

Glossary

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Acute hospitals: Establishments which provide at least minimal medical, surgical or obstetrical services for inpatient treatment and/or care, and which provide round-the-clock comprehensive qualified nursing service as well as other necessary professional services. Most patients require a relatively short stay.

Adverse effects of medical treatment: Includes adverse effects of drugs, medicinal and biologic substances in therapeutic use (where the drug is properly administered and not given or taken in error) and the unintended consequences of medical and surgical care. The latter includes misadventures to patients during surgical or medical care and abnormal reactions or later complications where misadventure did not occur at the time of the surgical or medical procedure.

AGPS: Australian Government Publishing Service.

AIHW: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Allied health services: Services provided by allied health practitioners excluding pharmacists and allied health services provided by hospitals.

ALOS: See **Average length of stay**.

Average length of stay (ALOS): The average number of bed-days (q.v.) per admitted patient episode.

Bed-day: The occupancy of a hospital bed by an inpatient for up to 24 hours.

Bed days: The number of full or partial days of stay for patients who were admitted for an episode of care and who underwent separation during the reporting period. A patient who is admitted and separated on the same day is allocated one patient day.

Department of Veterans' Affairs hospitals: Acute care hospitals operated by the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide hospital treatment for eligible veterans and their dependants at Commonwealth expense. Department of Veterans' Affairs hospitals are recorded as public sector hospitals for data reporting purposes.

Direct costs: The health system costs of providing prevention and treatment services for health problems.

External cause: Environmental events and circumstances as the cause of injury, poisoning and other adverse effect. External causes of injury and poisoning are described and classified in the supplementary chapter of the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases 9th Revision (ICD-9). Refer to Appendix A for more details.

Homicide and violence: Violence is the intentional use of, or threat of use of, physical force against another person or against oneself, which results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury or death. Intentional violence resulting in death is referred to as homicide.

Incidence: The number of new cases of a specified disease or condition in a defined time period.

Indirect costs: Costs associated with disease and injury other than direct health system costs. These include lost production due to sickness and premature death, as well as costs impacting outside the health care sector (such as caring costs borne by the family, and police and court costs associated with drug abuse, for example).

Injury: Injury is used as shorthand to refer to injuries and poisonings and to all consequences of the external causes described in the supplementary chapter of the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases 9th Revision (ICD-9). The definition includes interpersonal and self-inflicted violence. It also includes the unintended consequences of medical and surgical care. (Harrison & Cripps 1994). See also **intentional injury** and **unintentional injury**.

Inpatient: Any person formally admitted by a hospital. Healthy newborn infants are excluded unless they have a stay of more than 10 days, or are the second or subsequent birth in multiple births.

Institutional: In this report, denotes the major health care institutions which provide residential care, such as hospitals and nursing homes.

Intentional injury: Injury resulting from deliberate violence inflicted by oneself or another person (e.g. homicide, rape, assault, suicide and attempted suicide, legal intervention by police etc.).

Internal derangement of knee: Includes chronic knee problems resulting from degenerative wear and tear or from old ruptures or tears of articular cartilage of meniscus of the knee. Acute knee derangement (including torn ligaments and ruptures) are classified as injuries rather than as musculoskeletal disorders.

Internal injuries: This term is used in this report to refer to internal injuries of the chest, abdomen and pelvis, injuries to blood vessels (excluding intracranial hemorrhage following injury), crushing injuries to face, neck, trunk and limbs, and injuries to nerves and spinal cord.

International Classification of Disease (ICD): The World Health Organisation's internationally accepted classification of death and disease. The ninth revision (ICD-9) was in use in 1993–94.

Knee derangement: See **Internal derangement of knee**.

Machine injuries: Machine injuries include all injuries caused by accidents involving machinery in operation, with the exclusion of powered hand tools and appliances. The great majority of machine injuries occur in the workplace.

Medical services: Private medical services excluding those to hospital inpatients. This includes consultations with general practitioners and specialists as well as pathology tests and screening and diagnostic imaging services. It includes services to veterans.

Non-inpatient occasion of service: Occurs when a patient attends a functional unit of the hospital for the purpose of receiving some form of service, but is not admitted. A visit for administrative purposes is not an occasion of service.

Non-inpatient: Patients not requiring admission to hospital, but who receive treatment in accident and emergency (casualty) departments, undergo short-term specialist treatment (such as minor surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy), receive care from a recognised non-admitted patient service/clinic of a hospital or are treated in their own homes through home nursing programs. Previously referred to as outpatients.

Nursing homes: Establishments which provide long-term care involving regular basic nursing care to chronically ill, frail, disabled or convalescent persons or senile inpatients. In practice, they cater mainly for older people. They must be approved by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care and/or licensed by the State or Territory, or controlled by government departments.

Osteoarthritis: chronic degenerative joint disease causing joint pain and restriction of mobility.

Osteoporosis: Osteoporosis is a disease characterised by low bone density and micro-architectural deterioration of bone tissue, leading to enhanced bone fragility and a consequent increase in fracture risk. Cost estimates for osteoporosis include costs of diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis per se but most of the costs for fractures resulting from osteoporosis will be classified as injury costs associated with fractures (injury type) and falls (external cause), although many osteoporotic fractures are atraumatic.

Outpatient: See **non-inpatient**.

Over-the-counter drugs (OTC): Pharmaceutical drugs available without prescription. Examples are cough mixtures, simple analgesics and antacids. Some OTCs can be sold only by pharmacists, but many can be sold through non-pharmacy outlets.

PBS: Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Pharmaceutical drugs: Includes prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines.

Prescription drugs: Pharmaceutical drugs available only on the prescription of a registered medical practitioner. These drugs are also known as Schedule Four (or S-4) drugs after the schedule to the State and Territory Acts of Parliament that regulates the sale and distribution of poisons and drugs. Prescription drugs are available only from pharmacists who are regulated by State and Territory laws whether they work in community or in hospital pharmacies.

Prevalence: The number of cases of a given disease or condition present in a given population at a given time (see also **incidence**).

Prevention: Refers to all health system activities relating to the primary prevention of diseases and injury, including screening for asymptomatic disease within the hospital and medical sectors.

Private hospitals: Privately owned and operated institutions approved by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services. Private hospitals cater only for private patients who are treated by a doctor of their own choice and are charged fees for accommodation and medical services. Private hospitals can be classified as acute or psychiatric on the basis of the proportion of acute inpatient services provided.

Psychiatric hospitals: Establishments devoted primarily to the treatment and care of inpatients with psychiatric, mental, or behavioural disorders.

Public health: The programs, services, and institutions, outside the treatment sectors of the health system, which emphasise the prevention of disease and the health needs of the population as a whole.

Public hospitals: As determined by the State or Territory health authority, and includes both recognised and non-recognised hospitals. Recognised hospitals are those nominated by States and Territories and accepted by the Commonwealth and appearing in schedules to each State/Territory Medicare Agreement (Schedule B in the current Medicare Agreements). They provide free shared-ward accommodation for all who require it and free treatment

there by a hospital-appointed doctor. In addition, they provide, to those who are prepared to pay for it (for example, through private insurance), private ward accommodation and the doctor of choice. Thus, public hospitals service much private medical practice as well as public.

Recurrent expenditure: Expenditure which recurs continually or very frequently (for example, salaries). It may be contrasted with capital expenditure, such as the cost of hospital buildings and diagnostic equipment, for which the expenditure is made infrequently.

Repatriation hospitals: Acute care hospitals run by the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs originally set up to provide hospital treatment for eligible veterans and their dependants at Commonwealth expense.

Research: Health and medical research as defined in the *Health Expenditure Bulletin* published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Rheumatoid arthritis: A chronic disabling auto-immune disorder of joints.

Road traffic accidents: Accidents on streets, roads, and highways involving drivers, passengers, pedestrians, or vehicles. Traffic accidents refer to automobiles (passenger cars, buses, and trucks), bicycles, and motorcycles but not off-road motor vehicles, railroads or snowmobiles. See also **Transport accident**.

Self-inflicted injury: The injurious effect of suicide and attempted suicide. This includes injuries resulting from self-destructive acts carried out without the intention of dying.

Separation (or discharge): Occurs when an inpatient leaves hospital to return home, transfers to another institution, or dies. The number of separations in a year is almost the same as the number of hospital inpatient episodes.

SLE: see **Systemic lupus erythematosus**.

Suicide: Death from injury, poisoning, or suffocation where there is evidence (either explicit or implicit) that the injury was self-inflicted and that the decedent intended to kill him/herself.

Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE): A multi-system auto-immune disease characterised by remissions and exacerbations with tissue damage affecting many body systems. Arthralgia and arthritis are present in up to 95% of patients (Rasaratnam & Ryan 1998).

Transport accident: A transport accident is any accident involving a device designed primarily for, or being used at the time primarily for, conveying persons or goods from one place to another. Transport accidents are classified as either **Road traffic accidents** (q.v.) or **Other transport accident** (see below) in this report.

Transport accident—other: Other transport accidents are transport accidents which do not occur on streets, roads and highways. They include accidents involving vehicles on private property, off-road vehicles, rail, sea and air transport.

Treatment: Refers to all health system activities relating to the diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliation for diseases, injuries and symptoms.

Unintentional injury: Injury that is not inflicted by deliberate means. When death or disability occurs under 'accidental' circumstances, the preferred term is 'unintentional injury' (e.g. motor vehicle crash, falls, fires, poisoning, drowning).

Violence: See **Homicide and violence**.