

MURTOA TOWN PROFILE 2024



Photo credit: Yarriambiack Shire Council

Murtoa was originally Marma Gully, renamed Murtoa in 1870. Its name means 'home of the lizard' in a local Traditional Language. Located in the Yarriambiack Shire it is 31.1kms from Horsham and 55kms from Warracknabeal.

Murtoa sits in prime agricultural production land and the remains of a strong and busy town are still visible. This is a community with a strong sense of self. Pride in heritage is evident in the iconic Stick Shed complex and in other features and events. Though only a short drive from the large centre of Horsham, Murtoa maintains a variety of services and utilises an extensive park complex centred around Lake Marma for both local and tourism opportunities. Sporting clubs and facilities are well-used and the local Neighbourhood House has long been a social gathering point as well as a centre for community activities.

WWHS IN MURTOA

Facilities: Community Health Centre

Services:

- Community Nursing
- Diabetes Education
- Dietetics
- Exercise Groups
- Health Education & Promotion
- Occupational Therapy
- Packaged Care
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Social Work
- Speech Therapy
- Social Support Group

WHO IS MURTOA?



The median age is 48



Country of Birth (Other than Aus)
England, India, Scotland, Germany and The Philippines



Households
37.5% Single Person
60.2% Family



3.3% of Households speak a language other than English



Families

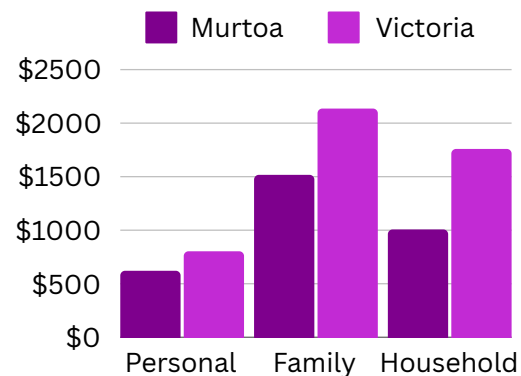
- Couple without children **44%**
- Couple with children **36.9%**
- One Parent **15.4%**

Top Employment Industries

- Hospitals / Health Services
- Other Grain Growing
- Combined Primary and Secondary Education
- Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming
- Aged Care Residential Services

1.6% are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Median Weekly Income



MURTOA IS KNOWN FOR:

Lake Marma, Murtoa Stick Shed and birth place of Amalie Sara Coloquhoun, Joyce Lee, Chris Crether, Hugh Delahunty and John Cade.



We acknowledge that Murtoa is located on the Traditional Lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people, and pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.



WEST WIMMERA HEALTH SERVICE

HOW HEALTHY IS MURTOA'S LGA (YARRIAMBIAACK SHIRE)?

Traditionally, health has been measured in rates of illness and disease. When people experience these it can have a larger impact on other aspects of their lives and on society. This is known as the burden of disease. There are systems of reporting that can give high-level information about the burden of disease to **local government or post-code areas**. These include the following sources: ABS Census, PHIDU Social Health Atlas of Australia, VAHI Victorian Population Health Survey, Dental Health Services Victoria Oral Health Profiles and data from the Crime Statistics Agency.

5 year olds with full immunisation

100%



4.1% of adults have been diagnosed with heart disease*



105 police-recorded family incidents in 2023



Potential years of life lost due to premature deaths is 55% above the national average

Potentially preventable hospitalisations is 73% above the national average



10% have a profound or severe disability



86 Median age at death 80.5



CANCER

3.1%

of adults have cancer (inc. remission*)

44.9%

participate in bowel screening

6.8% of people have Diabetes (Type 1 and Type 2)*



52.3%

participate in breast screening

42.4%

participate in cervical screening

Children with at least one decayed, missing or filled baby or adult tooth

Adults with anxiety or depression

Females - 41.1%

Males - 32%

4.2%

of adults have three or more selected (see page 4) chronic diseases*



33% - 0-5 years
59% - 6 years

In the Yarriambiack Shire:

- People have similar rates as the state in cancer screening participation
- The rate of females having anxiety or depression is higher than males, which is the same as the state
- The proportion of males and females having anxiety or depression is higher in Yarriambiack compared to the state
- Hospital admissions for preventable conditions is similar to the Australian average
- Police-recorded family incidents is similar to the state rate
- Children with tooth decay at public services is slightly higher than the state

This comparison highlights the areas most in need of improvement for Yarriambiack. Some things that could be done to help in these areas are:

- More mental health services
- Increased education on oral hygiene

WELLBEING IN MURTOA'S LGA (YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE)

Wellbeing is derived from far more than physical health. Other factors – the social determinants of health – also impact on both physical and mental wellbeing. Once again, national and state-wide data can give us a high level picture of wellbeing in Murtoa.



Highest level of Educational Attainment*

Bachelor Degree and above	12.4%
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	9.8%
Certificate III or IV	17.6%
Year 10,11 or 12	34.1%
Certificate I or II	0%
Year 9 or below	13.8%

10.1% 65 and over are Seniors Health Card holders

7.9% Receive long-term unemployment benefit

6.4% Low income, welfare-dependent families (with children)

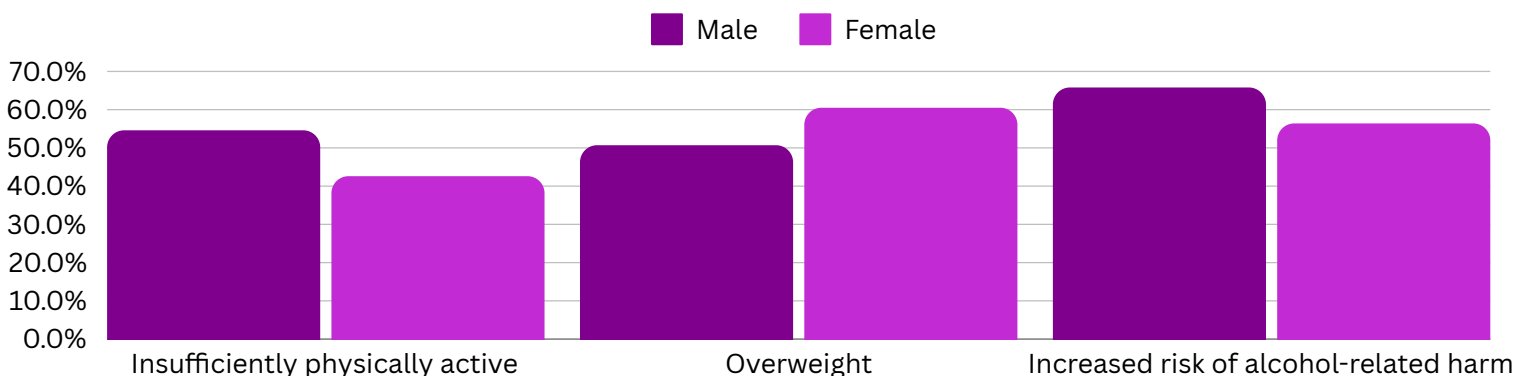
29.5% current smokers (daily and occasional)



13.3% consume sugar-sweetened soft drinks daily



55.8% do not meet dietary guidelines for either fruit or vegetable consumption



Key differences in the Yarriambiack Shire Local Government Area compared to state averages are:

- The proportion of current smokers is almost double the Victorian average
- Higher proportion of males who are insufficiently active
- Higher proportion of females who are overweight

While this data is collected at the Local Government Area level, when considered in the context of Murtoa's demographics, some key influencing factors are:

- Most people work in the farming industry (especially grain farming) which due to the increase of machinery use has led to farmers being less active in their daily work
- There is a significant proportion of older adults who may have mobility issues or limited ability to participate in physical activity
- Lower median income which can affect people's ability to access resources to support health and wellbeing, and can contribute to higher rates of unhealthy behaviours such as smoking
- Higher proportion of people who live alone

*Data at town level not LGA

This is the second edition of Murtoa's Health and Wellbeing Profile. For this, and future versions we are providing some key outcomes of our 5 Top Things survey. This specific local survey will be Murtoa's opportunity to identify what matters most about health and wellbeing to the people who live here.

WHAT DOES MURTOA THINK?

This page shows some, but not all, the findings of the 5 Top Things Survey in Murtoa.



MURTOA RATES THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HEALTH OUT OF 10 AS:

7.67

People in Murtoa told us when they need help with their health, they to go places like the Community Health Centre and Ambulance. **BUT**.... They also walk and exercise around the lake, go swimming, talk to neighbours, family and people at church.

People in Murtoa were most concerned about the following in their community:

Mental health

Health service access

Drug/alcohol use

Elderly population

Transport, especially for older adults

WHEN PEOPLE THINK MURTOA, THEY THINK:

PRIORITIES FOR MURTOA

The regional health promotion priorities for the Wimmera and Southern Mallee are:

- Healthy Eating
- Active Living
- Social Connection
- Reduction of Harm from Tobacco and Alcohol

Foundational activities for the WWSHS Health Promotion team include:

- Café Health
- WWSHS Community Health & Wellbeing grants projects:
 - Murtoa Community Pool Come and Try Days

People in Murtoa have come up with some ideas to tackle their main concerns. These ideas could be addressed by the community, service providers, or advocated for:

- Increase the frequency the doctor is in town and other medical support.
- Increase transport available, particularly for attending appointments in Ballarat.
- Increase public housing available.
- Increase housing options appropriate for older adults.
- Provide awareness and education sessions on health matters.
- Provide support programs, especially for families.
- Increase health services and facilities available to provide them, particularly for mental health.
- Encourage new people to come to town, ensuring efforts are made to make them feel welcome and get involved.
- Increase social connection through events and other opportunities.
- Promote the benefits of volunteering, as a form of social connection.
- Increase funding for rural towns.
- Increase the utilisation of local resources to support those on low incomes.

The things people in Murtoa told us in the 5 Top Things Survey about their town help us to plan how best to support Murtoa.