Role of epidemiology 13/10/10

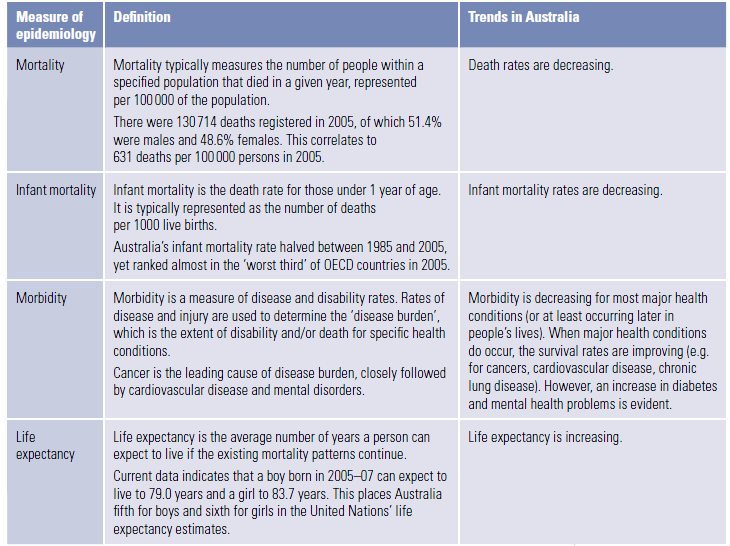
Epidemiology – study of disease and other health-related conditions, usually in relation to clearly defined population groups.

Key focuses

* **Occurrence** – *looks at factors such as prevalence and incidence*
* **Distribution patterns** – *look at trends over time, particularly subgroups in a population*
* **Determinants** – *identify factors likely to contribute to the occurrence of the disease or condition*
* **Prevention and control measures** – *potentially reduce the likelihood of the disease or condition occurring*

Epidemiology is used to develop an evidence-based understanding of current health issues.

**Prevalence** – number or proportion of people with a disease in a particular population at a given point in time.

**Incidence** – number or proportion of new cases arising in a particular population within a given period, usually one year.

Data may show may suggest that certain conditions were less prevalent than was actually the case. This is mainly due to health promotion messages and education programs, alerting people to signs and symptom of diseases such as diabetes and metal health problems and to encourage them to seek treatment. This has contributed to the rise in morbidity rates for these two diseases as more people are aware of the symptoms and sings.