

# Insights 2

Insights into the lives of people living with psychosis from the Survey of High Impact Psychosis and the Psychosis Australia Trust.



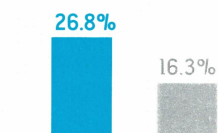
# Physical health

+ people with psychosis



## Increased physical illness

People with psychotic illness experience physical illness at far higher rates than the general population. As well as heart disease, there are higher rates of asthma, diabetes, hepatitis, epilepsy, arthritis, kidney disease, migraine, and stroke.



Rates of heart disease

People with psychotic illness 26.8%  
General population 16.3%

## High rates of metabolic syndrome

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of medical conditions, including obesity, high blood pressure, and increased glucose and cholesterol levels. It carries a high risk of diabetes and heart disease, and is twice as common among people with psychotic illness.

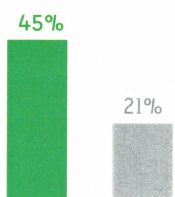


Rates of metabolic syndrome

People with psychotic illness 61%  
General population 29%

## Early impact on health

Before the age of 20, people with psychotic illness are already showing signs of metabolic syndrome. By the time they are adults, 45% will be obese – more than double the general population rate.



Rates of obesity

People with psychotic illness 45%  
General population 21%

## High smoking rates

Smoking is a major health risk for a range of fatal conditions. People with psychotic illness smoke at over three times the rate of the general population.

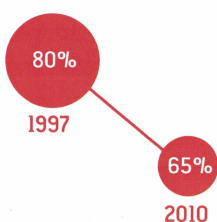


Smoking rates

People with psychotic illness 66%  
General population 20%

## Conditions are undetected

Detection of physical health conditions among people with psychotic illness is poor, despite the known risk factors. The proportion having physical health examinations has dropped dramatically in recent years.



Physical health assessments

Proportion in 1997 80%  
Proportion in 2010 65%

## Serious under-treatment

Many people with psychotic illness do not receive treatment and medication for diabetes and other serious conditions. Modifiable risk factors such as smoking, obesity, low physical activity, and poor nutrition are also not addressed.



Rates of treatment

Untreated for diabetes 60%  
Untreated for hypertension 48%

# The challenge

## Physical health + people with psychosis

People living with psychotic illness die 10-20 years earlier than other Australians.

They experience far higher rates of heart disease and other serious physical health conditions. They are also more likely to have risk factors for physical illness from a young age, but these are not routinely measured or treated. As well as the cost to physical health and quality of life, there is a cost to health services of treating these problems – an avoidable cost if early action is taken.

**Our challenge is to reduce the human and economic costs of physical ill health in people already burdened by severe mental illness, through systematic detection and treatment, and especially by reducing rates of the harmful and avoidable risk factors which lead to these conditions.**

For more information, contact

Professor Vera Morgan | Chair of the Survey of High Impact Psychosis (SHIP) Study Group  
vera.morgan@uwa.edu.au