

Glossary

ABS: The 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.

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.

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.

Benign neoplasm: A neoplasm (or tumour) which does not invade surrounding tissue and is not malignant. See also **malignant neoplasm**.

Cancer (malignant neoplasm): A general term for more than 100 diseases in which malignant cells develop. These diseases occur when the process of cell division, by which tissues normally grow and renew themselves, becomes uncontrolled and leads to the development of malignant cells. These cancer cells multiply in an uncoordinated way, independently of normal growth control mechanisms, to form a tumour. This tumour may expand locally by invasion or systemically by metastasis via the lymphatic or vascular systems. If left untreated, most malignant tumours will eventually result in death.

Cancer death: A death where the underlying cause is indicated as cancer. Persons with cancer dying of other causes are not counted in the death statistics in this publication.

Carcinoma in situ: An early stage of cancer, in which the tumour is still only in the structures of the organ where it first developed, and the disease has not invaded other parts of the organ or spread (metastasised). Most in situ carcinomas are highly curable.

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.

ICD-9: International Classification of Disease. A coding system used to identify the primary site of the malignancy. This classification is in its ninth revision.

Incidence: See **new cancer case**.

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).

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.

In-situ: See **carcinoma in-situ**.

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

International Classification of Disease (ICD): WHO's internationally accepted classification of death and disease. The ninth revision (ICD-9) is currently in use (WHO 1977).

Invasive cancer: Cancer that has spread beyond the area it developed in, to involve adjacent tissues. For example, invasive breast cancers develop in milk glands (lobules) or milk passages (ducts) and spread to the adjacent fatty breast tissue. Some invasive cancers spread to distant areas of the body (metastasise), but others do not.

Malignant neoplasm: A mass of cancer cells that may invade surrounding tissues or spread (metastasize) to distant areas of the body. See **cancer**.

Mammogram, mammography: An x-ray of the breast; the principal method of detecting breast cancer in women over 40. Screening mammography is used for early detection of breast cancer in women without any breast symptoms. Diagnostic mammography is used to help characterise breast masses or determine the cause of other breast symptoms.

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.

Mortality: See **cancer death**.

Neoplasm: An abnormal growth (tumor) that starts from a single altered cell; a neoplasm may be benign or malignant. Cancer is a malignant neoplasm.

Neoplasm of uncertain behaviour: A neoplasm which there is insufficient evidence to classify it as either benign or malignant.

New cancer case: A person who has a new cancer diagnosed for the first time. One person may have more than one cancer and therefore may be counted twice in incidence statistics if it is decided that the two cancers are not of the same origin.

NMSC: See **non-melanoma skin cancer**.

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 as outpatients.

Non-melanoma skin cancer: Cancer of the skin apart from melanoma (cancer of pigmented melanocytic cells such as those found in moles and freckles).

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 Family Services and/or licensed by the State or Territory, or controlled by government departments.

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.

Pap smear: Papanicolaou smear — a procedure for the detection or diagnosis of malignant and pre-malignant conditions of the female genital tract.

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.

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.

Primary site: The site where cancer begins. Primary cancer is usually named after the organ in which it starts (for example, cancer that starts in the breast is always breast cancer even if it metastasizes to other organs, such as bones or lungs).

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.

PSA test: Prostate-specific antigen test — a procedure for the detection or diagnosis of cancer of the prostate gland.

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.

PYLL: Potential years of life lost.

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 Australian Health Expenditure Bulletins (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 1996).

Screening: The search for disease, such as cancer, in people without symptoms. Screening may refer to coordinated programs in large populations such as the National Program for the Early Detection of Breast Cancer.

Secondary tumour: A tumour that forms as a result of spread (metastasis) of cancer from its site of origin.

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.

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

Tumour: A lump or mass which has formed due to excessive accumulation of abnormal cells. 'Tumour' is not a precise medical term. Tumours can be benign (not cancerous) or malignant (cancerous).

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