

5.5.3 Community capacity

“Oh, I get by with a little help from my friends.”

John Lennon and Paul McCartney⁸³

The health and wellbeing of Queenslanders is generally enhanced by social participation and community life. Current evidence indicates that active, participant directed communities are healthy places to live. Furthermore, health outcomes are more likely to be maximised when government and communities work together in partnership.⁸⁴ This requires support for communities to develop the capacity to become active partners in the process.⁸⁵ This includes involvement in identifying relevant health determinant issues, and, planning, implementing and evaluating activities to address these issues.

While the impact of community factors on population health is generally accepted, a standard set of indicators to measure and monitor community capacity is yet to be established. Because there is considerable interaction and overlap among determinants, some community capacity indicators are reported in other sections of this document. There are community capacity indicators that are missing due to lack of data or limited quality data, such as some community support services. It is envisaged that in future, indicators to monitor community capacity and quality data to support these indicators will be more readily available, and more clearly defined.

The data in this report focuses on infrastructure issues like access to broadcasts, services and communications.

Many Indigenous communities are located in remote parts of Queensland and Australia. ABS data shows that access to primary school services is reasonably good. Fifty-one percent of communities with a population of 50 or more where more than 50km from a school that was able to teach to a year 10 level. Accessibility to years 11 and 12 are not documented by the ABS (Table 5.10, Table 5.13).

Access to public telephones is poor, and appears to have worsened since 1999 (Table 5.12). In 2001, three (7%) communities with a population of 50 or more in Queensland did not have access to public broadcasts (Table 5.11). Television broadcasts have the capacity to inform, but they also carry advertising for products that are unhealthy.^{86, 87} Half of the Indigenous communities identified with a population of 50 or more were located more than 50km from a hospital (Table 5.13).

Table 5.10: Travel time to nearest town this major services, 1999

	Communities with a population of					Total
	Less than 20	20-49	50-99	100-199	200 or more	
Usual means of travel - road						
Less than 1 hour	205	92	24	27	32	380
1-4 hours	271	131	36	21	43	502
5-9 hours	46	19	7	6	16	94
10 hours or more	26	4	3	3	5	41
All communities(a)	554	247	70	57	97	1025
Usual means of travel - air or sea						
Less than 1 hour	24	17	4	2	13	60
1-4 hours	23	6	1	4	20	54
5-9 hours	-	-	1	1	1	3
10 hours or more	-	-	-	-	1	1
All communities(a)	51	23	6	7	35	122
Travel time by usual means(b)						
Less than 1 hour	229	109	28	29	45	440
1-4 hours	296	138	37	25	63	559
5-9 hours	46	19	8	7	17	97
10 hours or more	26	4	3	3	6	42
All communities(a)	607	271	76	64	132	1150
Communities located within town with major services						
	5	2	23	16	12	58
All communities(c)	616	273	102	80	145	1216

Source: Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. ABS, 2001. Cat. No. 4710.0

(a) includes 'Travel time to nearest town with major services' not stated.

(b) includes 'Usual means of travel to nearest town with major services' not stated.

(c) includes 'Usual means of travel to nearest town with major services' and 'Travel time to nearest town with major services' not stated.

Table 5.11: Types of broadcasts received, communities with a population of 50 or higher, 1999

	Radio			Television				Total receiving broadcasts ^(a)	Did not receive these broadcasts	All communities ^(b)
	ABC	Commercial	Indigenous	ABC	Commercial	SBS	Indigenous			
Queensland	40	26	32	41	39	36	33	41	-	44
Australia	279	209	188	289	286	198	164	307	12	327

Source: Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. ABS, 2001. Cat. No. 4710.0

(a) Components may not add to total as more than one response may be specified.

(b) includes 'Weather broadcasts received' not stated.

Table 5.12: Access to public telephones, 1999 and 2001, communities with a population of 50 or higher

	One public telephone		Two or more public telephones		No access to a public telephone		All communities	
	1999	2001	1999	2001	1999	2001	1999	2001 ^{(a)(b)}
	%	%	%	%	%	%	no.	no.
Queensland	38.6	40.9	40.9	22.7	20.5	29.5	44	44
Australia	47.7	43.4	28.2	26.3	24.1	28.4	348	327

Source: Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. ABS, 2001. Cat. No. 4710.0

(a) Includes 'Number of public telephones in community' not stated.

(b) Includes 'Whether public telephones in community' not stated.

Table 5.13: Distance to nearest community services, communities with a population of 50 or more, 1999

	Located within the community	Less than 10km	10-24km	25-49km	50-99km	100-249km	250km or more
Distance to nearest primary school	33	5	1	-	-	1	1
Distance to nearest secondary school to year 10	8	9	1	2	9	7	5
Distance to nearest hospital	8	9	-	5	10	8	4

Source: Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. ABS, 2001, Cat No 4710.0⁸⁸