Aboriginal	A person of Aboriginal descent who identifies as an Aboriginal and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.
Admission	Admission to hospital. In this report, the number of separations has been taken as the number of admissions. Hence, admission rate is the same as separation rate.
Age-specific rate	A rate for a specified age group. The numerator and denominator relate to the same age group. See Appendix 1 (Section A1.1) for full description.
Age standardisation	A method of removing the influence of age when comparing populations with different age structures. This is usually necessary because the rates of many diseases vary considerably with age. The age structures of the different populations are converted to the same 'standard' structure, then the disease rates that would have occurred with that structure are calculated and compared.
Airway hyperresponsiveness	Excessive twitchiness or narrowing of the airways in response to certain stimuli. This is a characteristic feature of asthma.
ARIA/ASGC classification	A classification of the level of accessibility to goods and services (such as general practitioners, hospitals and specialist care) based on the proximity to these services (measured by road distance).
Associated cause of death	Diseases, conditions or injuries that contributed to the death directly or indirectly. Compare with *Underlying cause of death*.
Asthma	A chronic inflammatory disorder of the airways in which many cells and cellular elements play a role, in particular mast cells, eosinophils, T lymphocytes, macrophages, neutrophils and epithelial cells. In susceptible individuals this inflammation causes recurrent episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and coughing, particularly at night or in the early morning. These episodes are usually associated with widespread but variable airflow obstruction that is often reversible either spontaneously or with treatment. The inflammation also causes increases in existing bronchial hyperresponsiveness to a variety of stimuli. .
Asthma action plan	A plan that provides instructions on how to recognise and respond to worsening asthma. It is recommended that these instructions be given in writing ('written asthma action plan'). The action plan is based on symptoms and/or peak expiratory flow measurements and is individualised according to the pattern of the person's asthma. These plans have sometimes been referred to as 'asthma management plans', 'asthma plans', 'self-management plans', 'asthma care plans' or 'personal asthma plans'.
Asthma expenditure	The component of total health expenditure that is attributable to asthma. Compare with *Total health expenditure*.
Asthma management plan	An individualised plan of management for patients with asthma formulated in accordance with the Six Step Asthma Management Plan. (The asthma action plan forms one part of this.)
Asthma 3+ Visit Plan	An incentive scheme funded by the Australian Government aimed at people with moderate to severe asthma. The plan entails three visits to the GP at which asthma is assessed, an individualised asthma management plan is developed and reviewed, and the patient receives appropriate education about asthma.

Average length of stay	The mean number of days of care for inpatient hospitalisations. Calculated by dividing total patient days in a given period by the total number of hospital separations in that period. See *Patient days, Hospital separation* and *Length of stay*.
BEACH survey	A continuous cross-sectional paper-based data collection, which collects information about the reasons for seeking medical care, the type of patients seen, the types of problems managed and treatment provided in general practice across Australia.
Bronchial challenge tests	A test designed to detect the presence of airway hyperresponsiveness. See *Airway hyperresponsiveness*.
Cause of death	The disease or factor contributing to the death. When used technically this term is usually applied to the 'underlying cause' listed on the medical certificate issued at death. From information reported on the medical certificate of cause of death, each death is classified by the underlying cause of death according to rules and conventions of the International Classification of Diseases of the day (currently ICD version 10). See *Underlying cause of death and Associated cause of death*.
Confidence interval	A statistical term describing a range (interval) of values within which we can be 'confident' that the true value lies, usually because it has a 95% or higher chance of doing so.
Culturally and linguistically diverse	This term is used to describe the multicultural nature of the Australian population, including those from English-speaking countries and those from countries where English is not spoken as the first language.
Defined daily dose	The assumed average maintenance dose per day for a drug used for its main indication in adults.
English-speaking background	Includes anyone born in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, United States of America, Canada or South Africa (DIMIA English proficiency Group 1).
Estimated resident population	An estimate of the resident population derived from the 5-yearly Census counts. It is based on the usual residence of the person.
Health-related quality of life	A term used to describe the impact that a disease has on an individual's health status and everyday functioning. It is most often used when referring to chronic diseases.
Health risk factor	Any factor that represents a greater risk of a health disorder or other unwanted condition. Risk factors may be causes of disease or contributors to disease.
Health service use	Use of the available health care services within the population, including hospitals, emergency departments and general practitioners.
Health survey	A research method in which health information is collected from participants at a point in time. In population health monitoring, this typically involves selecting a representative sample of the population and administering questionnaires to the participants. This can be done in person, over the phone or by post. Some surveys have additionally included physiological measurements.
Hospital separation	The formal process by which a hospital records the completion of treatment and/or care for an admitted patient. The episode of care may be completed by an admitted patient's discharge, death, transfer to another hospital or change in the type of care.

Incidence	The number of new cases (of a disease, condition or event) occurring during a given period. Compare with *Prevalence*.
Indigenous Australians	Refers to people of Indigenous origin who identify themselves as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.
International Classification of Diseases (ICD)	The World Health Organization's internationally accepted statistical classification of disease and injury. The 10th revision is currently in use. In this report, hospital separations prior to 1998–99 and causes of death prior to 1997 under previous revisions have been reclassified to ICD-10.
Length of stay	Duration of hospital stay, calculated by subtracting the date the patient is admitted from the day of separation. All leave days, including the day the patient went on leave, are excluded. See also *Average length of stay*.
Mechanical ventilation, invasive	A medical intervention used in situations where patients become unable to breathe by themselves. It involves the use of a positive pressure ventilator to maintain respiration via an endotracheal tube. This intervention is generally administered in hospital intensive care units. See also Mechanical ventilation, non-invasive.
Mechanical ventilation, non-invasive	A medical intervention that is similar to invasive mechanical ventilation (see *Mechanical ventilation, invasive*). However, the ventilator is attached to the patient via a facemask rather than an endotracheal tube.
Morbidity	Refers to ill-health in an individual and to levels of ill-health in a population or group.
Mortality	Death.
Non-English-speaking background	This term is used to describe people who have re-settled in Australia but who come from countries where English is not the primary language spoken. Includes people born in all countries not identified as English-speaking-background countries (equivalent to DIMIA English proficiency Groups 2 to 4). See also *English-speaking-background*.
Outcome (health outcome)	A health-related change due to a preventive or clinical intervention or service. (The intervention may be single or multiple and the outcome may relate to a person, group or population or be partly or wholly due to the intervention.)
Patient days	The total number of days for patients who were admitted to hospital for an episode of care and who separated during a specified reference period. A patient who is admitted and separated on the same day is allocated one patient day. Compare with *Length of stay* and *Average length of stay*.
Prescription drugs	Pharmaceutical drugs available only on the prescription of a registered medical practitioner and only from pharmacies.
Prevalence	The number or proportion of people with certain conditions in a population at a given time. Compare with *Incidence*.
Principal diagnosis	The diagnosis established to be chiefly responsible for occasioning the episode of care or attendance at a health care facility.
Re-admission	An admission to the same or different hospital within a defined period following discharge from a hospital.
Re-attendance	An admission to a hospital or visit to the emergency department within a defined period following discharge from hospital or the emergency department.
Risk factor	See *Health risk factor*.

Rural, Remoteness and Metropolitan Areas	Classification of remoteness used in the BEACH survey. Based on the patients' location of residence.
Same day patient	Admitted patients who are admitted and separated on the same day.
SAND data	Additional questions asked of patients in subsamples of general practice encounters, as part of the BEACH survey.
SEIFA Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage	An index of socioeconomic status which provides a summary score for a range of key socioeconomic variables that are related to health status, including household income and resources, education, occupation, fluency in English, and Indigenous status.
Separation	See *Hospital separation*.
SF-36	Short-Form 36, a widely used questionnaire containing 36 questions that measure general health and wellbeing.
Six Step Asthma Management Plan	Consensus-based guidelines for the management of asthma. The six steps are: (1) Assess asthma severity; (2) Achieve best lung function; (3) Maintain best lung function: identify and avoid trigger factors; (4) Maintain best lung function: optimise medication program; (5) Develop an action plan; and (6) Educate and review regularly.
Spirometer/spirometry	Spirometry is a measure of lung function performed by a spirometer. Spirometry is used to establish the presence of airflow obstruction and its reversibility in response to bronchodilator, which is an important feature in the diagnosis of asthma.
Statistical significance	An indication from a statistical test that an observed difference or association may be significant, or 'real', because it is unlikely to be due to chance alone. A statistical result is often said to be 'significant' if it would occur by chance only once in twenty times or less often.
Total health expenditure	The sum of health expenditure for all health conditions (i.e. allocated recurrent health expenditure). This excludes expenditure that cannot be allocated to a specific disease (e.g. ambulance services) and capital expenditure (non-recurrent).
Underlying cause of death	The disease or condition considered to be most directly responsible for the death. Compare with *Associated cause of death*.
Wheeze	Breathing difficulty accompanied by an audible whistling sound.