

FACT SHEET: CANCER¹

- Cancer killed 42,418 Australians in 2008, according to the NSW Cancer Institute's latest Incidence and Mortality Report
- Cancer is responsible for 28 per cent of all deaths in NSW and is the single largest cause of death in people aged between 35 and 84 in 2008
- In 2008, the number of men and women diagnosed with cancer has increased to 36,611 new cases, an increase of 11 per cent over the past 10 years
- Incidence rates have increased in men by 11 per cent over the past 10 years, although there has been a significant downward trend in cancer incidence rates in women for the most recent seven-year period
- There has been a statistically significant improvement in the five-year survival rate from 63 per cent in 1999-2003 to 64 per cent in 2002-2006
- Prostate cancer is the most common cancer overall, increasing from 18 per cent in 2007 to 19 per cent of total cancers in 2008. Prostate cancer represents 33 per cent of all cancers in men
- Australia has the highest rates of melanoma in the world and this has continued to increase over the last 10 years by 15 per cent in males and 11 per cent in females. Most of the increase in melanoma is seen in older people with no increases in those aged less than 50 years
- Cancers of the prostate, bowel, breast, melanoma and lung were responsible for 63% of all new cases of cancer.
- The most common causes of cancer death are lung, bowel, unknown primary, breast and prostate.
- In females, breast cancer incidence rates reduced by 73 per cent, possibly due to increased awareness of breast cancer in young women in the media.
- In the past 10 years, mortality rates fell by 13% in men and 8%

¹ 2008 Cancer in NSW: Incidence and Mortality Report, NSW Cancer Institute