Patterns of Injuries among 0-19 year olds in the Pilbara, 2001-2011

The Pilbara region is WA’s second most northern region, covering 507,896 square kilometres. The major population centres include Karratha, Port Hedland, Newman and Tom Price, with the region also including many Aboriginal, pastoral, mining and coastal communities. The majority of inhabitants are located within the western half of the region, with the eastern half made up of very few. The Pilbara has a large transient population due to the fly-in-fly out workforce which can create a challenge to deliver accessible health services across the region.

There are two main public hospitals located in Karratha and Port Hedland, with five smaller hospitals located throughout the region. Aboriginal Health Services and the Royal Flying Doctor Service play a vital role in the regions health care and where necessary, patients are flown to Perth for treatment.

Demographics

13,907

Children reside in the Pilbara region on average per year

22%
Aboriginal

78%
Non-Aboriginal

Child Injury Stats

About 1 in 18 WA child injury deaths occur in the Pilbara

2,870
Pilbara children treated each year for an injury

379
Pilbara children hospitalised each year for an injury

Regional Childhood Injury Snapshot: Pilbara

Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia
Western Australia
The Pilbara region recorded the third highest injury death rate (33.5 deaths per 100,000) and the second highest hospitalisation rate (2,714.3 per 100,000) among 0 to 19 year olds when compared to all other regions in WA. The Pilbara region also recorded the highest injury hospitalisation rate of Aboriginal children in WA with 4,625.4 per 100,000 compared to 2,160.7 per 100,000 for non-Aboriginal children.

When child injury hospitalisations are broken down by gender, males aged 0-19 years were more likely to be hospitalised for an injury in the Pilbara region accounting for 3,364.1 per 100,000 compared to females with a rate of 1,990.4 per 100,000.

The majority of hospitalisations (85.7%, n=3,007) were due to unintentional circumstances. Causes of unintentional injury resulting in hospitalisation in the Pilbara include:

**Falls (31%)  Transport Accidents (23%)  Burns & Scalds (4%)  Poisoning (3%)**

**PRIORITIES FOR PREVENTION**

- Raise awareness within the community of the causes of childhood injury and the extent of the problem.
- Convey to the community that childhood injuries are largely preventable.
- Involve key community stakeholders such as parents, carers, child care services, educators, health professionals and sporting organisations.
- Provide culturally appropriate information with a specific focus on injuries to Aboriginal children, children of low-socio economic status and those living in remote communities.
- Encourage supervision as the most important method in the prevention of childhood injuries.
- Promote the use of child car restraints and direct parents and carers to qualified type 2 child car restraint installers.
- Educate children and young people on how to stay safe on and around roads.
- Encourage community members to keep children away from hot items that could burn or scald such as camp fires, hot tap water and hot food and drink.
- Educate community members on how to keep young children safe in and around water.

For further information on childhood injury prevention and resources that may be useful in your region please visit the Kidsafe WA website: [www.kidsafewa.com.au](http://www.kidsafewa.com.au)

**REFERENCES**
