



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

**FASD** | Fetal Alcohol  
Spectrum Disorder  
**AR** | Australian Registry

## Biannual Data Summary Report

June 2024

# National surveillance of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

1 January 2015 to 30 June 2024

The FASDAR houses national surveillance of de-identified cases of FASD in children aged less than 15 years by the APSU. From study inception on 1 January 2015 to 30 June 2024, 1720 notifications of FASD have been made to the APSU, 1613 (93.8%) of these notifications had a case report form providing sufficient FASD data. After internal verification of data, there were 1294 confirmed cases of FASD during this period.

## **Sociodemographics**

The median age of diagnosis was 8.7 years, with the majority of the sample being male, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and in foster care. Notified cases were from New South Wales (22.6%), Western Australia (22.2%), Victoria (19.6%), Queensland (19.4%), Northern Territory (9.0%), South Australia (4.3%), Tasmania (2.2%), and Australian Capital Territory (0.8%). Half of the children lived in major cities (49.4%), and remote/very remote areas were overrepresented (16.4%).

## **FASD diagnosis**

Approximately 17% of children (16.8%) were diagnosed with FASD with 3 sentinel facial features and approximately one-fifth (21.5%) had microcephaly.

## **Prenatal alcohol exposure**

Prenatal alcohol exposure was confirmed in the vast majority of children (97.2%). Most had high or very high-risk prenatal alcohol exposure (72.9%).

## **Neurodevelopment**

The most common domains of severe neurodevelopmental impairment were attention (80.8%); executive function, including impulse control and hyperactivity (77.2%); adaptive behaviour, social skills or social communication (75.1%); language (63.6%); academic achievement (62.7%); cognition (48.5%); and motor skills (43.5%).

## **Comorbidities**

Comorbidities were frequently reported, the most common being attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (71.2%), communication disorders (55.9%), trauma, stress-related or attachment disorders (51.8%), motor disorders (30.0%), sleep disorders (28.4%), anxiety (28.1%), intellectual disabilities (25.7%), autism spectrum disorder (25.1%) and specific learning disorders (21.4%).

## Acknowledgements

Australian Government Department of Health FASD Australian Registry Grant  
Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit (ASPU) staff  
FASDAR National Steering Group  
The University of Sydney  
Clinicians who report cases to APSU/FASDAR

## Suggested citation

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Australian Registry (FASDAR). Biannual Data Summary Report – June 2024. The University of Sydney, Westmead, Australia. 2024. Available at: <http://www.fasdregistry.org.au>.

## Contact

### **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Australian Registry (FASDAR)**

Professor Elizabeth Elliott  
Chief Investigator

Dr Tracey W. Tsang  
Senior Research Fellow & Registry Manager  
[tracey.tsang@sydney.edu.au](mailto:tracey.tsang@sydney.edu.au)

Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit  
Locked Bag 4001  
Westmead 2145, NSW Australia

[fasdregistry.org.au](http://fasdregistry.org.au)  
[sydney.edu.au](http://sydney.edu.au)

CRICOS 00026A

