

6 Waiting times for elective surgery

Introduction

This chapter presents national statistics for elective surgery waiting times for the years 2001–02 to 2005–06, and a state and territory overview of elective surgery waiting times for 2005–06. Information on the number of days waited at the 50th and 90th percentiles by patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, the proportion of patients waiting greater than 365 days, and the number of patients admitted is presented by public hospital peer group. Information is also included by the specialty of the surgeon who was to perform the elective surgery and by indicator procedure.

The 50th percentile (the median or the middle value in a group of data arranged from lowest to highest value for days waited) represents the number of days within which 50% of patients were admitted; half the waiting times will have been shorter, and half the waiting times longer, than the median. The 90th percentile data represent the number of days within which 90% of patients were admitted. The 50th and 90th percentiles have been rounded to the nearest number of days.

The data cover public hospitals only, except as noted below in the description of the coverage of the data collection.

The waiting times data presented here for patients who complete their wait and are admitted for their surgery on an elective basis are generally used as the main summary measure of elective surgery waiting times. Most patients are admitted after waiting; however, some patients are removed from waiting lists for other reasons. Other reasons for removal are that the patient was admitted as an emergency patient for the awaited procedure; was transferred to another hospital's waiting list; had been treated elsewhere; was not contactable; had died, or had declined surgery. Information on time spent on waiting lists is therefore also presented for those reasons for removals.

The number of patients added to waiting lists and the number of patients removed from waiting lists for admission or other reasons are also presented in this chapter. This provides information about the movement of patients onto and off waiting lists.

National health data dictionary definitions (NHDC 2003) are the basis of the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection (see Chapter 1) and are summarised in the glossary. However, some of the definitions used varied slightly among the states and territories in 2005–06 and in comparison with previous reporting periods. Comparisons between jurisdictions and between 2005–06 and previous reporting periods should therefore be made with reference to the notes on the definitions used and to previous reports (AIHW 2003, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a).

Variation in methods to calculate waiting times

Waiting times were generally calculated by comparing the date on which a patient was added to a waiting list with the date that a patient was admitted. Days on which the patient was 'not ready for care' were excluded.

For reporting periods before the 2004–05 collection period, South Australia used a different method from other states and territories to calculate waiting times for patients who changed clinical urgency category. However, from the 2004–05 reporting period, South Australia has been able to report waiting times as per the agreed national standard for calculating waiting times, that is:

Counting the time waited in the most recent urgency category plus any time waited in more urgent categories, e.g. time waiting in category 2, plus time spent previously in category 1.

This would have the effect of decreasing the apparent waiting time for South Australian admissions in 2004–05 and 2005–06 compared with previous reporting periods. In previous periods South Australia counted the waiting time in all urgency categories.

Transfers between waiting lists

In some states and territories, for patients who were transferred from a waiting list managed by one hospital to that managed by another, the time waited on the first list is not included in the waiting time reported to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. Therefore, the number of days waited in those jurisdictions reflects the waiting time on the list managed by the reporting hospital only. This has the effect of shortening the reported waiting time compared with the time actually waited by these patients.

New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory were able to report the total time waited on all waiting lists. This could have the effect of increasing the reported waiting time for admissions in these states and territories compared with other jurisdictions. South Australia and Queensland have indicated that it is uncommon for patients to be transferred from a waiting list managed by one public hospital to that managed by another in those jurisdictions.

Waiting times and other data elements reported for elective surgery

Figure 6.1 presents data on patients admitted to hospital from elective surgery waiting lists for surgery performed by a doctor whose area of clinical expertise is *Ophthalmology*. The information presented by indicator procedure and public hospital peer groups is for all jurisdictions. The other information provided in Figure 6.1 was available only for those jurisdictions that also included data for elective surgery waiting times for the National Hospital Morbidity Database, thus allowing waiting times information for patients to be related to other information concerning their admission for elective surgery. For the 2005–06 collection year, New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory provided elective surgery waiting times data to the National Hospital Morbidity Database. New South Wales provided 96.3% of elective surgery records linked, with Queensland providing 100.0%, Western Australia providing 99.4 %, South Australia providing 99.4%, the Australian Capital Territory providing 82.2% and the Northern Territory providing 66.6%.

Australia-wide there were 62,956 admissions from elective surgery waiting lists for surgery performed by a doctor whose area of clinical expertise is *Ophthalmology*. The median waiting time for these patients was 69 days and 6.5% of these patients waited more than 365 days for

admission. *Cataract extraction* was the indicator procedure with the highest number of admissions from elective surgery waiting lists for surgery performed by doctors in this surgical specialty.

For New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory combined, there were 42,471 admissions from elective surgery waiting lists for *Ophthalmology* and these accounted for 45,451 patient days. The average length of stay was 1.1 days.

For these states and territories the most common procedure (other than *Cerebral anaesthesia*) reported to the National Hospital Morbidity Database was *Extracapsular crystalline lens extraction by phacoemulsification* (Block 197), and the most common principal diagnosis reported was *Other cataract* (H26), followed by *Type 2 diabetes mellitus* (E11). The most common AR-DRG reported was *Lens procedures, sameday* (C16B).

The age group with the highest proportion of separations was *75–84 years* and there were more separations for females than males. A large proportion (99.1%) of these episodes had a separation mode of *Other*, suggesting that these patients went home after separation from hospital.

State and territory overview

Coverage

The National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection covers public acute hospitals only. However, some public patients treated under contract in private hospitals in Victoria and Tasmania are included.

The data collection covered most public hospitals that undertake elective surgery. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 show that coverage of the collection (as indicated by the proportion of hospitals included) was highest for the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group with 78 hospitals reported in this peer group. The collection covered 34 hospitals in the *Large hospitals* peer group, and 51 hospitals in the *Medium hospitals* peer group. Hospitals that were not included may not actually undertake elective surgery, may not have had waiting lists, or may have had different waiting list characteristics compared with reporting hospitals. Some smaller remote hospitals may have different patterns of service delivery compared with other hospitals because specialists providing elective surgery services visit these hospitals only periodically.

Tables 6.1 and 6.2 also present estimates of the proportions of elective surgery admissions that were covered by the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. The AIHW derived these estimates from data provided by the states and territories for the National Hospital Morbidity Database as:

The number of separations with Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for public hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection as a proportion of the number of separations with Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for all public hospitals.

Separations for cosmetic surgery were excluded from the estimated coverage calculations. The definition of 'surgical procedure' used for these estimates is detailed in the glossary and

based on the procedures used to define 'surgical' in *Australian refined diagnosis related groups* version 5.0 (DoHA 2002). Information about 'urgency of admission' is detailed in Chapter 7.

Based on this measure, coverage was highest for the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group at about 99%, and was progressively lower for the *Large hospitals* and *Medium hospitals* groups (Table 6.1). Overall coverage of the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection was about 87% in 2005–06, and ranged from 100% in New South Wales, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory to 63% in South Australia (Table 6.2).

Admissions from waiting lists for elective surgery

Hospitals in the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group accounted for 69.3% of admissions from elective surgery waiting lists in 2005–06 compared with 67.7% in 2004–05. Another 17.6% were reported for hospitals in the *Large hospitals* peer group in 2005–06, compared with 18.4% in 2004–05. In 2005–06, 11.4% of admissions were in the *Medium hospitals* peer group, compared with 12.7% in 2004–05 (Table 6.1). Overall, for 2005–06, 556,953 admissions from waiting lists were reported compared with 549,746 in 2004–05 (Table 6.1).

There were 27.2 admissions reported for elective surgery per 1,000 population (crude rate) for Australia overall in 2005–06, unchanged from 2004–05 (Table 6.1).

Distribution of waiting times

Overall, the median waiting time for patients who were admitted from waiting lists was 32 days in 2005–06, 29 days in 2004–05, 28 days in 2003–04 and 2002–03 and 27 days in 2001–02 (Table 6.1). In 2005–06, the median waiting time ranged from 25 days in Queensland to 61 days in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 6.2). In 2005–06, 90% of patients were admitted within 237 days, compared with 217 days in 2004–05, 193 days in 2003–04, 197 days in 2002–03 and 203 days in 2001–02. In 2005–06, the 90th percentile for waiting time ranged from 127 days in Queensland to 372 days in the Australian Capital Territory.

In 2005–06, the median waiting time for patients admitted from waiting lists for hospitals in the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group (30 days) was shorter than for the *Large hospitals* and *Medium hospitals* peer groups (35 days and 38 days respectively).

Proportion waiting more than 365 days

Overall, the proportion of patients admitted after waiting more than 365 days was 4.6% in 2005–06 compared with 4.8% in 2004–05, 3.9% in 2003–04, 4.0% in 2002–03 and 4.5% in 2001–02 (Table 6.1). In 2005–06, this proportion ranged from 2.1% in Queensland to 10.3% in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 6.2).

In the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group in 2005–06, 4.7% of patients were admitted after waiting more than 365 days, as were 4.6% of patients in the *Large hospitals* peer group, and 3.8% of patients in the *Medium hospitals* peer group.

Additions to and removals from waiting lists

Table 6.3 shows the movement of patients on and off waiting lists in 2005–06. This includes data on the total number of patients added to and removed from waiting lists, the distribution of days waited by patients removed from waiting lists and the proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days before being removed from waiting lists.

In 2005–06 a total of 638,904 patients were added to elective surgery waiting lists and 657,401 patients were removed from elective surgery waiting lists, whether they were admitted for the procedure they were waiting for or were removed for other reasons. In 2005–06, only Victoria, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory reported removals from waiting lists for transfer to another hospital's waiting list. This could have an effect of reducing the waiting times reported for overall removals for those three jurisdictions relative to others.

Elective admissions accounted for the most removals from waiting lists in 2005–06 (84.7%), ranging from 80.9% in the Northern Territory to 88.3% in Queensland. *Surgery not required or declined* accounted for the next largest number of removals in 2005–06 (7.4%, 48,729 patients) following admissions as elective patients. A further 4.0% of patients (26,565 patients) were *Treated elsewhere*, 1.5% (9,792) were *Not contactable/died*, and 0.9% (6,154) were *Emergency admissions*.

Distribution of waiting times

Overall, the reason for removal category with the shortest median waiting time in 2005–06 was *Emergency admission* (1 day), and the category with longest median waiting time was *Not contactable/died* (212 days).

As was the case with median waiting times, the reason for removal category with the shortest waiting time by which 90% of patients were removed was *Emergency admission* (76 days) and the category with the longest waiting time was *Not contactable/died* (785 days). The length of time by which 90% of patients were removed from waiting lists varied substantially between states and territories in most reason for removal categories. For example, waiting times at the 90th percentile in the *Emergency admission* category ranged from 6 days in the Australian Capital Territory to 249 days in Tasmania.

Proportion waiting more than 365 days

In 2005–06 the reason for removal category with the lowest proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days before removal was *Emergency admission* (1.0%) and the category with the highest proportion was *Not contactable/died* (30.5%).

The proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days differed substantially between individual states and territories in 2005–06. Overall, it ranged from 3.3% in Queensland to 13.4% in the Australian Capital Territory. For the removal category *Surgery not required or declined* it ranged from 14.6% in Queensland to 35.0% in Western Australia.

Specialty of surgeon

Table 6.4 shows the distribution of days waited by patients admitted from waiting lists, the proportion who waited more than 365 days and the total number of patients admitted from

waiting lists in 2005–06, by the specialty of the surgeon who was to perform the surgery and by state and territory.

Distribution of waiting times

Ophthalmology and *Orthopaedic surgery* were the surgical specialties with the longest median waiting times in 2005–06 (69 and 54 days respectively). All other surgical specialties except *Ear, nose and throat surgery* had median waiting times of less than 30 days; *Cardio-thoracic surgery* had the shortest median waiting time (12 days).

There was a marked variation between states and territories in the median waiting time for *Ophthalmology*, with 50% of patients being admitted within 34 days in Queensland and within 189 days in the Northern Territory. There was less variation between states and territories in the median waiting time for *Plastic surgery*, with waiting times ranging from 24 days in Victoria to 52 days in the Australian Capital Territory.

The length of time by which 90% of patients had been admitted also varied by surgical specialty in 2005–06, from 73 days for *Cardio-thoracic surgery* to 364 days for *Orthopaedic surgery*.

Proportion waiting more than 365 days

Orthopaedic surgery and *Ear, nose and throat surgery* were the specialties with the highest proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days to be admitted (9.9% and 8.3% respectively). *Cardio-thoracic surgery* had the lowest proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days (0.1%), followed by *Gynaecology* (1.3%) and *Neurosurgery* (2.1%).

There was marked variation among the states and territories in the proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days to be admitted for some surgical specialties. For example, 1.0% of patients admitted for *Ophthalmology* in 2005–06 waited more than 365 days in Victoria, compared with 30.2% of patients in Tasmania.

Admissions from waiting lists

Nationally, admissions from waiting lists were highest for *General surgery* (141,359) and lowest for *Neurosurgery* (10,786). Admissions from waiting lists were also highest for *General surgery* across all jurisdictions. *Neurosurgery* had the lowest number of admissions for most states and territories where it is undertaken. Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory admissions were lowest for *Cardio-thoracic surgery* (2,645 and 232 admissions, respectively) and Western Australia admissions were lowest for *Vascular surgery* (1,003 admissions).

Indicator procedures

Indicator procedures are procedures which are of high volume and are often associated with long waits. Table 6.5 shows state and territory data on the distribution of days waited by patients admitted from waiting lists, the proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days to be admitted from waiting lists and the total number of patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery in 2005–06, by indicator procedure.

Distribution of waiting times

Nationally, the indicator procedure with the lowest median waiting time in 2005–06 was *Coronary artery bypass graft* (15 days) and the one with the highest median waiting time was *Total knee replacement* (178 days).

There was marked variation among the states and territories in the median waiting time for *Myringoplasty*, ranging from 60 days in Queensland to 631 days in the Australian Capital Territory.

The length of time by which 90% of patients had been admitted also varied by indicator procedure, from 100 days for *Coronary artery bypass graft* to 596 days for *Varicose veins stripping & ligation*.

Proportion waiting more than 365 days

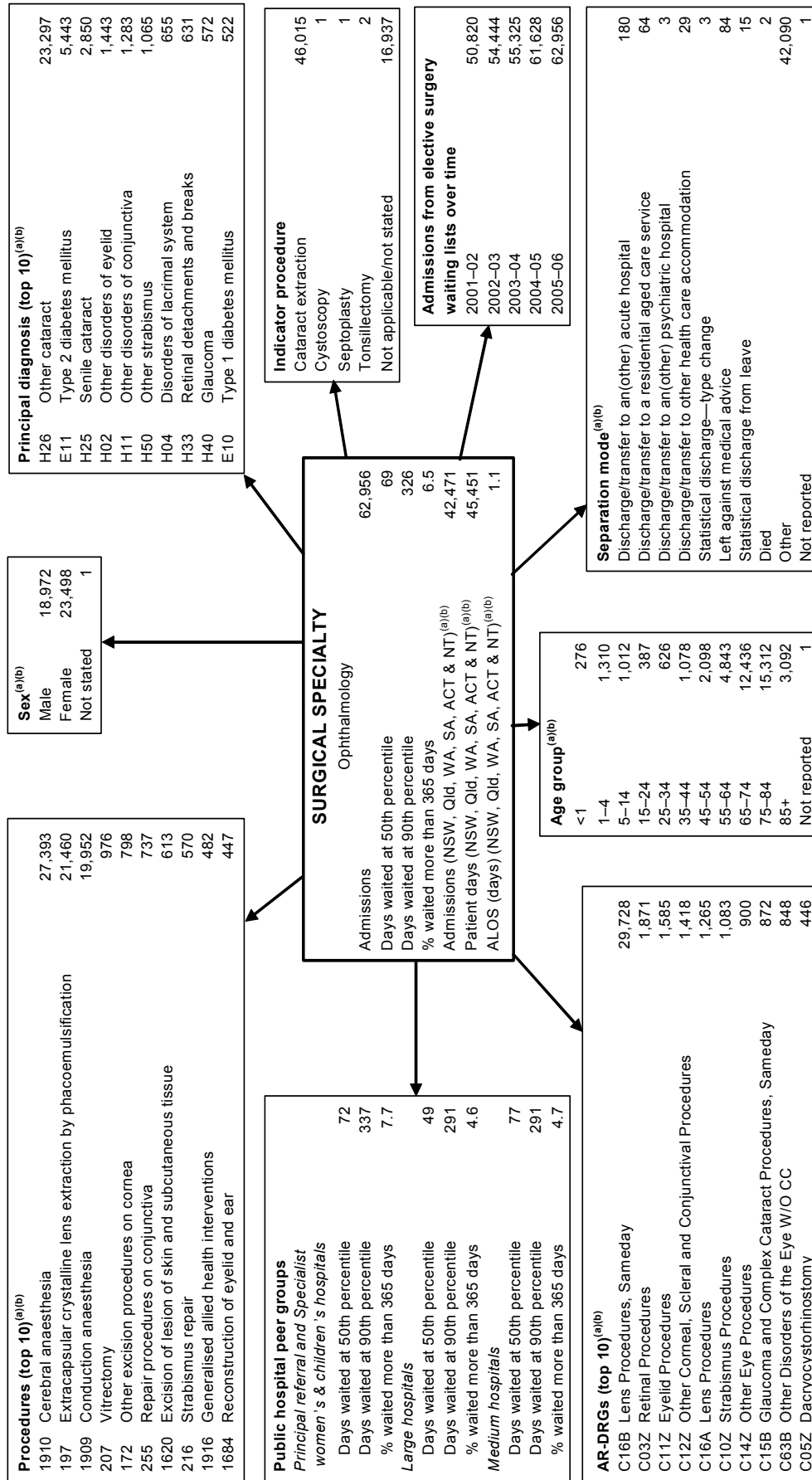
The indicator procedure with the highest proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days was *Total knee replacement* (23.1%), followed by *Septoplasty* (22.4%). *Coronary artery bypass graft* (0.1%) has the lowest proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days.

The proportion of patients admitted from waiting lists who waited more than 365 days varied substantially in some cases between the states and territories. For example, 9.4% of patients waited more than 365 days for admission for *Myringoplasty* in Victoria, compared with 61.1% in the Australian Capital Territory. For *Cataract extraction*, the proportion ranged from 0.8% in Victoria to 50.8% in Tasmania.

Admissions from waiting lists

Overall, 33.0% of patients admitted for elective surgery had been waiting for one of the indicator procedures. There was some variation among the states and territories: the Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of admissions for the indicator procedures (38.9%) and the Northern Territory had the lowest proportion (18.0%).

Cataract extraction was the highest volume indicator procedure across all jurisdictions. *Myringoplasty* was the lowest volume indicator procedure for Victoria, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory (414, 383 and 18 admissions respectively). Western Australia and South Australia admissions were lowest for *Varicose veins stripping and ligation* (78 and 180 respectively), New South Wales admissions were lowest for *Myringotomy* (509), Tasmania admissions were lowest for *Septoplasty* (16) and the Northern Territory admissions were lowest for *Haemorrhoidectomy* (9).



(a) These data are supplied to the National Hospital Morbidity Database for New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory only.
 (b) Separations for which the care type was reported as *Newborn* with no qualified days, and records for *Hospital boarders* and *Posthumous organ procurement* have been excluded.
 Abbreviations: CC—complications and comorbidities; W/O—without; ALOS—average length of stay.

Figure 6.1: Interrelationships of a specialty of surgeon (Ophthalmology) with other data elements, all hospitals, 2005-06

Table 6.1: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by public hospital peer group, Australia, 2001–02 to 2005–06

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Principal referral and Specialist women's & children's hospitals					
Number of reporting hospitals ^(a)	66	69	68	75	78
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) ^(b)	100	99	99	99	99
Number of admissions ^(c)	317,275	339,370	343,430	372,085	386,203
Days waited at 50th percentile	24	26	27	28	30
Days waited at 90th percentile	184	182	182	203	228
% waited more than 365 days	4.2	3.9	3.9	4.6	4.7
Large hospitals					
Number of reporting hospitals ^(a)	40	41	42	36	34
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) ^(b)	84	82	85	82	81
Number of admissions ^(c)	116,882	108,742	110,284	100,916	97,816
Days waited at 50th percentile	33	31	30	29	35
Days waited at 90th percentile	229	213	206	227	251
% waited more than 365 days	5.0	4.2	4.2	4.8	4.6
Medium hospitals					
Number of reporting hospitals ^(a)	56	56	58	59	51
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) ^(b)	53	52	59	62	62
Number of admissions ^(c)	62,430	59,109	68,790	69,830	63,643
Days waited at 50th percentile	32	34	34	37	38
Days waited at 90th percentile	231	234	215	272	257
% waited more than 365 days	4.7	3.6	3.3	6.1	3.8
Total^(d)					
Number of reporting hospitals ^(a)	193	199	196	195	191
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) ^(b)	84	85	87	87	87
Number of admissions ^(c)	508,371	517,503	528,949	549,746	556,953
Admissions per 1,000 population ^(e)	26.0	26.2	26.5	27.2	27.2
Days waited at 50th percentile	27	28	28	29	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	203	197	193	217	237
% waited more than 365 days	4.5	4.0	3.9	4.8	4.6

(a) Number of hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. See Appendix 2 for further information.

(b) This is the number of separations with urgency of admission reported as 'elective' and a surgical procedure for public hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection as a proportion of the number of separations with urgency of admission reported as 'elective' and a surgical procedure for all public hospitals.

(c) Number of admissions for elective surgery reported to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection.

(d) Includes data for hospitals not included in the specified hospital peer groups and some private hospitals contracted to do elective surgery.

(e) Crude rate based on the Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December of the period in question.

Table 6.2: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by hospital peer group, states and territories, 2005-06

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Principal referral and Specialist women's & children's hospitals									
Number of reporting hospitals ^(b)	28	19	16	4	5	3	1	2	78
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) ^(c)	100	100	97	100	100	100	100	100	99
Number of admissions ^(d)	127,298	85,425	89,393	28,512	30,352	15,041	5,106	5,076	386,203
Days waited at 50th percentile	31	32	24	30	38	34	n.p.	26	30
Days waited at 90th percentile	278	238	132	208	213	332	n.p.	298	228
% waited more than 365 days	5.6	5.0	2.3	4.5	3.9	8.7	n.p.	7.2	4.7
Large hospitals									
Number of reporting hospitals ^(b)	14	9	6	2	2	..	1	..	34
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) ^(c)	100	72	100	52	100	..	100	..	81
Number of admissions ^(d)	29,741	37,473	12,435	8,630	5,567	..	3,970	..	97,816
Days waited at 50th percentile	43	32	26	22	40	..	n.p.	..	35
Days waited at 90th percentile	312	222	105	224	199	..	n.p.	..	251
% waited more than 365 days	5.4	3.9	1.4	4.5	6.1	..	n.p.	..	4.6
Medium hospitals									
Number of reporting hospitals ^(b)	36	4	7	4	0	..	..	..	51
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) ^(c)	100	36	86	78	0	..	..	..	62
Number of admissions ^(d)	38,306	11,626	4,034	9,677	n.a.	..	..	..	63,643
Days waited at 50th percentile	48	32	28	23	n.a.	..	..	..	38
Days waited at 90th percentile	304	136	112	145	n.a.	..	..	..	257
% waited more than 365 days	4.8	2.1	1.1	2.7	n.a.	..	..	..	3.8
Total^(e)									
Number of reporting hospitals ^(b)	100	32	31	11	7	3	2	5	191
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) ^(c)	100	79	96	76	63	100	100	100	87
Number of admissions ^(d)	201,438	134,524	106,323	48,937	35,919	15,041	9,076	5,695	556,953
Admissions per 1,000 population ^(f)	29.6	26.6	26.6	24.1	23.2	30.9	27.8	27.9	27.2
Days waited at 50th percentile	36	32	25	28	38	34	61	30	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	291	224	127	205	212	332	372	313	237
% waited more than 365 days	5.4	4.5	2.1	4.3	4.2	8.7	10.3	7.7	4.6

(a) The total number of admissions for Queensland includes 644 admissions that were removed from the waiting list for elective admission before 30 June 2005 and separated before 30 June 2006. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.

(b) Number of hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. See Appendix 2 for further information.

(c) The number of separations with urgency of admission reported as 'elective' and a surgical procedure for public hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection as a proportion of the number of separations with urgency of admission reported as of 'elective' and a surgical procedure for all public hospitals.

(d) Number of admissions for elective surgery reported to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection.

(e) Includes data for hospitals not included in the specified hospital peer groups.

(f) Crude rate based on the Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December 2005.

.. Not applicable.

n.a. Not available.

n.p. Not published because there was only one hospital in the peer group.

Table 6.3: Additions to waiting lists, and waiting time statistics for patients removed from waiting lists for elective surgery, by reason for removal, states and territories, 2005–06

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Additions	220,136	148,470	138,678	56,487	41,119	17,437	10,630	5,947	638,904
Removals^(b)									
Elective admission	201,438	134,524	106,323	48,937	35,919	15,041	9,076	5,695	556,953
Days waited at 50th percentile	36	32	25	28	38	34	61	30	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	291	224	127	205	212	332	372	313	237
% waited more than 365 days	5.4	4.5	2.1	4.3	4.2	8.7	10.3	7.7	4.6
Emergency admission	1,883	761	2,881	200	221	167	5	36	6,154
Days waited at 50th percentile	7	9	0	22	16	23	3	20	1
Days waited at 90th percentile	113	137	14	119	131	249	6	144	76
% waited more than 365 days	1.1	2.5	0.2	2.5	0.9	4.8	0.0	2.8	1.0
Not contactable/died	3,202	2,692	1,064	1,169	553	923	189	n.a.	9,792
Days waited at 50th percentile	190	230	135	432	141	203	222	n.a.	212
Days waited at 90th percentile	505	823	906	1,078	550	988	827	n.a.	785
% waited more than 365 days	21.2	33.5	29.2	56.4	19.5	28.1	37.6	n.a.	30.5
Treated elsewhere	15,994	4,044	3,441	1,446	830	483	327	n.a.	26,565
Days waited at 50th percentile	130	107	74	126	87	205	196	n.a.	116
Days waited at 90th percentile	399	462	405	565	386	742	841	n.a.	426
% waited more than 365 days	13.0	15.7	12.1	22.9	11.1	31.1	31.8	n.a.	14.4
Surgery not required or declined	18,218	14,774	6,682	4,494	2,481	1,133	947	n.a.	48,729
Days waited at 50th percentile	128	124	68	212	113	247	181	n.a.	122
Days waited at 90th percentile	458	560	470	755	474	948	678	n.a.	537
% waited more than 365 days	16.3	19.5	14.6	35.0	17.0	34.7	25.9	n.a.	19.4
Transferred to another hospital's waiting list	n.a.	1,592	n.a.	2,225	n.a.	n.a.	171	n.a.	3,988
Days waited at 50th percentile	n.a.	101	n.a.	173	n.a.	n.a.	515	n.a.	138
Days waited at 90th percentile	n.a.	281	n.a.	785	n.a.	n.a.	923	n.a.	671
% waited more than 365 days	n.a.	5.7	n.a.	31.0	n.a.	n.a.	55.0	n.a.	21.9
Not reported	n.a.	1,314	n.a.	1,102	1,366	n.a.	128	1,310	5,220
Days waited at 50th percentile	n.a.	39	n.a.	63	72	n.a.	0	209	76
Days waited at 90th percentile	n.a.	345	n.a.	466	483	n.a.	45	1,177	596
% waited more than 365 days	n.a.	9.0	n.a.	15.2	15.5	n.a.	3.1	36.0	18.6
Total removals	240,735	159,701	120,391	59,573	41,370	17,747	10,843	7,041	657,401
Days waited at 50th percentile	42	38	26	36	42	41	70	41	36
Days waited at 90th percentile	321	280	155	346	254	417	449	444	294
% waited more than 365 days	6.9	6.7	3.3	9.3	5.7	12.0	13.4	13.0	6.6

(a) The total number of removals for Queensland includes 751 removals that were removed from the waiting list for elective or emergency admission before 30 June 2005 and separated before 30 June 2006. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.

(b) See the glossary for a full description of these categories.
n.a. Not available.

Table 6.4: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by specialty of surgeon, states and territories, 2005-06

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Cardio-thoracic surgery									
Admissions	4,167	2,645	3,486	3,302	835	428	232	0	15,095
Days waited at 50th percentile	13	7	7	14	18	36	27	..	12
Days waited at 90th percentile	73	92	78	46	72	135	100	..	73
% waited more than 365 days	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	..	0.1
Ear, nose & throat surgery									
Admissions	14,859	13,602	9,704	3,614	4,134	702	786	515	47,916
Days waited at 50th percentile	70	45	20	82	46	45	140	75	47
Days waited at 90th percentile	404	229	143	320	296	491	828	623	331
% waited more than 365 days	13.0	4.9	3.7	8.2	7.8	15.4	23.0	18.4	8.3
General surgery									
Admissions	56,853	31,644	25,924	10,905	8,452	4,281	1,552	1,748	141,359
Days waited at 50th percentile	29	29	26	21	31	23	27	51	28
Days waited at 90th percentile	175	203	112	132	141	193	159	324	166
% waited more than 365 days	2.3	3.7	1.7	2.5	1.5	3.9	4.2	8.4	2.6
Gynaecology									
Admissions	29,456	15,437	16,831	4,578	5,097	2,044	1,206	1,723	76,372
Days waited at 50th percentile	28	29	25	16	31	32	36	6	27
Days waited at 90th percentile	126	148	94	77	113	170	186	63	119
% waited more than 365 days	1.6	1.9	0.6	0.2	0.6	1.2	2.2	1.6	1.3
Neurosurgery									
Admissions	3,315	2,725	1,344	2,400	572	170	260	0	10,786
Days waited at 50th percentile	20	26	12	44	18	74	52	..	26
Days waited at 90th percentile	103	177	108	147	121	427	372	..	152
% waited more than 365 days	2.1	2.0	1.0	1.1	1.6	14.1	10.4	..	2.1
Ophthalmology									
Admissions	24,931	17,122	8,573	5,507	3,826	1,246	1,207	544	62,956
Days waited at 50th percentile	132	38	34	71	68	41	180	189	69
Days waited at 90th percentile	362	210	247	291	291	545	504	455	326
% waited more than 365 days	9.4	1.0	3.8	6.0	4.2	30.2	22.5	19.1	6.5
Orthopaedic surgery									
Admissions	31,246	17,442	19,762	6,051	4,252	2,160	1,388	594	82,895
Days waited at 50th percentile	66	69	23	70	77	146	137	36	54
Days waited at 90th percentile	390	392	168	370	404	538	450	340	364
% waited more than 365 days	12.0	11.2	2.9	10.2	12.3	22.4	15.3	8.4	9.9

(continued)

Table 6.4 (continued): Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by specialty of surgeon, states and territories, 2005–06

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Plastic surgery									
Admissions	8,453	11,687	8,280	3,593	3,851	1,256	419	90	37,629
Days waited at 50th percentile	29	24	29	31	37	25	52	46	29
Days waited at 90th percentile	185	223	134	310	217	146	392	357	197
% waited more than 365 days	3.9	5.3	2.3	8.8	5.0	3.3	12.9	8.9	4.7
Urology									
Admissions	20,516	15,819	7,608	6,597	3,771	2,087	1,080	69	57,547
Days waited at 50th percentile	28	20	28	21	38	36	49	25	26
Days waited at 90th percentile	168	176	118	147	160	184	215	174	162
% waited more than 365 days	2.6	3.9	1.7	3.2	4.0	3.4	3.1	7.2	3.0
Vascular surgery									
Admissions	4,912	2,969	2,251	1,003	961	399	360	0	12,855
Days waited at 50th percentile	19	33	21	17	12	42	22	..	20
Days waited at 90th percentile	122	507	84	76	47	284	552	..	175
% waited more than 365 days	2.0	14.2	2.0	0.8	0.3	4.3	13.6	..	5.0
Other^(b)									
Admissions	2,730	3,432	2,560	1,387	168	268	586	412	11,543
Days waited at 50th percentile	8	23	24	14	33	12	33	11	16
Days waited at 90th percentile	64	78	111	48	110	133	199	85	91
% waited more than 365 days	0.7	0.5	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	1.2	1.0
Total									
Admissions	201,438	134,524	106,323	48,937	35,919	15,041	9,076	5,695	556,953
Days waited at 50th percentile	36	32	25	28	38	34	61	30	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	291	224	127	205	212	332	372	313	237
% waited more than 365 days	5.4	4.5	2.1	4.3	4.2	8.7	10.3	7.7	4.6

(a) The total number of admissions for Queensland include 644 admissions that were removed from the waiting list for elective admission before 30 June 2005 and separated before 30 June 2006. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.

(b) Includes specialty of surgeon of *Not reported*.

.. Not applicable.

Table 6.5: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by indicator procedure, states and territories, 2005-06

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Cataract extraction									
Admissions	20,244	11,851	5,651	3,903	2,266	711	1,064	370	46,060
Days waited at 50th percentile	161	49	41	83	96	389	182	246	93
Days waited at 90th percentile	368	225	272	293	314	566	496	464	342
% waited more than 365 days	10.5	0.8	4.2	5.9	4.5	50.8	22.7	21.6	7.5
Cholecystectomy									
Admissions	6,962	4,091	3,183	957	861	493	250	113	16,910
Days waited at 50th percentile	50	48	41	31	29	47	48	71	45
Days waited at 90th percentile	261	210	138	175	96	264	169	568	211
% waited more than 365 days	4.4	3.3	1.5	3.3	0.0	4.9	6.4	15.0	3.4
Coronary artery bypass graft									
Admissions	1,442	987	1,490	270	421	278	160	0	5,048
Days waited at 50th percentile	16	10	8	20	25	45	22	..	15
Days waited at 90th percentile	90	159	93	62	79	138	98	..	100
% waited more than 365 days	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	..	0.1
Cystoscopy									
Admissions	13,872	9,642	3,792	3,288	1,694	702	678	140	33,808
Days waited at 50th percentile	24	21	32	23	35	38	55	51	25
Days waited at 90th percentile	141	159	140	198	137	180	216	211	155
% waited more than 365 days	1.8	2.8	1.7	4.8	3.5	2.7	2.9	5.0	2.5
Haemorrhoidectomy									
Admissions	1,240	996	484	276	320	59	24	9	3,408
Days waited at 50th percentile	54	70	42	32	47	53	70	n.p.	51
Days waited at 90th percentile	292	366	171	322	105	353	379	n.p.	286
% waited more than 365 days	5.3	10.0	3.3	8.3	0.0	8.5	12.5	n.p.	6.3
Hysterectomy									
Admissions	4,102	2,419	1,748	927	517	315	118	43	10,189
Days waited at 50th percentile	41	40	39	26	54	48	49	47	40
Days waited at 90th percentile	209	161	110	90	138	184	276	372	157
% waited more than 365 days	3.4	1.9	0.7	0.2	0.2	1.3	4.2	11.6	2.1
Inguinal herniorrhaphy									
Admissions	5,876	3,491	1,814	1,115	832	412	182	84	13,806
Days waited at 50th percentile	51	56	41	24	44	41	47	71	48
Days waited at 90th percentile	259	257	133	148	142	308	202	517	233
% waited more than 365 days	3.5	5.6	2.1	3.1	0.8	5.3	3.3	17.9	3.8

(continued)

Table 6.5 (continued): Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by indicator procedure, states and territories, 2005–06

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Myringoplasty									
Admissions	514	414	383	163	230	18	18	35	1,775
Days waited at 50th percentile	190	83	60	99	72	69	631	364	98
Days waited at 90th percentile	574	361	376	440	367	1903	1000	1144	463
% waited more than 365 days	26.7	9.4	10.2	10.4	10.0	38.9	61.1	45.7	16.3
Myringotomy									
Admissions	509	2,471	1,733	648	802	70	93	27	6,353
Days waited at 50th percentile	40	34	29	75	38	23	144	30	37
Days waited at 90th percentile	210	107	118	220	117	153	329	187	139
% waited more than 365 days	1.8	0.2	2.7	0.3	0.2	0.0	6.5	0.0	1.1
Prostatectomy									
Admissions	2,630	2,093	772	475	492	38	103	22	6,625
Days waited at 50th percentile	48	21	28	25	50	41	52	62	35
Days waited at 90th percentile	281	278	126	116	324	70	239	250	246
% waited more than 365 days	6.0	7.8	3.0	1.5	7.5	0.0	3.9	9.1	5.9
Septoplasty									
Admissions	1,511	1,814	484	197	189	16	55	36	4,302
Days waited at 50th percentile	266	96	66	147	130	n.p.	312	130	128
Days waited at 90th percentile	613	430	945	503	522	n.p.	847	468	542
% waited more than 365 days	32.9	14.7	19.0	16.2	20.1	n.p.	41.8	19.4	22.4
Tonsillectomy									
Admissions	4,262	3,891	2,523	1,027	834	34	208	83	12,862
Days waited at 50th percentile	129	56	40	119	74	57	203	118	72
Days waited at 90th percentile	406	215	182	390	231	648	894	389	336
% waited more than 365 days	13.6	3.9	3.9	11.3	2.0	26.5	30.3	13.3	8.1
Total hip replacement									
Admissions	2,888	1,858	1,196	555	523	289	191	24	7,524
Days waited at 50th percentile	119	154	61	99	106	238	149	120	111
Days waited at 90th percentile	418	408	187	359	418	552	477	345	406
% waited more than 365 days	16.0	13.0	3.3	9.2	14.9	32.2	16.8	8.3	13.3
Total knee replacement									
Admissions	5,179	1,977	1,698	681	657	268	294	18	10,772
Days waited at 50th percentile	242	188	74	138	193	326	219	137	178
Days waited at 90th percentile	519	463	287	498	505	639	633	1,060	492
% waited more than 365 days	29.1	18.6	6.4	20.0	26.0	41.0	29.6	22.2	23.1

(continued)

Table 6.5 (continued): Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by indicator procedure, states and territories, 2005-06

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Varicose veins stripping & ligation									
Admissions	1,870	1,623	589	78	180	51	95	21	4,507
Days waited at 50th percentile	70	182	71	33	203	52	241	352	98
Days waited at 90th percentile	358	726	699	416	504	252	927	635	596
% waited more than 365 days	9.5	29.1	19.9	10.3	29.4	3.9	46.3	47.6	19.6
Not applicable/not stated									
Admissions	128,337	84,906	78,783	34,377	25,101	11,287	5,543	4,670	373,004
Days waited at 50th percentile	27	26	21	23	32	28	36	22	25
Days waited at 90th percentile	191	195	109	167	176	253	290	237	174
% waited more than 365 days	3.3	4.1	1.6	3.6	3.7	5.7	6.7	5.6	3.3
Total									
Admissions	201,438	134,524	106,323	48,937	35,919	15,041	9,076	5,695	556,953
Days waited at 50th percentile	36	32	25	28	38	34	61	30	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	291	224	127	205	212	332	372	313	237
% waited more than 365 days	5.4	4.5	2.1	4.3	4.2	8.7	10.3	7.7	4.6

(a) The total number of admissions for Queensland includes 644 admissions that were removed from the waiting list for elective admission before 30 June 2005 and separated before 30 June 2006. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.

.. Not applicable.

n.p. Not published.