The South West Melbourne catchment includes the cities of Hobsons Bay and Wyndham and has a current population of almost 270,000. A significant challenge for the catchment is managing and responding to the differences in the two local council areas. Hobsons Bay is relatively advantaged, close to the State average in many key socio-economic indicators, well serviced by public transport and health service provision and its growth rate remains below average. In contrast, indicators suggest higher levels of disadvantage in Wyndham, including higher than average rates of unemployment, mortgage/rental stress, food insecurity, family incidents, alcohol related family violence and lower rates of service provision (including fewer pharmacies) and transport challenges. It is also the second fastest growing municipality in Victoria and the proportion of young people is greater than the State average.

Despite the differences, the two LGAs are similar in relation to:

- Cultural diversity: both have high rates of people born in a non-English speaking country and speaking languages other than English at home. People from India represent the largest group from a non-English speaking country. The rate of new settler arrivals in Wyndham is much higher than the state average.
- Gambling measures: both LGAs are ranked within the top 20 LGAs for gaming machine losses per head of adult population.
- Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) risk taking in young people: a range of indicators show particular vulnerability amongst young people aged 15 – 17 years – including high rates of smoking and alcohol, marijuana and illicit drug use.
- High rates of use of AOD services for alcohol and high number of presentations to emergency departments for pharmaceutical use, particularly for the 15 – 24 year old age group in Hobson’s Bay.

Both catchments have lower rates of registered mental health clients. However, Wyndham has a lower rate of MHCSS clients per 1000 population than the regional average and Hobsons Bay is higher. The rate of people seeking professional help for a mental health problem in Hobsons Bay is also higher than the State average although other indicators of psychological issues are similar.

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**Priorities for the South West catchment**

1. **Wyndham the growth corridor**
   
   Wyndham was repeatedly raised as an area of specific priority.

   - Allocation of resources
   - Poor infrastructure: transport, service provision
   - Specific area demographics, representing priority need

2. Service system: Specific needs raised around:
   
   - GPs: more training & awareness in recognising AOD issues / needs in their patients, pharmacotherapy permits
   - Opportunities for cross sector collaboration for problem solving & innovation
   - Need for CALD services, young people, people with gambling problems & families

3. Client need: Specific client groups require local planning attention.

   Service access issues identified for:
   
   - Young people
   - Culturally & linguistically diverse groups (especially refugees)
   - Families

   Complexity in the client group:
   
   - Culturally & linguistically diverse groups (especially refugees)
   - People with gambling issues
   - People with medical co-morbidities
**WYNDHAM** (pop 179,195)

Located on the south western fringe of Melbourne, growth is one of Wyndham’s key challenges – it is currently the 2nd fastest growing municipality in Victoria, and had the 4th largest population growth rate in Australia for the year 2012-13.

Wyndham has a relatively young population with 23% aged 0-14 and less than 7% aged 65+. There is a high level of cultural diversity, 27% were born in a non-English speaking country and 32% speak a language other than English at home. Unemployment is above average, but median household income is higher than average. The percentage of current smokers, rate of family incidents and developmentally vulnerable children are all higher than the state average.

Wyndham faces service distribution challenges, with the lowest current rates of GPs per 1000, Allied Health per 1000 and Pharmacies per 1000 in the whole of the North & West catchments. More than 26% of people commute over 2 hours per day (associated with a range of negative health effects including: stress, lower life satisfaction, negative impacts on relationships, financial costs and less time spent on health promoting behaviours).

AOD risk taking behaviour by young people is higher than the state average, particularly in relation to 15 to 17 year olds who have ever taken illicit drugs. There is also a high rate of alcohol related family violence in 18 to 24 year olds.

**HOBSONS BAY** (pop 88,408)

Hobsons Bay has a relatively high level of cultural diversity with 25% of people born in a non-English speaking country and 31% speaking a language other than English at home. There is a slightly lower than average rate of new settler arrivals. The most commonly spoken languages are Arabic, Italian and Greek which together equate for just over 10% of the population. Unlike neighbouring Wyndham, Hobsons Bay’s growth rate is projected to remain below average for the next 2 decades and its population distribution across age groups is broadly similar to that of the state.

AOD risk taking behaviour by young people is significantly higher than the state average. Men’s health is an area of particular concern for Hobsons Bay, with male obesity (26.6%) and male smoking rates (30%) both well above average (17.4% and 18.5% respectively). Persons who do not meet fruit and vegetable intake and physical activity guidelines are among the highest in the state.

Hobson’s Bay is relatively well serviced and is close to the state average in many key socio economic indicators. It ranks fifth in the state for its residents having adequate work/life balance (61.9%).