

Acute care hospital admissions and occupancy

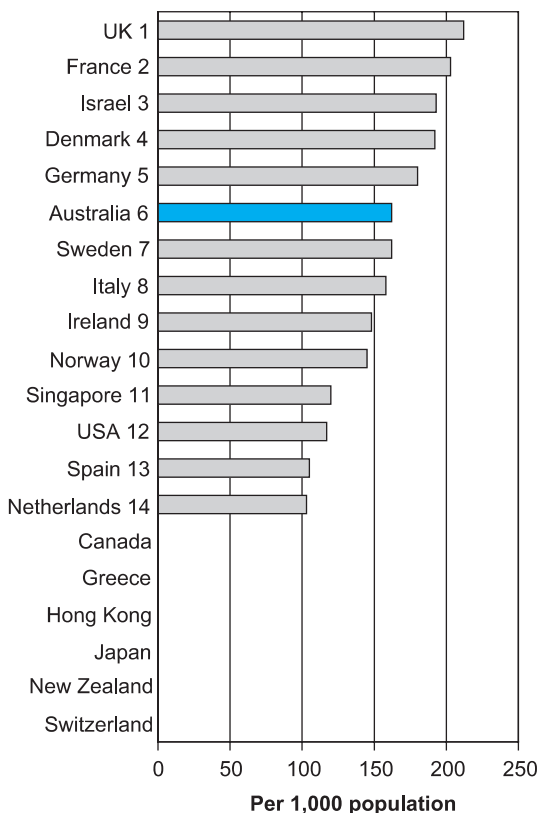


Figure 1: Acute care hospital admissions, 1993

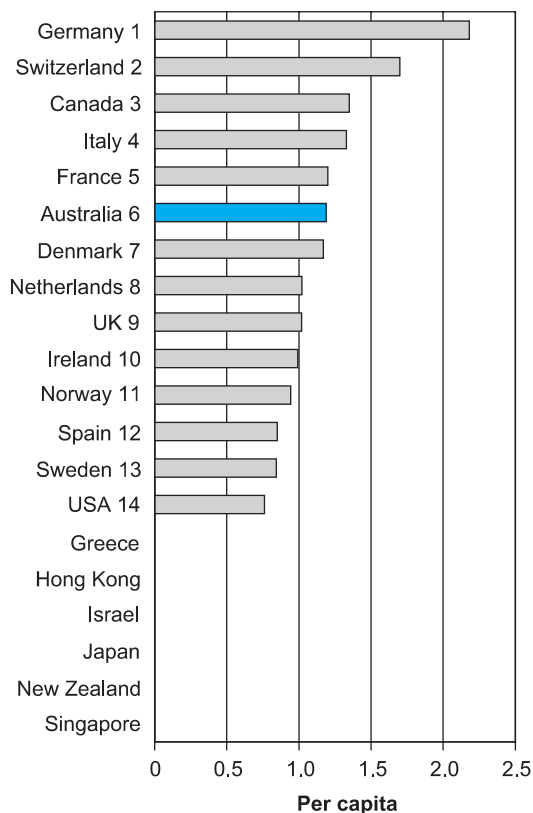


Figure 2: Acute care patient days, 1995

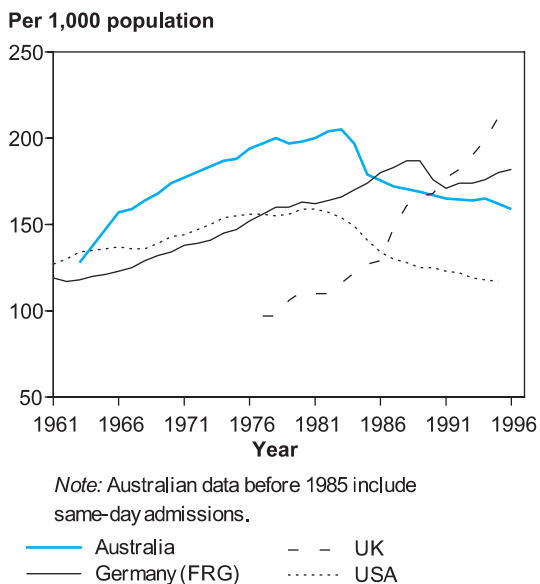


Figure 3: Trends in acute care hospital admissions, 1960 to 1996

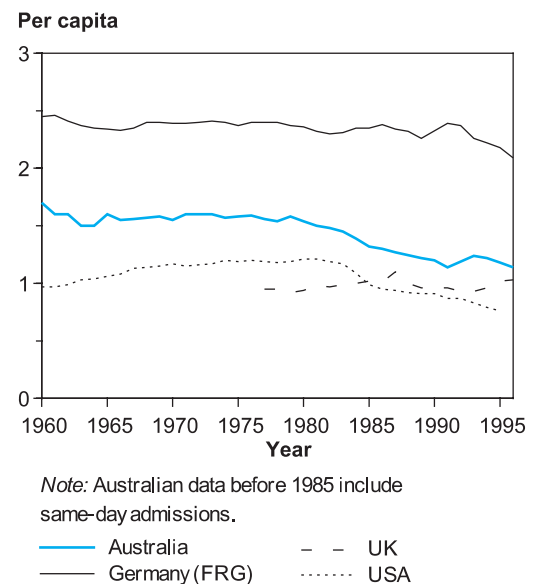


Figure 4: Trends in acute care patient days, 1960 to 1996

Acute care hospital admissions and patient days

Acute care hospital admission rate and patient days per capita^(a)

Country	Acute care hospital admissions (per 1,000 pop.)				Acute care hospital patient days (per capita)			
	1970	1980	Latest year		1970	1980	Latest year	
Australia ^(b)	174	198	1996–97	159	1.6	1.6	1996–97	1.1
Canada	—	146	1992	114	—	1.6	1995	1.3
Denmark	143	176	1995	192	—	1.6	1995	1.2
France	—	175	1995	203	—	1.8	1997	1.2
Germany (FRG)	134	163	1996	182	2.4	2.4	1996	2.0
Greece	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hong Kong	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ireland	156	172	1995	148	1.7	1.7	1997	0.9
Israel	129	154	1995	193	—	—	—	—
Italy	151	177	1995	158	2.1	1.9	1997	1.3
Japan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Netherlands	97	112	1997	103	1.8	1.6	1997	1.0
New Zealand	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Norway	123	143	1996	145	1.8	1.6	1996	1.0
Singapore	—	—	1995	120	—	—	—	—
Spain	—	—	1994	105	—	—	1996	0.8
Sweden	144	156	1996	159	1.6	1.3	1996	0.8
Switzerland	—	130	1993	142	—	2.0	1996	1.7
UK	—	111	1996	214	—	0.9	1995	0.8
USA	143	159	1996	116	1.2	1.2	1995	0.8

(a) Definitions may vary between countries. Australian data are for public acute and private hospitals, and exclude psychiatric hospitals.

(b) Data for 1970 and 1980 include same-day admissions.

Sources: OECD 1998; Israel CBS 1996.

- The rate of hospital admission constitutes an indicator of the number of episodes of hospital care per person. Patterns and trends in hospital admissions are influenced by several factors, including the level of illness in the population, the age and sex composition of the population, access to hospitals, repeated admissions, medical attitudes in treating an illness or injury in hospital, and financial considerations.
- In 1996–97, there were 1,167 public acute and private hospitals in Australia, with 77,191 beds available on average. The public acute and private hospital admission rate was 159 per 1,000 population. If same-day admissions are included, this figure rises to 288 per 1,000 population. Australia ranks towards the middle among developed countries for which data were available (Figure 1).
- Admission rates to Australian acute care hospitals have fluctuated over the last two decades—an increase during the 1970s was followed by a slight downturn beginning in the early 1980s, a pattern similar to that found in the United States (Figure 3).
- This downturn in admission rates has been noted in many developed countries, triggered by financial pressures and new medical technologies (OECD 1993). Two exceptions,

however, were Germany and the United Kingdom, which both saw steady increases in admission rates throughout the 1980s.

- A hospital bed occupied by an admitted patient for all or part of a day is known as a ‘patient day’. In 1996–97, the Australian crude patient day rate per capita was 1.1 for public acute and private hospitals. Again, Australia ranks towards the middle among developed countries for which data are available (Figure 2).
- Patient days per capita have declined for a number of developed countries, including Australia, over the previous decade (Figure 4). These declines reflect both changes in admission rates and lengths of stay. Most developed countries have seen notable declines in average lengths of stay; only some have seen declines in admission rates.

For more information, see:

OECD 1994. *The reform of health care systems – a review of seventeen OECD countries*. Paris: OECD.

AIHW 1998. *Australian hospital statistics 1996–97*. Canberra: AIHW (Health Services Series No. 11).