

# Appendix 5: Service Related Groups

## Introduction

The Service Related Group (SRG) classification is based on Australian Refined Diagnosis Related Group (AR-DRG) aggregations and categorises admitted patient episodes into groups representing clinical divisions of hospital activity. SRGs are used to assist the planning of services, in analysing and comparing hospital activity, examining patterns of service needs and access, and projecting potential trends in services. For this purpose the AR-DRG system was not considered appropriate as it contains too many classes. Both the Major Diagnostic Categories (MDC) and the *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th Revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM)* were also considered unsuitable as they generally relate to body systems rather than services.

An example illustrating the assignment of selected procedures to SRGs is shown below. These examples illustrate the differences between categorising procedures on the basis of ICD chapters, MDCs and SRGs.

Procedure	ICD-10-AM chapter	MDC	SRG
Extraction of wisdom teeth	Diseases of Digestive system	MDC 3 Ear, nose and throat	Dentistry
Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography	Diseases of Digestive system	MDC 6 Digestive System	Gastroenterology
Excision of haemorrhoids	Diseases of Digestive system	MDC 6 Digestive System	Colorectal surgery

Based on methodology originally developed by the New South Wales Department of Health, the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) developed the Specialist Service Related Group (SSRG) classification. These are largely aggregations of version 4.2 AR-DRG information. However, assignment of some separations to SSRGs is based on other information, such as procedures, diagnoses and care types. Separations with non-acute care are allocated to separate SSRG categories according to the type of care because the main service type of these separations cannot be ascertained from their diagnoses or procedures. Error DRGs become unallocated SRGs. The classification also incorporates non-specialist SRGs (NSSRGs), which are an aggregation of the SSRGs (into categories such as other non-specialty surgery) and are used for smaller hospitals that do not have the specialist services or specialist equipment.

There are 50 SRGs, 127 SSRGs and 122 NSSRGs. These are detailed in Table A5.1 in *Australian Hospital Statistics 2001–02 (AIHW 2003a)*.

More information relating to SRGs, including the algorithm for assigning SRGs can be obtained from the Department of Health and Ageing.

For this Appendix, separations were assigned to the SSRG or NSSRG classification depending on whether or not the hospital they were in had a specialist Neurosurgery, Perinatology or Cardiothoracic unit, as appropriate, as reported to the National Public

Hospital Establishments Database (see Chapter 3). SSRGs and NSSRGs were allocated using the data in the National Hospital Morbidity Database.

## State and territory overview

Tables A5.1 and A5.2 in the website version of this publication contain the number of separations in each SRG category by state and territory for all public and private hospitals respectively. *Dialysis* (SRG 23) had the largest number of separations in public hospitals, with 583,299, followed by *Obstetrics* (SRG 72), with 270,362. In the private sector, *Diagnostic gastrointestinal endoscopy* (SRG 16) recorded the highest number of separations, with 353,109, followed by *Orthopaedics* (SRG 49), with 239,080.

Tables A5.3 and A5.4 in the website version of this publication summarise the number of patient days in each sector by SRG and state and territory. In the public sector, *Psychiatry* (SRG 82) recorded the highest number of patient days, with 1,313,563, and *Orthopaedics* (SRG 49) recorded the highest in the private sector, with 788,780 patient days.

Table A5.5 contains the number of establishments with more than 50 separations and the number of establishments with more than 360 patient days in each SRG by state and territory and by Remoteness Area for public hospitals only. This has been included as an indicative measure of the number of specialty units. The best indicative measure of the number of units varies between SRGs and between uses of the measure so, for example, *Maintenance* (SRG 87) shows 114 hospitals providing more than 50 separations a year and 366 providing more than 360 patient days while *Ophthalmology* (SRG 50) shows 165 hospitals providing more than 50 separations a year and 66 providing more than 360 patient days a year. *Cardiothoracic surgery* (SRG 42) and *Neurosurgery* (SRG 46) showed no difference between the two different measures with 29 and 32 units respectively using both measures.

*Non-subspecialty medicine* (SRG 27) and *Non-subspecialty surgery* (SRG 54) had the greatest number of establishments with more than 50 separations at 430 and 400 respectively. Using the 360 patient day boundary changed the picture only slightly, with *Non-subspecialty medicine* (SRG 27) remaining the most common but *Maintenance* (SRG 87) moving into second place with 376 and 366 establishments respectively.

For confidentiality, the statistics for some blocks in the private sector, particularly for Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, have been suppressed.

**Table A5.5: Number of hospitals with more than 50 separations and number of hospitals with more than 360 patient days in each Service Related Group, by Service Related Group, public hospitals, states and territories, 2002-03**

Service Related Group	NSW		Vic		Qld		WA		SA		Tas		ACT		NT		Total	
	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days
11 Cardiology	128	105	73	60	70	46	31	19	43	26	6	3	2	2	5	3	358	264
Major City	39	40	21	20	13	10	8	8	9	9	..	..	2	2	..	..	92	89
Regional	84	62	52	40	46	34	16	8	28	13	6	3	..	..	1	1	233	161
Remote	5	3	0	0	11	2	7	3	6	4	0	0	..	..	4	2	33	14
12 Interventional cardiology	26	26	13	12	5	5	4	3	4	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	56	53
Major City	25	25	11	11	3	3	4	3	4	3	..	..	1	1	..	..	48	46
Regional	1	1	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	..	..	1	1	8	7
13 Dermatology	36	10	23	9	19	5	8	4	9	6	2	1	1	1	2	1	100	37
Major City	31	10	18	9	11	4	6	4	8	6	..	..	1	1	..	..	75	34
Regional	5	0	5	0	7	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	..	..	1	1	23	3
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	1	0	2	0
14 Endocrinology	58	50	34	29	27	23	13	14	13	10	3	3	2	2	2	1	152	132
Major City	36	36	21	18	12	12	9	10	8	8	..	..	2	2	..	..	88	86
Regional	22	14	13	11	14	10	4	4	5	2	3	3	..	..	1	1	62	45
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	1	0	2	1
15 Gastroenterology	115	70	69	45	58	29	28	13	37	14	4	3	2	2	4	3	317	179
Major City	39	38	24	23	13	11	10	8	9	9	..	..	2	2	..	..	97	91
Regional	71	32	45	22	38	17	12	4	24	5	4	3	..	..	1	1	195	84
Remote	5	0	0	0	7	1	6	1	4	0	0	0	..	..	3	2	25	4
Diagnostic gastrointestinal																		
16 endoscopy	84	54	68	39	38	23	29	15	25	13	3	2	2	2	4	2	253	150
Major City	38	32	22	19	12	11	10	9	9	9	..	..	2	2	..	..	93	82
Regional	46	22	46	20	24	12	13	6	14	4	3	2	..	..	1	1	147	67
Remote	0	0	0	0	2	0	6	0	2	0	0	0	..	..	3	1	13	1
17 Haematology	64	42	48	31	30	18	11	4	17	7	3	2	2	1	2	1	177	106
Major City	34	31	24	19	13	10	6	4	9	7	..	..	2	1	..	..	88	72
Regional	30	11	24	12	17	8	5	0	7	0	3	2	..	..	1	1	87	34
Remote	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	..	..	1	0	2	0
18 Immunology and infections	87	66	45	38	48	31	21	17	16	11	3	3	2	2	5	5	227	173
Major City	37	38	22	22	12	12	7	8	9	8	..	..	2	2	..	..	89	90
Regional	47	28	23	16	29	17	5	5	5	3	3	3	..	..	1	1	113	73
Remote	3	0	0	0	7	2	9	4	2	0	0	0	..	..	4	4	25	10
19 Medical oncology	61	58	46	37	26	23	10	7	10	9	3	4	2	2	2	2	160	142
Major City	35	36	22	19	12	11	6	5	8	7	..	..	2	2	..	..	85	80
Regional	26	22	24	18	14	12	4	1	2	2	3	4	..	..	1	1	74	60
Remote	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	..	..	1	1	1	2

(continued)

**Table A5.5: (continued) Number of hospitals with more than 50 separations and number of hospitals with more than 360 patient days in each Service Related Group, by Service Related Group, public hospitals, states and territories, 2002-03**

Service Related Group	NSW		Vic		Qld		WA		SA		Tas		ACT		NT		Total	
	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days
20 Chemotherapy	14	3	37	25	24	16	8	5	21	8	1	1	2	2	2	2	109	62
Major City	12	3	17	14	9	9	4	4	8	8	..	..	2	2	..	..	52	40
Regional	2	0	20	11	14	7	4	1	11	0	1	1	..	..	1	1	53	21
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	..	..	1	1	4	1
21 Neurology	112	89	63	53	52	38	31	19	38	22	4	5	2	2	3	3	305	231
Major City	41	42	23	22	13	13	10	10	9	10	..	..	2	2	..	..	98	99
Regional	68	47	40	31	36	24	12	8	25	11	4	5	..	..	1	1	186	127
Remote	3	0	0	0	3	1	9	1	4	1	0	0	..	..	2	2	21	5
22 Renal medicine	46	37	29	25	21	15	11	3	7	6	3	2	2	1	2	2	121	91
Major City	32	27	19	18	11	9	7	3	7	6	..	..	2	1	..	..	78	64
Regional	14	9	10	7	9	6	4	0	0	0	3	2	..	..	1	1	41	25
Remote	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	1	1	2	2
23 Dialysis	35	30	51	39	14	13	11	9	11	10	2	2	1	1	4	4	129	108
Major City	16	16	15	15	5	5	6	5	7	7	..	..	1	1	..	..	50	49
Regional	17	14	36	24	8	8	3	3	2	2	2	2	..	..	1	1	69	54
Remote	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	2	1	0	0	..	..	3	3	10	5
24 Respiratory medicine	135	128	83	78	76	56	39	33	45	32	6	7	2	2	5	5	391	341
Major City	41	43	25	26	14	14	9	10	10	10	..	..	2	2	..	..	101	105
Regional	87	80	58	52	46	37	17	15	29	20	6	7	..	..	1	1	244	212
Remote	7	5	0	0	16	5	13	8	6	2	0	0	..	..	4	4	46	24
25 Rheumatology	21	14	15	10	11	3	4	4	7	3	2	2	1	1	1	0	62	37
Major City	19	14	13	10	8	3	4	4	6	3	..	..	1	1	..	..	51	35
Regional	2	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	..	..	1	0	11	2
26 Pain management	22	7	27	9	9	3	7	5	8	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	76	29
Major City	19	7	16	8	7	3	5	5	6	3	..	..	0	0	..	..	53	26
Regional	3	0	11	1	2	0	2	0	2	1	3	1	..	..	0	0	23	3
27 Non-specialty medicine	142	137	95	98	89	57	42	31	49	39	6	7	2	2	5	5	430	376
Major City	50	51	33	34	15	15	13	12	12	12	..	..	2	2	..	..	125	126
Regional	86	81	62	64	54	40	17	11	30	22	6	7	..	..	1	1	256	226
Remote	6	5	0	0	20	2	12	8	7	5	0	0	..	..	4	4	49	24
41 Breast surgery	32	10	25	10	14	3	5	2	5	3	3	0	1	0	1	0	86	28
Major City	23	8	17	10	7	3	4	2	5	3	..	..	1	0	..	..	57	26
Regional	9	2	8	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	..	..	1	0	29	2
42 Cardiothoracic surgery	11	11	7	7	3	3	4	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	29	29
Major City	11	11	7	7	2	2	4	4	2	2	..	..	1	1	..	..	27	27
Regional	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	..	..	0	0	2	2

(continued)

**Table A5.5: (continued) Number of hospitals with more than 50 separations and number of hospitals with more than 360 patient days in each Service Related Group, by Service Related Group, public hospitals, states and territories, 2002-03**

Service Related Group	NSW		Vic		Qld		WA		SA		Tas		ACT		NT		Total	
	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days
43 Colorectal surgery	57	47	42	35	20	17	15	11	13	8	3	3	2	2	2	2	154	125
Major City	34	31	21	19	11	8	10	8	8	6	..	..	2	2	..	..	86	74
Regional	23	16	21	16	9	9	5	3	4	2	3	3	..	..	1	1	66	50
Remote	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	..	..	1	1	2	1
44 Upper gastrointestinal surgery	69	50	47	36	32	21	20	11	16	8	3	3	2	2	3	2	192	133
Major City	36	32	20	20	11	10	10	6	9	7	..	..	2	2	..	..	88	77
Regional	33	18	27	16	20	10	6	4	6	1	3	3	..	..	1	1	96	53
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	1	1	0	0	0	..	..	2	1	8	3
45 Head and neck surgery	18	9	17	6	9	2	3	3	3	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	54	21
Major City	16	9	14	6	6	2	3	3	3	1	..	..	1	0	..	..	43	21
Regional	2	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	..	..	1	0	11	0
46 Neurosurgery	10	10	7	7	6	6	3	3	4	4	1	1	1	1	0	0	32	32
Major City	10	10	7	7	5	5	3	3	4	4	..	..	1	1	..	..	30	30
Regional	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	..	..	0	0	2	2
47 Dentistry	33	1	26	7	26	4	8	2	9	2	3	0	2	0	2	0	109	16
Major City	15	1	7	3	11	3	4	2	4	2	..	..	2	0	..	..	43	11
Regional	17	0	19	4	14	1	4	0	4	0	3	0	..	..	1	0	62	5
Remote	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	..	..	1	0	4	0
48 Ear, nose and throat	60	29	56	28	24	13	22	9	21	6	3	2	2	1	3	1	191	89
Major City	35	22	23	18	10	8	10	8	8	5	..	..	2	1	..	..	88	62
Regional	25	7	33	10	13	5	6	1	11	1	3	2	..	..	1	1	92	27
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	2	0	0	0	..	..	2	0	11	0
49 Orthopaedics	114	97	70	58	61	38	33	26	41	22	4	4	2	2	5	3	330	250
Major City	43	44	24	23	13	13	11	10	9	9	..	..	2	2	..	..	102	101
Regional	68	53	46	35	39	24	13	10	28	12	4	4	..	..	1	1	199	139
Remote	3	0	0	0	9	1	9	6	4	1	0	0	..	..	4	2	29	10
50 Ophthalmology	55	23	41	14	23	8	22	10	16	7	3	0	2	2	3	2	165	66
Major City	30	14	20	10	10	6	10	9	7	6	..	..	2	2	..	..	79	47
Regional	25	9	21	4	9	2	6	1	8	1	3	0	..	..	1	1	73	18
Remote	0	0	0	0	4	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	..	..	2	1	13	1
51 Plastic surgery	77	40	60	32	37	21	24	11	25	11	3	3	2	1	4	2	232	121
Major City	37	30	25	19	12	11	10	7	9	8	..	..	2	1	..	..	95	76
Regional	40	10	35	13	24	9	8	4	15	3	3	3	..	..	1	1	126	43
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	0	1	0	0	0	..	..	3	1	11	2
52 Urology	84	48	57	34	37	16	23	13	26	10	3	2	2	2	4	2	236	127
Major City	39	32	24	20	12	9	11	9	9	8	..	..	2	2	..	..	97	80
Regional	45	16	33	14	24	7	9	4	16	2	3	2	..	..	1	1	131	46
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	..	..	3	1	8	1

(continued)

**Table A5.5: (continued) Number of hospitals with more than 50 separations and number of hospitals with more than 360 patient days in each Service Related Group, by Service Related Group, public hospitals, states and territories, 2002-03**

Service Related Group	NSW		Vic		Qld		WA		SA		Tas		ACT		NT		Total	
	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days
53 Vascular surgery	47	43	37	32	17	18	10	7	8	8	2	3	2	1	2	2	125	114
Major City	32	30	21	17	9	9	7	5	6	6	..	..	2	1	..	..	77	68
Regional	15	13	16	15	8	7	3	2	2	2	2	3	..	..	1	1	47	43
Remote	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	1	1	1	3
54 Non-specialty surgery	131	96	80	60	89	47	41	29	46	21	6	4	2	2	5	5	400	264
Major City	42	43	28	26	15	13	12	12	9	9	..	..	2	2	..	..	108	105
Regional	83	52	52	34	53	32	16	10	29	11	6	4	..	..	1	1	240	144
Remote	6	1	0	0	21	2	13	7	8	1	0	0	..	..	4	4	52	15
61 Transplant	2	4	1	4	1	3	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	14
Major City	2	4	1	4	1	3	0	2	1	1	..	..	0	0	..	..	5	14
62 Extensive burns	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	12	15
Major City	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	..	..	0	0	..	..	11	12
Regional	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	..	..	1	1	1	2
Remote	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	0	1	0	1
63 Tracheostomy	18	28	13	17	6	16	3	4	3	4	2	2	1	1	1	2	47	74
Major City	18	21	13	13	3	10	3	4	3	4	..	..	1	1	..	..	41	53
Regional	0	7	0	4	3	6	0	0	0	0	2	2	..	..	1	1	6	20
Remote	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	0	1	0	1
71 Gynaecology	79	50	68	40	41	23	29	16	27	16	3	3	2	2	4	2	253	152
Major City	35	29	25	18	11	11	11	9	9	9	..	..	2	2	..	..	93	78
Regional	44	21	43	22	27	11	11	5	17	6	3	3	..	..	1	1	146	69
Remote	0	0	0	0	3	1	7	2	1	1	0	0	..	..	3	1	14	5
72 Obstetrics	86	75	59	51	48	37	30	26	30	22	4	2	2	2	5	4	264	219
Major City	31	30	18	18	9	8	9	9	7	7	..	..	2	2	..	..	76	74
Regional	53	45	41	33	34	26	13	10	21	14	4	2	..	..	1	1	167	131
Remote	2	0	0	0	5	3	8	7	2	1	0	0	..	..	4	3	21	14
73 Qualified neonates	48	44	28	24	23	20	8	6	9	6	2	2	2	2	3	3	123	107
Major City	29	27	13	13	11	10	4	3	5	4	..	..	2	2	..	..	64	59
Regional	19	17	15	11	11	9	2	1	4	2	2	2	..	..	1	1	54	43
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	..	..	2	2	5	5
75 Perinatology	2	9	2	4	0	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	18
Major City	2	9	2	4	0	1	1	2	1	1	..	..	0	1	..	..	6	18
81 Drug and alcohol	77	46	35	24	40	16	22	14	20	11	4	4	2	2	3	2	203	119
Major City	40	34	18	17	12	8	10	9	11	11	..	..	2	2	..	..	93	81
Regional	35	12	17	7	26	8	7	4	8	0	4	4	..	..	1	1	98	36
Remote	2	0	0	0	2	0	5	1	1	0	0	0	..	..	2	1	12	2

(continued)

**Table A5.5: (continued) Number of hospitals with more than 50 separations and number of hospitals with more than 360 patient days in each Service Related Group, by Service Related Group, public hospitals, states and territories, 2002-03**

Service Related Group	NSW		Vic		Qld		WA		SA		Tas		ACT		NT		Total	
	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days	50 Seps	360 Days
82 Psychiatry	86	55	54	41	31	21	26	22	29	20	5	6	2	2	2	2	235	169
Major City	40	34	33	30	12	9	8	9	13	11	..	..	2	2	..	..	108	95
Regional	45	21	21	11	18	12	12	11	15	8	5	6	..	..	1	1	117	70
Remote	1	0	0	0	1	0	6	2	1	1	0	0	..	..	1	1	10	4
83 Non-acute psychiatry	5	9	0	6	10	12	4	7	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	21	37
Major City	5	7	0	5	7	7	4	7	2	2	..	..	0	0	..	..	18	28
Regional	0	2	0	1	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	..	..	0	0	3	9
84 Rehabilitation	62	78	30	43	23	31	13	14	9	12	3	3	2	2	2	2	144	185
Major City	35	39	19	22	10	12	9	8	5	7	..	..	2	2	..	..	80	90
Regional	27	39	11	21	12	19	4	6	4	5	3	3	..	..	1	1	62	94
Remote	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	1	1	2	1
85 Geriatric	8	10	28	35	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	49
Major City	4	4	19	20	1	1	1	1	0	0	..	..	0	0	..	..	25	26
Regional	4	6	9	15	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	0	0	14	23
86 Palliation	30	36	18	23	13	15	0	5	4	8	2	2	1	1	0	1	68	91
Major City	17	18	9	9	7	7	0	2	4	4	..	..	1	1	..	..	38	41
Regional	13	18	9	14	6	8	0	3	0	3	2	2	..	..	0	1	30	49
Remote	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	..	..	0	0	0	1
87 Maintenance	45	128	19	55	27	83	11	37	7	51	2	8	1	1	2	3	114	366
Major City	23	34	17	22	10	14	4	10	6	8	..	..	1	1	..	..	61	89
Regional	21	86	2	33	17	52	7	17	1	30	2	8	..	..	1	1	51	227
Remote	1	8	0	0	0	17	0	10	0	13	0	0	..	..	1	2	2	50
88 Psychogeriatric	2	11	0	0	1	1	4	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	18
Major City	2	7	0	0	1	1	4	6	0	0	..	..	0	0	..	..	7	14
Regional	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	..	..	0	0	0	4
99 Error	14	21	12	17	4	6	4	4	4	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	41	57
Major City	13	19	10	15	4	4	4	4	4	5	..	..	1	1	..	..	36	48
Regional	1	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	..	..	1	1	5	9

.. Not applicable

Note: Rows for regions with no apparent units are not shown.