Pregnancy-induced hypertension

A blood pressure of 140/90 or above occurring for the first time during pregnancy. If associated with generalised oedema and/or proteinuria the condition is known as pre-eclampsia.

Premature rupture of the membranes

Spontaneous rupture of the membranes before the onset of contractions.

Pre-term infant

An infant born before 37 completed weeks of gestation.

Pre-term labour

Regular painful contractions which begin before 37 completed weeks of gestation.

Prolonged labour

Labour of more than 24 hours duration.

Retained placenta

The placenta remains inside the uterus 1 hour or more after the birth.

Small for gestational age

The foetus has a weight below the tenth percentile for gestational age. The term is synonymous with 'small for dates'. The assignment of a birthweight percentile requires use of data appropriate for the population. Adjustments for gender, race and birth order may be made for paediatric considerations. Small for gestational age infants will include both constitutionally small infants and infants who show evidence of growth retardation through placental insufficiency.

Term infant

An infant born from 37 completed weeks to less than 42 completed weeks of gestation.

Total fertility rate

A hypothetical measure of the number of live births a woman would have if, throughout her reproductive years, she had children at the age-specific rates that were observed in any one year.

Vacuum extraction

Assisted delivery using a suction cap applied to the baby's head (usually in the occipital region).

Vaginal delivery, breech

Birth in which the buttocks or lower limbs are the presenting parts.

Vaginal delivery, spontaneous

Birth without intervention, in which the baby's head is the presenting part.

Appendix A: Hospital and non-hospital births

Table 40 Royal Darwin Hospital

		2000		2001		2002		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Number of mothers	<i>Total</i>	1572	100.0	1658	100.0	1563	100.0	4793	100.0
	Indigenous	497	31.6	638	38.5	576	36.8	1711	35.7
	non-Indigenous	1075	68.4	1020	61.5	987	63.2	3082	64.3
Maternal age									
Less than 20 years	Indigenous	141	28.4	170	26.6	147	25.5	458	26.8
	non-Indigenous	72	6.7	77	7.5	83	8.4	232	7.5
20 years and over	Indigenous	356	71.6	468	73.4	429	74.5	1253	73.2
	non-Indigenous	1003	93.3	943	92.5	904	91.6	2850	92.5
Antenatal visits									
	Yes	1508	95.9	1613	97.3	1497	95.8	4618	96.3
	No	7	0.4	4	0.2	10	0.6	21	0.4
	Unknown	57	3.6	41	2.5	56	3.6	154	3.2
Smoking (first trimester)									
	Yes	459	29.2	529	31.9	507	32.4	1495	31.2
	No	905	57.6	924	55.7	829	53	2658	55.5
	Unknown	208	13.2	205	12.4	227	14.5	640	13.4
Received an ultrasound (before 20 weeks)									
		1077	76.7	1118	74	992	63.5	3187	66.5
Method of birth									
	Normal vaginal birth	1150	73.2	1191	71.8	1095	70.1	3436	71.7
	Emergency caesareans	185	11.8	213	12.8	243	15.5	641	13.4
	Elective caesareans	117	7.4	144	8.7	132	8.4	393	8.2
	Vacuum extraction birth	66	4.2	65	3.9	56	3.6	187	3.9
	Forceps birth	44	2.8	37	2.2	30	1.9	111	2.3
	Vaginal breech birth	10	0.6	8	0.5	7	0.4	25	0.5
Onset of labor									
	Spontaneous onset	1094	69.6	1099	66.3	1082	69.2	3275	68.3
	Induced labor	314	20.0	371	22.4	303	19.4	988	20.6
	No labor	164	10.4	188	11.3	178	11.4	530	11.1
Complications of childbirth									
	Meconium stained liquor	261	28.4	273	24.5	228	21.4	762	24.6
	Fetal distress	188	20.4	227	20.4	203	19.1	618	19.9
	Postpartum hemorrhage	96	10.4	110	9.9	104	9.8	310	10
	Obstructed labor	60	6.5	84	7.5	107	10.1	251	8.1
	Hypertension	54	5.9	58	5.2	42	3.9	154	5
	Pre-eclampsia	41	4.5	38	3.4	38	3.6	117	3.8
	Ante-partum hemorrhage	39	4.2	41	3.7	53	5	133	4.3
	Retained placenta	25	2.7	42	3.8	35	3.3	102	3.3
	Other	156	17.0	241	21.6	254	23.9	651	21
Birthweight									
Less than 2500 g	Indigenous	99	19.9	95	14.8	103	17.7	297	17.3
	non-Indigenous	101	9.3	76	7.4	77	7.8	254	8.2
2500g or more	Indigenous	392	80.1	548	85.2	478	82.3	1418	82.7
	non-Indigenous	982	90.7	954	92.6	909	92.2	2845	91.8

Table 41 Darwin Private Hospital

		2000		2001		2002		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Number of mothers	<i>Total</i>	<i>577</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>634</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>689</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>1900</i>	<i>100.0</i>
	Indigenous	9	1.6	8	1.3	13	1.9	30	1.6
	non-Indigenous	568	98.4	626	98.7	676	98.1	1870	98.4
Maternal age									
Less than 20 years	Indigenous	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
	non-Indigenous	7	1.2	7	1.1	13	1.9	27	1.4
20 years and over	Indigenous	8	1.4	8	1.3	13	1.9	29	1.5
	non-Indigenous	561	97.2	619	97.6	663	96.2	1843	97.0
Antenatal visits	Yes	550	95.3	625	98.6	673	97.7	1848	97.3
	No	0	0.0	2	0.3	3	0.4	5	0.3
	Unknown	27	4.7	7	1.1	13	1.9	47	2.5
Smoking (first trimester)	Yes	38	6.6	34	5.4	49	7.1	121	6.4
	No	508	88.0	583	92.0	601	87.2	1692	89.1
	Unknown	30	5.2	17	2.7	39	5.7	86	4.5
Received an ultrasound (before 20 weeks)		474	82.1	565	89.1	670	97.2	1709	89.9
Method of birth	Normal vaginal birth	330	57.2	353	55.7	367	53.3	1050	55.3
	Emergency caesareans	105	18.2	118	18.6	182	26.4	405	21.3
	Elective caesareans	89	15.4	85	13.4	67	9.7	241	12.7
	Vacuum extraction birth	0	0.0	27	4.3	18	2.6	45	2.4
	Forceps birth	52	9.0	53	8.4	54	7.8	159	8.4
Onset of labor	Spontaneous onset	287	49.7	327	51.6	304	44.1	918	48.3
	Induced labor	179	31.0	180	28.4	206	29.9	565	29.7
	No labor	110	19.1	127	20.0	179	26.0	416	21.9
Complications of childbirth	Meconium stained liquor	55	22.3	59	27.2	43	24.2	157	24.5
	Fetal distress	36	14.6	42	19.4	27	15.2	105	16.4
	Retained placenta	12	4.9	2	0.9	2	1.1	16	2.5
	Postpartum hemorrhage	11	4.5	17	7.8	12	6.7	40	6.2
	Pre-eclampsia	11	4.5	10	4.6	3	1.7	24	3.7
	Ante-partum hemorrhage	5	2.0	5	2.3	5	2.8	15	2.3
	Hypertension	4	1.6	2	0.9	3	1.7	9	1.4
	Obstructed labor	0	0.0	1	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.2
	Cord prolapse	1	0.4	2	0.9	0	0.0	3	0.5
	Other	112	45.3	77	35.5	83	46.6	272	42.4
Birthweight									
Less than 2500 g	Indigenous	0	0.0	2	10.5	1	6.3	3	7.3
	non-Indigenous	25	4.4	30	4.7	22	3.3	77	4.1
2500g or more	Indigenous	6	100.0	17	89.5	15	93.8	38	92.7
	non-Indigenous	542	95.6	609	95.3	644	96.7	1795	95.9

Table 42 Alice Springs Hospital

		2000		2001		2002		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Number of mothers	Total	814	100.0	789	100.0	817	100.0	2420	100.0
	Indigenous	435	53.4	431	54.6	434	53.1	1300	53.7
	non-Indigenous	379	46.6	358	45.4	383	46.9	1120	46.3
Maternal age									
Less than 20 years	Indigenous	148	34.0	132	30.6	143	32.9	423	32.5
	non-Indigenous	22	5.8	23	6.4	15	3.9	60	5.4
20 years and over	Indigenous	287	66.0	299	69.4	291	67.1	877	67.5
	non-Indigenous	357	94.2	335	93.6	368	96.1	1060	94.6
Antenatal visits	Yes	779	95.7	760	96.3	795	97.3	2334	96.4
	No	8	1.0	8	1.0	9	1.1	25	1.0
	Unknown	27	3.3	21	2.7	13	1.6	61	2.5
Smoking (first trimester)	Yes	177	21.7	198	25.1	181	22.2	556	23.0
	No	452	55.5	444	56.3	503	61.6	1399	57.8
	Unknown	185	22.7	147	18.6	133	16.3	465	19.2
Receiving an ultrasound (before 20 weeks)		500	61.4	518	65.7	551	67.4	1569	64.8
Method of birth	Normal vaginal birth	584	71.7	534	67.7	579	70.9	1697	70.1
	Emergency caesareans	103	12.7	119	15.1	140	17.1	362	15.0
	Elective caesareans	65	8.0	68	8.6	58	7.1	191	7.9
	Vacuum extraction birth	43	5.3	39	4.9	19	2.3	101	4.2
	Forceps birth	16	2.0	26	3.3	20	2.4	62	2.6
	Vaginal breech birth	3	0.4	3	0.4	1	0.1	7	0.3
Onset of labor	Spontaneous onset	560	68.8	553	70.1	557	68.2	1670	69.0
	Induced labor	175	21.5	141	17.9	175	21.4	491	20.3
	No labor	79	9.7	95	12.0	85	10.4	259	10.7
Complications of childbirth	Fetal distress	101	24.6	80	21.3	83	22.0	264	22.7
	Meconium stained liquor	80	19.5	77	20.5	59	15.6	216	18.6
	Postpartum hemorrhage	58	14.1	42	11.2	52	13.8	152	13.1
	Obstructed labor	45	11.0	36	9.6	32	8.5	113	9.7
	Hypertension	29	7.1	27	7.2	29	7.7	85	7.3
	Retained placenta	15	3.7	17	4.5	13	3.4	45	3.9
	Ante-partum hemorrhage	8	2.0	6	1.6	11	2.9	25	2.1
	Other	74	18.0	91	24.2	99	26.2	264	22.7
Birthweight									
Less than 2500g	Indigenous	48	11.1	55	13.2	50	11.4	153	11.9
	non-Indigenous	17	4.5	24	6.6	14	3.6	55	4.9
2500g or more	Indigenous	384	88.9	362	86.8	387	88.6	1133	88.1
	non-Indigenous	361	95.5	339	93.4	371	96.4	1071	95.1

Table 43 Katherine Hospital

		2000		2001		2002		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Number of mothers	Total	333	100.0	386	100.0	352	100.0	1071	100.0
	Indigenous	192	57.7	243	63.0	207	58.8	642	59.9
	non-Indigenous	141	42.3	143	37.0	145	41.2	429	40.1
Maternal age									
Less than 20 years	Indigenous	75	39.1	92	37.9	72	34.8	239	37.2
	non-Indigenous	15	10.6	12	8.4	11	7.6	38	8.9
20 years and over	Indigenous	117	60.9	151	62.1	135	65.2	403	62.8
	non-Indigenous	126	89.4	131	91.6	134	92.4	391	91.1
Antenatal visits	Yes	311	93.4	378	97.9	323	91.8	1012	94.5
	No	0	0.0	3	0.8	0	0.0	3	0.3
	Unknown	22	6.6	5	1.3	29	8.2	56	5.2
Smoking (first trimester)	Yes	119	35.7	165	42.7	132	37.5	416	38.8
	No	193	58.0	203	52.6	196	55.7	592	55.3
	Unknown	21	6.3	18	4.7	24	6.8	63	5.9
Received an ultrasound (before 20 weeks)		159	47.7	210	54.4	197	56.0	566	52.8
Method of birth	Normal vaginal birth	266	79.9	277	71.8	271	77.0	814	76.0
	Emergency caesareans	33	9.9	54	14.0	44	12.5	131	12.2
	Elective caesareans	22	6.6	33	8.5	28	8.0	83	7.7
	Vacuum extraction birth	8	2.4	16	4.1	7	2.0	31	2.9
	Forceps birth	3	0.9	6	1.6	2	0.6	11	1.0
	Vaginal breech birth	1	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Onset of labor	Spontaneous onset	269	80.8	270	69.9	261	74.1	800	74.7
	Induced labor	40	12.0	78	20.2	55	15.6	173	16.2
	No labor	24	7.2	38	9.8	36	10.2	98	9.2
Complications of childbirth	Meconium stained liquor	33	22.8	43	19.1	45	23.8	121	21.6
	Postpartum hemorrhage	28	19.3	56	24.9	48	25.4	132	23.6
	Obstructed labor	19	13.1	24	10.7	16	8.5	59	10.6
	Hypertension	17	11.7	25	11.1	19	10.1	61	10.9
	Fetal distress	15	10.3	30	13.3	25	13.2	70	12.5
	Retained placenta	10	6.9	7	3.1	9	4.8	26	4.7
	Ante-partum hemorrhage	2	1.4	3	1.3	1	0.5	6	1.1
	Cord prolapse	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.2
	Other	21	14.5	36	16.0	26	13.8	83	14.8
Birthweight									
Less than 2500 g	Indigenous	16	8.3	20	8.3	20	9.8	56	8.8
	non-Indigenous	3	2.1	3	2.1	4	2.7	10	2.3
2500g or more	Indigenous	176	91.7	222	91.7	184	90.2	582	91.2
	non-Indigenous	139	97.9	137	97.9	142	97.3	418	97.7

Table 44 Gove District Hospital

		2000		2001		2002		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Number of mothers	<i>Total</i>	223	100.0	163	100.0	189	100.0	575	100.0
	Indigenous	167	74.9	110	67.5	122	64.6	399	69.4
	non-Indigenous	56	25.1	53	32.5	67	35.4	176	30.6
Maternal age									
Less than 20 years	Indigenous	63	37.7	32	29.1	46	37.7	141	35.3
	non-Indigenous	2	3.6	0	0.0	1	1.5	3	1.7
20 years and over	Indigenous	104	62.3	78	70.9	76	62.3	258	64.7
	non-Indigenous	54	96.4	53	100.0	66	98.5	173	98.3
Antenatal visits	Yes	208	93.3	161	98.8	178	94.2	547	95.1
	No	4	1.8	0	0.0	4	2.1	8	1.4
	Unknown	11	4.9	2	1.2	7	3.7	20	3.5
Smoking (first trimester)	Yes	73	32.7	56	34.4	71	37.6	200	34.8
	No	116	52.0	85	52.1	92	48.7	293	51.0
	Unknown	34	15.2	22	13.5	26	13.8	82	14.3
Receiving an ultrasound (before 20 weeks)		106	47.5	85	52.1	105	55.6	296	51.5
Method of birth	Normal vaginal birth	179	80.3	129	79.1	148	78.3	456	79.3
	Emergency caesareans	39	17.5	25	15.3	24	12.7	88	15.3
	Elective caesareans	5	2.2	7	4.3	14	7.4	26	4.5
	Vacuum extraction birth	0	0.0	2	1.2	3	1.6	5	0.9
Onset of labor	Spontaneous onset	200	89.7	139	85.3	157	83.1	496	86.3
	Induced labour	17	7.6	14	8.6	18	9.5	49	8.5
	No labour	6	2.7	10	6.1	14	7.4	30	5.2
Complications of childbirth	Postpartum hemorrhage	43	26.9	19	24.7	28	29.2	90	27.0
	Meconium stained liquor	31	19.4	14	18.2	21	21.9	66	19.8
	Fetal distress	22	13.8	6	7.8	7	7.3	35	10.5
	Obstructed labor	14	8.8	12	15.6	9	9.4	35	10.5
	Hypertension	8	5.0	1	1.3	3	3.1	12	3.6
	Retained placenta	7	4.4	4	5.2	4	4.2	15	4.5
	Pre-eclampsia	4	2.5	2	2.6	1	1.0	7	2.1
	Ante-partum hemorrhage	1	0.6	1	1.3	4	4.2	6	1.8
	Other	30	18.8	18	23.4	19	19.8	67	20.1
Birthweight									
Less than 2500g	Indigenous	8	4.8	10	8.8	8	6.8	26	6.6
	non-Indigenous								
2500g or more	Indigenous	157	95.2	104	91.2	109	93.2	370	93.4
	non-Indigenous	56	100.0	54	100.0	67	100.0	177	100.0

Table 45 Tennant Creek Hospital

		2000		2001		2002		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Number of mothers	<i>Total</i>	42	100.0	38	100.0	43	100.0	123	100.0
	Indigenous	27	64.3	29	76.3	30	69.8	86	69.9
	non-Indigenous	15	35.7	9	23.7	13	30.2	37	30.1
Maternal age									
Less than 20 years	Indigenous	11	40.7	8	27.6	8	26.7	27	31.4
	non-Indigenous	2	13.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	3	8.1
20 years and over	Indigenous	16	59.3	21	72.4	22	73.3	59	68.6
	non-Indigenous	13	86.7	8	88.9	13	100.0	34	91.9
Antenatal visits									
	Yes	39	92.9	37	97.4	39	90.7	115	93.5
	No	0	0.0	1	2.6	1	2.3	2	1.6
	Unknown	3	7.1	0	0.0	3	7.0	6	4.9
Smoking (first trimester)									
	Yes	14	33.3	10	26.3	10	23.3	34	27.6
	No	21	50.0	27	71.1	20	46.5	68	55.3
	Unknown	7	16.7	1	2.6	13	30.2	21	17.1
Receiving an ultrasound (before 20 weeks)									
		23	54.8	15	39.5	15	34.9	53	43.1
Method of birth									
	Normal vaginal birth	39	92.9	37	97.4	43	100.0	119	96.7
	Emergency caesareans	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Elective caesareans	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Vacuum extraction birth	2	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.6
	Forceps birth	0	0.0	1	2.6	0	0.0	1	0.8
	Vaginal breech birth	1	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Onset of labor									
	Spontaneous labor	42	100.0	38	100.0	42	97.7	122	99.2
	Induced labor	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.3	1	0.8
	No labor	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
								0	
Complications of childbirth									
	Meconium stained liquor	7	36.8	2	33.3	10	40.0	19	38.0
	Postpartum hemorrhage	5	26.3	0	0.0	4	16.0	9	18.0
	Fetal distress	2	10.5	2	33.3	4	16.0	8	16.0
	Hypertension	0	0.0	1	16.7	1	4.0	2	4.0
	Retained placenta	0	0.0	1	16.7	2	8.0	3	6.0
	Ante-partum hemorrhage	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Other	5	26.3	0	0.0	4	16.0	9	18.0
Birthweight									
Less than 2500g	Indigenous	2	7.7	2	7.1	1	3.6	5	6.1
	non-Indigenous	2	13.3		0.0		0.0	2	5.4
2500g or more	Indigenous	24	92.3	26	92.9	27	96.4	77	93.9
	non-Indigenous	13	86.7	9	100.0	13	100.0	35	94.6

Table 46 Non-hospital births

		2001		2002		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Number of mothers	Total	116	100.0	82	100.0	198	100.0
	Indigenous	73	62.9	54	65.9	127	64.1
	non-Indigenous	43	37.1	28	34.1	71	35.9
Maternal age							
Less than 20 years	Indigenous	22	19.0	16	19.5	38	19.2
	non-Indigenous	1	0.9	1	1.2	2	1.0
20 years and over	Indigenous	51	44.0	38	46.3	89	44.9
	non-Indigenous	42	36.2	27	32.9	69	34.8
Place of birth							
	Community health centre	44	37.9	39	47.6	83	41.9
	Home birth	37	31.9	35	42.7	72	36.4
	In transit	4	3.4	7	8.5	11	5.6
	Other	31	26.7	1	1.2	32	16.2
Antenatal visits							
	Yes	113	97.4	74	90.2	187	94.4
	No	3	2.6	8	9.8	11	5.6
	Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Method of birth							
	Normal vaginal birth	116	100.0	82	100.0	198	100.0
Onset of labour							
	Spontaneous onset	116	100.0	82	100.0	198	100.0
Complications of childbirth							
	Postpartum haemorrhage	7	22.6	6	20.0	13	21.3
	Meconium stained liquor	2	6.5	7	23.3	9	14.8
	Fetal distress	2	6.5	0	0.0	2	3.3
	Retained placenta	2	6.5	2	6.7	4	6.6
	Hypertension	1	3.2	0	0.0	1	1.6
	Antepartum haemorrhage	1	3.2		0.0	1	1.6
	Other	16	51.6	15	50.0	31	50.8
Birthweight							
Less than 2500g	Indigenous	24	20.7	15	18.3	39	19.7
	Non Indigenous	3	2.6	0	0.0	3	1.5
2500g or more	Indigenous	49	42.2	39	47.6	88	44.4
	Non Indigenous	40	34.5	28	34.1	68	34.3

Appendix B: Population estimates, Northern Territory, 2000–2002

Table 47 Population of the Northern Territory, 2000

Age (years)	Males			Females			Total
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Total	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Total	
0-4	3514	5509	9023	3329	5193	8522	17545
5-9	3694	5381	9075	3334	5062	8396	17471
10-14	3313	4847	8160	3029	4554	7583	15743
15-19	3029	4741	7770	2949	4199	7148	14918
20-24	2750	5767	8517	2687	5029	7716	16233
25-29	2725	7181	9906	2697	6663	9360	19266
30-34	2177	7104	9281	2247	6568	8815	18096
35-39	1866	7176	9042	2005	6244	8249	17291
40-44	1427	6365	7792	1541	5686	7227	15019
45-49	1150	5978	7128	1241	5163	6404	13532
50-54	847	5413	6260	900	4190	5090	11350
55-59	582	3704	4286	642	2615	3257	7543
60-64	430	2273	2703	516	1384	1900	4603
65-69	254	1280	1534	355	880	1235	2769
70-74	171	922	1093	221	633	854	1947
75+	240	778	1018	269	857	1126	2144
Total	28 169	74 419	102 588	27 962	64 920	92 882	195 470

Table 48 Population of the Northern Territory, 2001

Age (years)	Males			Females			Total
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Total	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Total	
0-4	3499	5506	9005	3370	5224	8594	17599
5-9	3683	5417	9100	3314	5065	8379	17479
10-14	3417	4957	8374	3066	4657	7723	16097
15-19	3007	4680	7687	2966	4207	7173	14860
20-24	2758	5669	8427	2664	4952	7616	16043
25-29	2669	6825	9494	2644	6385	9029	18523
30-34	2274	7105	9379	2342	6705	9047	18426
35-39	1895	7044	8939	2039	6165	8204	17143
40-44	1500	6535	8035	1605	5823	7428	15463
45-49	1194	5961	7155	1276	5267	6543	13698
50-54	872	5666	6538	954	4559	5513	12051
55-59	593	3858	4451	644	2774	3418	7869
60-64	463	2548	3011	550	1561	2111	5122
65-69	262	1357	1619	377	913	1290	2909
70-74	177	997	1174	236	682	918	2092
75+	250	815	1065	275	899	1174	2239
Total	28 513	74 940	103 453	28 322	65 838	94 160	197 613

Table 49 Population of the Northern Territory, 2002

Age (years)	Males			Females			Total
	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Total	Indigenous	non-Indigenous	Total	
0-4	3526	5548	9074	3362	5213	8575	17649
5-9	3578	5264	8842	3262	4988	8250	17092
10-14	3454	5011	8465	3065	4654	7719	16184
15-19	2991	4655	7646	2975	4219	7194	14840
20-24	2740	5632	8372	2628	4884	7512	15884
25-29	2574	6579	9153	2513	6065	8578	17731
30-34	2274	7104	9378	2367	6777	9144	18522
35-39	1876	6972	8848	2003	6057	8060	16908
40-44	1531	6666	8197	1627	5901	7528	15725
45-49	1179	5886	7065	1276	5259	6535	13600
50-54	877	5690	6567	980	4680	5660	12227
55-59	632	4101	4733	685	2947	3632	8365
60-64	501	2752	3253	600	1699	2299	5552
65-69	278	1443	1721	392	947	1339	3060
70-74	180	1014	1194	243	701	944	2138
75+	281	917	1198	307	1069	1376	2574
Total	28 472	75 234	103 706	28 285	66 060	94 345	198 051

Feedback

The Department of Health and Community Services values your opinion, constructive criticism and suggestions for improving the way we provide information on health status and the factors that affect it, in the Northern Territory. Our aim is to inform the community, policy makers and service providers about the state of health and about those factors that influence health in the Northern Territory. We also aim to provide scientifically sound information, to produce this information in a form that is easy to read and understand, and to make the information widely available.

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Your Comments Please

Can you describe yourself. For example, are you a member of the public, a health professional, a policy analyst, a student or other category?

.....

Can you describe your main occupation (tick more than one if necessary)

- Planning and delivering health services Policy development work
- Conducting research and analysis Other:

How did you find the format of this report? Easy to follow Difficult to follow

Did you find the report informative? Yes No

What content changes would you like to see to the report to make it more informative?

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