

Regional Diversity

OCEANIA

Geographic dispersion, long distances, the impact of climate change, and a double burden of infection- and lifestyle-related cancers confront the nations of this vast region.

An estimated 181,000 new cancer diagnoses and 69,000 cancer deaths occurred in 2018 in the subregions of Oceania, namely Australasia, Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. **FIGURE 23.1** Cancers of the female breast (24,600 new cases,

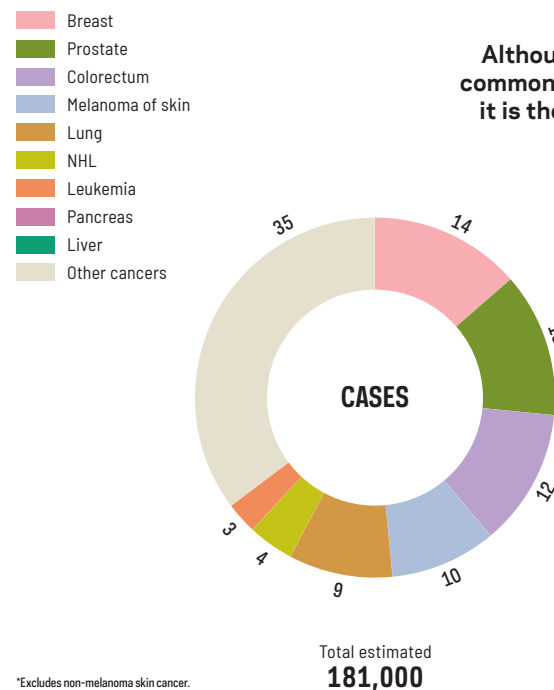
14% of all cancers), prostate (23,500, 13%), and colorectum (22,300, 12%) are also commonly diagnosed in the region. Lung cancer accounts for the greatest number of cancer deaths (11,800, 17%), followed by colorectal (8,100, 12%) and female breast cancer (4,800, 7%). Skin cancers (melanoma and non-melanoma) are the most common cancers and represent a significant public health issue, particularly in Australia and New Zealand.

FIGURE 23.2 Given the relatively large proportion of the region's inhabitants in Australia and New Zealand, the vast majority of the region's cancer cases and deaths (93% and 85%, respectively) occur in these two countries. Papua New Guinea is unique among the other nations in terms of its relatively large population and burden (8.4 million, 11,200 new cases, 7,100 deaths); most of the Pacific Island countries and territories feature small populations that are often spread across many remote islands.

Cancer profiles vary considerably across subregions. In Australasia and Polynesia, the cancers with the highest incidence rates include female breast, prostate, lung, and colorectum.

FIGURE 23.3 In contrast, in Melanesia and Micronesia, breast cancer incidence rates are almost half those of the above regions, and cervical cancer is the second-leading cancer, with rates two to three times higher than the average rate in the region. **MAP 23.1**

FIGURE 23.1 Estimated number* of new cancer cases vs. deaths and distribution (%) by type, both sexes, 2018



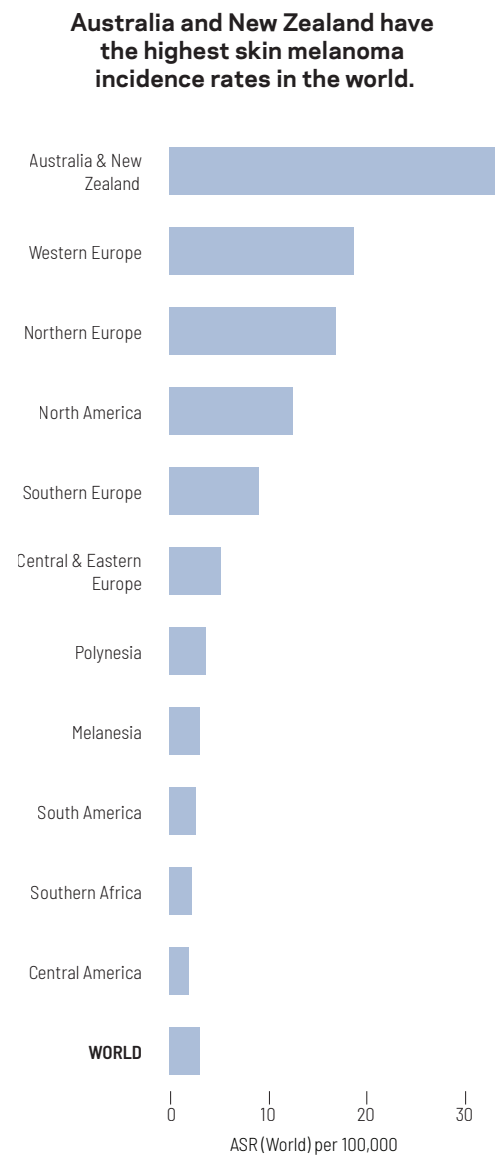
Although lung cancer is the fifth-most commonly diagnosed cancer in the region, it is the leading cause of cancer death.



Delivering cancer services in our small island nations is a challenge. Regional solutions built collaboratively with local leaders have been shown to provide sustainable benefits.

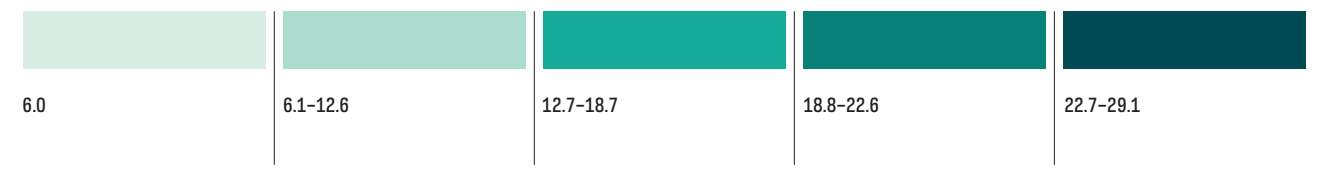
— Dr. Paula Vivili, Director, Public Health Division at the Pacific Community, New Caledonia

FIGURE 23.2 Incidence rates of melanoma of the skin in selected regions, both sexes combined, 2018



MAP 23.1

Cervical cancer incidence in Oceania, age-standardized rate (world) per 100,000, 2018



Australia has achieved high HPV vaccine and cervical cancer screening coverage, which is predicted to reduce cervical cancer rates to fewer than four new cases per 100,000 women by around 2028.

Cervical cancer incidence rates in the region range from 6 cases per 100,000 female population in Australia and New Zealand to 25 or more in Fiji and Papua New Guinea.



FIGURE 23.3 Incidence and mortality rates in Oceania by sub-regions, top 10 cancers, 2018

