AGED CARE STATISTICS SERIES Supplement
(Internet only)

# Nursing homes in Australia 1992–93, 1993–94 and1994–95

## A statistical overview

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
and
Department of Health and Family Services
Canberra

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# Preface

In 1997, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare agreed to participate in a joint venture to publish nursing home and hostel data, with the Institute taking over the task of producing the publications. Previously, nursing home and hostel data had been published by the Department of Health and Family Services in two report series — *Nursing Homes for the Aged: A Statistical Overview* and *Hostels for the Aged: A Statistical Overview*. From 1997, the Aged Care Statistics Series, produced by the Aged Care Unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, replaces those earlier publications, providing access to annual data on both nursing homes and hostels.

So far, four reports of the series have been released. They are *Nursing Homes in Australia 1995–96, Nursing homes in Australia 1996–97, Hostels in Australia 1995–96* and *Hostels in Australia 1996–97*. The previous report series published by the Department of Health and Family Services provided data on hostels for the years from 1991–92 to 1993–94, and for nursing homes for the years from 1988 to 1991–92. In order to maintain continuity in the data series for nursing homes, the Institute is releasing these tables in electronic format for the years 1992–93, 1993–94 and 1994–95.

The statistics presented in this supplement were derived from information held on the Commonwealth Nursing Home Payment System (NHPS) by the Department of Health and Family Services.

A large range of information is presented, focusing on the characteristics of nursing home residents (including age, sex, marital status and dependency levels) and the patterns of service use (including length of stay, admissions and separations).

The information in this publication is presented in three parts — nursing homes in Australia 1992–93, 1993–94 and 1994–95 respectively. Each part consists of the following sections:

- Population and nursing home service capacity;
- Nursing home residents and nursing home characteristics;
- Nursing home admissions and nursing home separations
- Nursing home resident characteristics; and
- Nursing home resident dependency.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and
Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services

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Peter Braun and John Patroni in the Strategic Development Section of the Aged and Community Care Division of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services provided the nursing home data used to produce the statistics presented here, and made constructive comments on the draft report.

Diane Gibson and David Cooper of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare provided useful comments. Michael Paxton provided technical support in data management. Nigel Harding arranged electronic release of the report.

# Data and limitations

## Introduction

The prime data source for this publication is the Nursing Home Payment System at the Department of Health and Family Services. This central computerised system is primarily a payment processing system with the major objective of making accurate and timely payment of nursing home benefits to nursing homes, in respect of their residents. At the time of its development, management information, other than that required for financial management, was a minor objective. In some cases this has led to the development of an environment where accurate non-financial information is difficult to obtain. The access to the nursing home data, however, has been improved by the development of a new computer system, the Aged and Community Care Strategic Information System (ACCSIS) at the Department.

The Nursing Home Payment System contains information gathered through a number of instruments. Among those instruments, the following three are directly relevant to this report.

- 'Application for Nursing Home Admission' (NH5), a form completed by persons applying for admission to a nursing home or someone (normally a carer) on behalf of the applicant;
- 'Application for Resident Classification' (NH4), a form completed by the nursing home to determine the residents overall level of nursing and personal care needs; and
- 'Claim for Commonwealth Benefits — In Respect of Qualified Nursing Home Patients in Approved Nursing Homes' (NH3), a form completed by the nursing home as part of the monthly funding cycle.

## Resident information

All residents admitted to a non-government nursing home (including the private for profit and private not for profit nursing homes) must have a valid NH5. This form is valid for 90 days from the date of the approval decision. Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) with delegation are authorised to approve NH5s.

The information entered into the Nursing Home Payment System from the NH5 is the major source for the following data items in the tables:

- Sex
- Date of birth
- Marital status
- Pension status
- Indigenous status
- Country of birth
- Preferred language
- Resident's usual residence (prior to admission)
- Resident's living arrangements (prior to admission)

- Whether in hospital at time of application.

Generally NH5 forms are not used by State Government controlled nursing homes (although some residents have them); in these cases a more limited set of data (the persons age and sex only) is derived from the NH3 form (refer below).

# Resident Classification Instrument (RCI)

The Resident Classification Instrument (RCI) application form (NH4) is forwarded to State/Territory offices of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services by nursing homes for each resident admitted. On the basis of the information provided, residents are assigned to one of five service-need categories for the purpose of funding. The information provided on the RCI is used in Section 5 of this report.

# Claim for Commonwealth Benefit (NH3)

The Claim for Commonwealth Benefits (NH3) form is sent to approved nursing homes each calendar month as part of the payment cycle. It shows claim details for the previous month plus a 'forecast' schedule for the current month. The nursing home checks the information and records separation and absence (hospital and social leave) data for current residents and details of any admissions to the home which occurred during the month.

The NH3 is the source for the following data items in the tables:

- Date of admission
- Date of separation
- Separation mode
- Admission type

The NH3 is the only source of resident data for the majority of residents in State Government controlled nursing homes.

The location and characteristics of these nursing homes are also recorded on the Nursing Home Payment System.

# Populations used in tables

It should be noted that tables in this publication have different coverage and, consequently, may not be directly comparable. The populations covered in the tables in this report are summarised below.

### Section 2: Nursing home residents and nursing home characteristics

All tables in this section relate to the number of approved residents who were in nursing homes on 30 June. There were 72,309 residents (72,023 for permanent care and 286 for respite care) in 1993, 72,482 (72,029 for permanent care and 453 for respite care) in 1994 and 72,492 (71,976 for permanent care and 516 for respite care) in 1995.

### Section 3: Nursing home admissions

Tables 3.1 to 3.3 relate to admissions for permanent and/or respite care over a financial year. In 1992–93, 38,744 admissions for permanent care and 4,227 for respite care were reported[1]. The corresponding figures were 34,385 and 6,031 in 1993–94, and 34,833 and 7,931 in 1994–95.

Tables 3.4 to 3.7 refer to separations of permanent and/or respite residents over a financial year. In 1992–93, 37,736 separations of permanent residents and 4,206 of respite residents were reported[2]. The corresponding figures were 33,790 and 5,874 in 1993–94, and 34,247 and 7,875 in 1994–95.

### Section 4: Resident characteristics (data from NH5)

These tables are based on the same population as that used in Section 2. As only sex and date of birth are mandatory for the NH5 forms, there are considerable numbers of 'not reported' cases in some of these tables.

### Section 5: Nursing home resident dependency (data from NH4)

Tables 5.1 to 5.3 in this section relate to the number of permanent nursing home residents as at 30 June of each year (68,286 in 1993, 68,518 in 1994 and 67,818 in 1995) who had been classified using the Resident Classification Instrument. Respite residents are not included in this section as the vast majority of them were given default category 3 on the dependency scale.

Table 5.4 relates to people who were admitted to a nursing home for permanent care during a financial year (33,416 in 1992–93[3], 30,475 in 1993–94 and 30,552 in 1994–95). Multiple admissions are excluded from this table.

Tables 5.5 to 5.6 represent those permanent residents who separated from the nursing homes during a financial year (34,695 in 1992–93[4], 32,281 in 1993–94 and 33,040 in 1994–95). Multiple separations are also excluded from these tables.

# Data limitations

It should be noted that the accuracy of some specific data items may be limited. Such cases include:

- Compensation status and Domiciliary Nursing Care Benefit – data on these items are not available to this report.
- Death indicator – In some cases, nursing homes may not be equipped for some terminally ill residents. Accordingly, some residents were transferred to acute-care institutions prior to death, hence there is an under enumeration of discharges due to death.
- Length of stay – The length of stay of a resident is based upon the time between the date of admission and the date of separation in relation to completed stays, and between the date of admission and 30 June of the relevant year for current residents' uncompleted stays. When a person is transferred from one nursing home to another, the date of admission to the first nursing home is the date on which the length of stay is calculated.

[1] The admission figures for 1992–93 should be treated with caution. The higher level was affected by the 'book' transfer of some State government nursing home beds to adjusted fees nursing home beds as a consequence of a shift in their funding arrangements.

[2] See footnote 1.

[3] See footnote 1.

[4] See footnote 1.

Aged Care Statistics Series Supplement

# Part one

# Nursing homes in Australia 1992–93

## A statistical overview

# Section 1

# Population and nursing home service capacity

Population data in this section are derived from population estimates compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics based on the results of the 1996 Census. Other data are derived from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services database on approved nursing homes for the aged as at 30 June 1993.

# Section 2

# Nursing home residents and nursing home characteristics

These tables are based on those residents in nursing homes for the aged at 30 June 1993. Length of stay and age and sex of residents are included in this section as basic reporting characteristics. Nursing home characteristics include nursing home type and nursing home location.

# Section 3

# Nursing home admissions and separations

These tables refer to admissions to and separations from nursing homes between 1 July 1992 and 30 June 1993. An individual can have more than one admission and one separation during the period. Transfers are excluded from the tables in this section.

# Section 4

# Nursing home resident characteristics

The tables in this section refer to all persons in nursing homes as at 30 June 1993.

# Section 5

# Nursing home resident dependency

The tables in this section describe dependency levels among nursing home residents. Resident dependency levels are based on the Resident Classification Instrument which classifies the residents into five categories. Category 1 represents the highest dependency level and category 5 the lowest.

Aged Care Statistics Series Supplement

# Part two

# Nursing homes in Australia 1993–94

## A statistical overview

# Section 1

# Population and nursing home service capacity

Population data in this section are derived from population estimates compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics based on the results of the 1996 Census. Other data are derived from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services database on approved nursing homes for the aged as at 30 June 1994.

# Section 2

# Nursing home residents and nursing home characteristics

These tables are based on those residents in nursing homes for the aged at 30 June 1994. Length of stay and age and sex of residents are included in this section as basic reporting characteristics. Nursing home characteristics include nursing home type and nursing home location.

# Section 3

# Nursing home admissions and separations

These tables refer to admissions to and separations from nursing homes between 1 July 1993 and 30 June 1994. An individual can have more than one admission and one separation during the period. Transfers are excluded from the tables in this section.

# Section 4

# Nursing home resident characteristics

The tables in this section refer to all persons in nursing homes as at 30 June 1994.

# Section 5

# Nursing home resident dependency

The tables in this section describe dependency levels among nursing home residents. Resident dependency levels are based on the Resident Classification Instrument which classifies the residents into five categories. Category 1 represents the highest dependency level and category 5 the lowest.

Aged Care Statistics Series Supplement

# Part three

# Nursing homes in Australia 1994–95

## A statistical overview

# Section 1

# Population and nursing home service capacity

Population data in this section are derived from population estimates compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics based on the results of the 1996 Census. Other data are derived from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services database on approved nursing homes for the aged as at 30 June 1995.

# Section 2

# Nursing home residents and nursing home characteristics

These tables are based on those residents in nursing homes for the aged at 30 June 1995. Length of stay and age and sex of residents are included in this section as basic reporting characteristics. Nursing home characteristics include nursing home type and nursing home location.

# Section 3

# Nursing home admissions and separations

These tables refer to admissions to and separations from nursing homes between 1 July 1994 and 30 June 1995. An individual can have more than one admission and one separation during the period. Transfers are excluded from the tables in this section.

# Section 4

# Nursing home resident characteristics

The tables in this section refer to all persons in nursing homes as at 30 June 1995.

# Section 5

# Nursing home resident dependency

The tables in this section describe dependency levels among nursing home residents. Resident dependency levels are based on the Resident Classification Instrument which classifies the residents into five categories. Category 1 represents the highest dependency level and category 5 the lowest.

# Glossary

**Adjusted fees (government) nursing homes**

Nursing homes either operated by or on behalf of a State or Territory Government and receiving a modified level of recurrent funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services.

**Admission day**

The first day of a person's stay in a nursing home. In the case of a person transferring between homes, where the time between leaving one home and entering another is less than two days, it is the date of the initial admission. Permanent and respite admissions are treated separately. For example, if a person transfers from a respite stay to a permanent stay, a new permanent admission is created.

**Geographic areas**

The geographic areas are based on the classification developed by the Department of Primary Industries and Energy, and the Department of Human Services and Health (now the Department of Health and Family Services) in 1994. This classification categorises all statistical local areas (SLAs) in Australia according to their remoteness, with an index of remoteness being calculated for each SLA in non-metropolitan Australia. Remoteness is measured by population density and distances to large population centres. The structure of the classification is as follows:

*Metropolitan areas*

- Capital city — State and Territory capital city statistical divisions
- Other metropolitan centre — Urban centres of population 100,000 or more

*Non-metropolitan zones*

- Rural zone — (Index of remoteness less than or equal to 10.5)
  - Large rural centres — Urban centre population between 25,000 and 99,999
  - Small rural centres — Urban centre population between 10,000 and 24,999
  - Other rural area — Urban centre population under 10,000
- Remote zone — (Index of remoteness greater than 10.5)
  - Remote centre — Urban centre population 5,000 or over
  - Other remote area — Urban centre population under 5,000

**Government homes**

Nursing homes either operated by or on behalf of a State or Territory Government.

**Length of stay**

The length of stay of a separated resident is based upon the time between the date of admission and the date of separation. For a current resident, it is the time between the date of admission and 30 June 1996. The admission day and the specified day (30 June 1996) are included but the separation day is excluded from the calculation of length of stay.

**Nursing home for the aged**

All nursing homes approved under the National Health Act other than nursing homes for disabled people. In this publication all references to nursing homes are to nursing homes for the aged. There have been a small number of young people with disabilities living the nursing homes for the aged.

**Permanent admission**

An admission to a nursing home for long-term care purposes. The term 'permanent' does not mean staying in a nursing home forever. In fact, many 'permanent admissions' leave the nursing homes alive after a short period of stay.

**Permanent care**

A nursing home resident is under permanent care if this resident entered a nursing home as a *permanent admission.*

**Permanent resident**

A nursing home resident who was admitted to a nursing home for long-term care purpose.

**Private for profit nursing homes**

Nursing homes operated by private-for-profit bodies or individuals.

**Resident**

A person living in a nursing home who is eligible for the payment of Commonwealth benefits or who has an entitlement to third party or workers' compensation insurance.

**Resident Classification Instrument (RCI)**

The RCI is forwarded to Commonwealth State offices by nursing homes for each resident admitted. On the basis of the information provided, residents are assigned to one of five service-need categories for the purpose of funding. Category 1 represents the highest level of care needs and category 5 the lowest. The RCI categories are used here to measure the level of dependency based on the assumption that the level of dependency positively relates to the level of care needs.

**Respite admission**

A short-term admission to a nursing home, usually in order to give a carer a 'respite' relief from the provision of care.

**Respite care**

A nursing home resident is under respite care if this resident entered a nursing home as a respite admission.

**Respite resident**

A nursing home resident who was admitted to a nursing home for respite care.

**Separation**

When a person is discharged from a nursing home and has not re-entered the same or another nursing home within two days.

**Separation day**

The last day of a person's stay in a nursing home; the day on which the person leaves the nursing home. In the case of a person transferring between homes, where the time between leaving one home and entering another is less than two days, this is not viewed as a separation.

**Separation mode**

The destination of a resident at separation, including death.

**Transferred home**

A nursing home for the aged which was previously deficit funded by the Commonwealth under the Nursing Homes Assistance Act and which had its approval transferred to the National Health Act from July 1987.

**Transfer**

Where a person leaves a nursing home on one day and is admitted into another within two days.

**Usual housing status**

Usual housing tenure prior to application for nursing home admission.

# Reference

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 1997. Population by age and sex, Australian States and Territories June 1992 to June 1997, Cat No. 3201.0. Canberra: ABS.