

## 5 Non-admitted patient care

This chapter presents information on non-admitted patient care in Australia's public hospitals.

Non-admitted patient care includes both emergency and non-emergency services for non-admitted patients.

Emergency departments provide care for patients who may have an urgent need for medical, surgical or other care. Emergency occasions of service for non-admitted patients include visits to formal emergency departments in larger hospitals and those to smaller hospitals with other arrangements for providing emergency services.

Non-emergency non-admitted patient care includes outpatient clinic care and other non-admitted patient care.

Outpatient clinic care includes consultations with specialists to determine the most appropriate treatment for a patient's condition. This can result, for example, in the patient being placed on a waiting list for surgery.

Other non-admitted patient care includes the dispensing of medication, and provision of diagnostic procedures, including pathology, X-rays and ultrasounds – often provided in association with admitted patient care or outpatient clinic services. District and community nursing services, and mental health and alcohol and drug services are also delivered from hospitals for non-admitted patients.

The data are counts of occasions of service, not persons. A person may have multiple occasions of service, at a variety of outpatient clinics or departments reported in a reference year.

### What data are reported?

This chapter presents non-admitted patient occasions of service, by type of non-admitted patient service, public hospital peer group and by state and territory.

### Emergency non-admitted patient care

#### Emergency occasions of service

Data on **emergency occasions of service** were sourced from the National Public Hospital Establishments Database (NPHEd) which is based on the Public hospital establishments NMDS, defined in the *National health data dictionary 2012, version 16* (AIHW 2012b).

The NPHEd has essentially full coverage of public hospitals (see Appendix A). For the purposes of this report, emergency occasions of service refer to those occasions of service reported with a type of non-admitted patient care of *Emergency services*.

The emergency occasions of service data sourced from the NPHEd are provided as aggregate data only. Therefore, it is not possible to describe who used these services, how urgently they required care, how long they waited for treatment or the length of time to completion of the occasion of service.

Data on emergency occasions of service reported to the NPHED are in tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.6.

## **Emergency department presentations**

Data for **emergency department presentations** provided at formal emergency departments between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013 were sourced from the National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database (NNAPEDCD) that is based on the Non-admitted patient emergency department care NMDS, as defined in the *National health data dictionary 2012, version 16* (AIHW 2012b).

The emergency department presentations data are provided as episode-level data. The NNAPEDCD data include information on the sex, age and Indigenous status of the patient, their triage category, how long they waited for treatment and the length of time to completion of the presentation.

Timely provision of the 2012–13 emergency department presentations data by state and territory health authorities allowed detailed demographic and waiting times information on emergency department care for larger hospitals to be reported in *Australian hospital statistics 2012–13: emergency department care* (AIHW 2013c) in October 2013.

Counts of emergency department presentations are presented in Table 5.2 to demonstrate the proportion of emergency occasions of service for which detailed information was available. In 2012–13, the NNAPEDCD data provided detailed information for 85% of all public hospital emergency occasions of service, an increase from 80% in 2008–09 (Table 5.2).

Data for emergency department presentations provided at formal emergency departments between 1 January 2013 and 31 December 2013 were sourced from the National Emergency Access Target Database (NEATD) that is based on the Non-admitted patient emergency department care NMDS, as defined in the *National health data dictionary 2012, version 16* (AIHW 2012b).

## **Non-emergency non-admitted patient care**

### **Non-admitted patient occasions of service**

Data on **non-admitted occasions of service** were sourced from the National Public Hospital Establishments Database (NPHED) which is based on the Public hospital establishments NMDS, defined in the *National health data dictionary 2012, version 16* (AIHW 2012b).

The non-admitted patient occasions of service data sourced from the NPHED are provided as aggregate data only. Therefore, it is not possible to describe who used these services, how urgently they required care, how long they waited for treatment, what treatment was provided or the length of time to completion of the occasion of service.

The non-admitted patient occasions of service reported to the NPHED includes data on non-admitted patient occasions of service for 14 non-emergency non-admitted patient services. These services can be categorised as:

- outpatient-related occasions of service
- other non-admitted patient occasions of service.

## Outpatient clinic services

Clinic-level summary data for **outpatient clinic occasions of service** in public hospitals are sourced from the National Outpatient Care Database (NOCD) which is based on the Outpatient care NMDS, defined in the *National health data dictionary 2012, version 16* (AIHW 2012b).

The outpatient care data sourced from the NOCD are provided as aggregate data only. Therefore, it is not possible to describe who used these services, how urgently they required care, how long they waited for treatment, what treatment was provided or the length of time to completion of the occasion of service.

These data were provided as counts of individual occasions of service and group sessions for 24 types of outpatient clinics.

The scope for the Outpatient care NMDS for 2012–13 was services provided to non-admitted, non-emergency patients registered for care in outpatient clinics of public hospitals that were classified as either peer group A (*Principal referral and specialist women's and children's hospitals*) or B (*Large hospitals*) in *Australian hospital statistics 2011–12* (AIHW 2013a). Some states and territories also provided outpatient care data for public hospitals that were classified to other peer groups. Western Australia provided data for 7 other hospitals, and South Australia and Tasmania each provided data for 1 other hospital.

The categories of services included in *Outpatient-related occasions of service* (from the NPHEd) can be considered to be equivalent to the total outpatient clinic categories (from the NOCD).

In 2012–13, the proportion of individual outpatient-related occasions of service and group sessions for which outpatient clinic services data were available was about 80% for individual occasions of service and 73% for group sessions for all public hospitals (see Table 5.8).

### Box 5.1: What are the limitations of the data?

#### Emergency occasions of service

- South Australia's NPHEd occasions of service data excluded patients who were dead on arrival (no resuscitation attempted) and patients in country hospitals who did not wait for treatment.

#### Emergency department presentations

- The NNAPEDCD provides information about presentations in public hospital emergency departments for hospitals that were mostly classified in peer groups A and B (from *Australian hospital statistics 2011–12*, AIHW 2013a) and mostly located within *Major cities and Inner regional areas*.
- The data are not necessarily representative of the hospitals not included in the NNAPEDCD. Hospitals not included generally do not have emergency departments that are equivalent to those in peer groups A and B.
- Statistics on emergency department presentations for non-admitted patients may be affected by variations in reporting practices across states and territories.
- From 2009–10, the data for the Albury Base Hospital have been included in statistics for Victoria, whereas they were formerly reported by, and included in statistics for, New South Wales.

(continued)

### **Box 5.1 (continued): What are the limitations of the data?**

#### **Non-emergency non-admitted patient occasions of service**

- States and territories may differ in the extent to which outpatient services are provided in non-hospital settings (such as community health services) that are beyond the scope of the NPHEd.
- There is considerable variation among states and territories and between reporting years in the way in which non-admitted patient occasions of service data are collected for the NPHEd. Differing admission practices between the states and territories also lead to variation among jurisdictions in the services reported.
- For 2009–10 and 2011–12, Tasmania were not able to provide outpatient care data for one hospital, which reported about 180,000 occasions of service to the NPHEd in 2010–11.
- From 2010–11, Tasmania was able to exclude counts of outpatient occasions of service provided at public hospitals by private specialists. In previous years, these were included in Tasmania’s public hospital counts.

#### **Outpatient clinic services**

- Data from the NOCD should be interpreted with caution as:
  - they may not be representative of outpatient clinic activity for hospitals that were not required to provide data for the NOCD
  - the comparability of the data may be influenced by variation in admission practices, the type of facility providing these services and in the allocation of outpatient services to the 24 clinic types among the states and territories.
- For some jurisdictions, the reporting of outpatient clinic care data to the NOCD varied over the period 2010–11 to 2012–13, in order to align with the reporting requirements for Activity Based Funding. These changes included: the discontinuation of reporting for some activity; the commencement of reporting for some activity; and the re-categorisation of some clinics according to the Tier 2 clinics structure (IHPA 2011). Therefore, these data may not be comparable with data reported for previous years.
- The estimated proportions of individual occasions of service reported to the NOCD for 2012–13 varied significantly by state and territory, ranging from 77% for New South Wales and Queensland to 100% for the Australian Capital Territory. For group occasions of service, the estimated proportion reported to the NOCD for 2012–13 ranged from 21% in the Australian Capital Territory to 100% for the Northern Territory.
- For 2011–12, data supply issues in Victoria resulted in significant under-reporting of non-admitted occasions of service for *Dental*, *Mental health*, and *Community health*. Consequently, the 2011–12 data for Victoria are not directly comparable with other years presented in time series.
- For Western Australia, counts of outpatient group sessions reported to the NOCD reflect the number of individuals who attended group sessions. The data for Western Australian group sessions are therefore not directly comparable with the data provided for group sessions presented for other states and territories.
- For 2009–10 and 2011–12, Tasmania were not able to provide outpatient care data for one hospital, which reported about 134,000 occasions of service to the NOCD in 2010–11.

See Appendix A for more information.

### **Box 5.2: What methods were used?**

- The proportion of emergency occasions of service for which NNAPEDCD patient-level data was available was calculated as the number of emergency department presentations reported to the NNAPEDCD divided by the number of emergency occasions of service, from the NPHED, as a percentage. Where the number of presentations reported to the NNAPEDCD was greater than the number of emergency occasions of service reported to the NPHED, the proportion is presented as 100%.
- The proportion of outpatient occasions of service for which NOCD clinic-level data was available was calculated as the number of outpatient occasions of service reported to the NOCD divided by the number of outpatient-related occasions of service (as defined above), from the NPHED, as a percentage. Where the number of occasions of service reported to the NOCD was greater than the number of outpatient-related occasions of service reported to the NPHED, the proportion is presented as 100%.

## **How has activity changed over time?**

### **Non-admitted patient occasions of service**

Table 5.1 shows the number of individual occasions of service for non-admitted patient care reported to the NPHED for public acute hospitals between 2008–09 and 2012–13.

Between 2008–09 and 2012–13, the number of emergency occasions of service reported to the NPHED increased steadily from 7.2 million to 7.9 million, an average annual increase of 2.5%.

During that period, outpatient-related care delivered in specialist outpatient clinics increased by an average of 2.3% per year and *Community health, Outreach and District nursing* increased by 9.0% per year (Table 5.1). However, there were marked variations across the categories of non-admitted patient services that may reflect changes in activity or reporting practices across states and territories. For example, the large increase for *Dialysis* occasions of service between 2011–12 and 2012–13 was largely caused by the reporting of dialysis training activity for Victoria for the first time.



**Table 5.2: Emergency department presentations and emergency occasions of service, public hospitals, 2008–09 to 2012–13**

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	Change (%)	
						Average since 2008–09	Since 2011–12
Hospitals reporting emergency occasions of service to NPHEd	607	609	611	609	621	0.6	2.0
Emergency occasions of service (NPHEd)	7,171,667	7,390,459	7,651,233	7,809,335	7,924,241	2.5	1.5
Hospitals reporting to NNAPEdCD	182	183	185	203	204	2.9	0.5
Presentations (NNAPEdCD)	5,702,039	5,941,498	6,165,813	6,547,342	6,712,357	4.2	2.5
<b>Estimated proportion (%)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>

*Note:* See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods.

*Source:* National Public Hospital Establishments Database (NPHEd) and the National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database (NNAPEdCD).

### States and territories

Between 2008–09 and 2012–13, the number emergency occasions of service reported to NPHEd increased by an average of 2.5% per year (Table 5.3). Over that period, Western Australia reported the highest average annual increase of 5.4%.

Between 2011–12 and 2012–13, Tasmania reported the highest increase in emergency occasions of service of 3.2%.

For Victoria, the increase in the number of hospitals reporting emergency occasions of service between 2011–12 and 2012–13 was not accompanied by a marked increase in emergency occasions of service. The increase in the number of reporting hospitals was mostly due to changed reporting practices for 9 local hospital networks, with these data reported at an individual hospital level in 2012–13, rather than at the network level as had occurred in previous years. There were also 7 small hospitals in Victoria that commenced reporting emergency occasions of service in 2012–13.

Similar information about the numbers of emergency department presentations reported to the NNAPEdCD by state and territory for 2008–09 to 2012–13 and detailed information for the 6.7 million emergency department presentations in 2012–13 was reported in *Australian hospital statistics 2012–13: emergency department care* (AIHW 2013c).

**Table 5.3: Emergency occasions of services, public hospitals, states and territories, 2008–09 to 2012–13**

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	Change (%)	
						Average since 2008–09	Since 2011–12
<b>New South Wales<sup>(a)</sup></b>							
Occasions of service	2,416,731	2,442,982	2,484,261	2,537,681	2,580,878	1.7	1.7
Number of hospitals	187	187	189	186	185		
<b>Victoria<sup>(a)(b)</sup></b>							
Occasions of service	1,537,510	1,591,819	1,654,943	1,659,550	1,658,736	1.9	<–0.1
Number of hospitals	90	88	90	90	107		
<b>Queensland</b>							
Occasions of service	1,525,407	1,578,490	1,664,170	1,711,873	1,746,928	3.4	2.0
Number of hospitals	154	156	157	156	156		
<b>Western Australia<sup>(c)</sup></b>							
Occasions of service	783,294	823,402	877,671	944,759	966,901	5.4	2.3
Number of hospitals	80	81	80	81	80		
<b>South Australia<sup>(d)</sup></b>							
Occasions of service	531,575	554,906	562,293	537,115	546,588	0.7	1.8
Number of hospitals	73	73	73	73	70		
<b>Tasmania</b>							
Occasions of service	146,085	159,472	154,220	154,731	159,701	2.3	3.2
Number of hospitals	16	17	15	16	16		
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>							
Occasions of service	101,898	106,806	112,460	118,767	118,975	3.9	0.2
Number of hospitals	2	2	2	2	2		
<b>Northern Territory</b>							
Occasions of service	129,167	132,582	141,215	144,859	145,534	3.0	0.5
Number of hospitals	5	5	5	5	5		
<b>Total</b>							
<b>Occasions of service</b>	<b>7,171,667</b>	<b>7,390,459</b>	<b>7,651,233</b>	<b>7,809,335</b>	<b>7,924,241</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Number of hospitals</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>621</b>		

- (a) From 2009–10, the data for the Albury Base Hospital have been included in statistics for Victoria, whereas they were formerly reported by, and included in statistics for, New South Wales.
- (b) For Victoria, the increase in the number of reporting hospitals was mostly due to changed reporting practices for 9 local hospital networks, with these data reported at an individual hospital level in 2012–13, rather than at the network level as had occurred in previous years. There were also 7 small hospitals in Victoria that commenced reporting emergency occasions of service in 2012–13.
- (c) For Western Australia, the decrease in the number of reporting hospitals occurred because in Western Australia the scope for NPHEd reporting is restricted to hospitals that report admitted patient activity. In 2012–13, one hospital that provided emergency services did not record any admitted patient activity, so was not included in Western Australia's NPHEd submission.
- (d) For South Australia, the decrease in emergency occasions of service between 2010–11 and 2011–12 was due to changes in the categorisation of emergency department services at 2 hospitals. From 1 July 2011, the units at the 2 hospitals were no longer categorised as emergency departments.

Note: See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods.

Source: National Public Hospital Establishments Database.

## Outpatient and other non-admitted occasions of service

Between 2008–09 and 2012–13, the number of outpatient clinic services reported to the NOCD increased by 3.4% per year, from 13.0 million to 14.9 million, and the proportion of outpatient-related occasions of service for which clinic-level data were available increased from 78% to 80% (Table 5.4).



**Table 5.4: Outpatient clinic services and outpatient-related occasions of service, public hospitals, 2008–09 to 2012–13**

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	Change (%)	
						Average since 2008–09	Since 2011–12
Hospitals reporting outpatient-related occasions of service to NPHEd	137	135	141	137	138	0.2	0.7
Outpatient-related occasions of service (NPHEd)	16,516,005	16,789,487	16,682,006	16,867,591	18,087,570	2.3	7.2
Hospitals reporting to NOCD	113	110	114	116	117	0.9	0.9
Outpatient clinic services	13,035,982	13,034,892	13,316,298	13,814,027	14,892,699	3.4	7.8
<b>Estimated proportion (%)</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>

Note: See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods. Additional information on outpatient clinic services by public hospital peer groups is in Table 5.8 at the end of this chapter.

Source: National Public Hospital Establishments Database (NPHEd) and the National Outpatient Care Database (NOCD).

## States and territories

Between 2008–09 and 2012–13, individual *Outpatient* occasions of service reported to the NPHEd increased by an average of 2.3% per year, with the Australian Capital Territory reporting the highest increase of 13% per year (Table 5.5). From 2011–12, outpatient care and public hospital establishments data reported for the Australian Capital Territory differ from previous years due to the inclusion of public hospital non-admitted/outpatient services delivered in the community.

Between 2011–12 and 2012–13, there were apparent variations in the activity that some jurisdictions reported. For the Australian Capital Territory there were notable increases in *Pharmacy, Pathology, Radiology and organ imaging, and Allied health*. Western Australia had a notable decrease in *Allied health* (see Table 5.6 and *Australian hospital statistics 2011–12*, AIHW 2013a).

For 2011–12, Victoria was not able to report all *Dental, Mental health and Community health* occasions of service. For 2012–13, Victoria was able to report these data, resulting in a notable increase in the numbers of occasions of service reported between 2011–12 and 2012–13.

## How much activity was there in 2012–13?

### Emergency occasions of service

In 2012–13, public hospitals provided more than 7.9 million emergency occasions of service (Table 5.6).

Overall, emergency occasions of service accounted for about 15% of all non-admitted occasions of service reported. However, there was some variation in this proportion among states and territories. The Australian Capital Territory had the lowest proportion of non-admitted occasions of service that were for emergency services and South Australia had the highest proportion (6% and 33%, respectively). This reflects variation in the types of non-admitted services provided by hospitals.

**Table 5.5: Individual non-admitted patient occasions of service for outpatient and other services, public acute hospitals, states and territories, 2008–09 to 2012–13<sup>(a)</sup>**

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	Change (%)	
						Average since 2008–09	Since 2011–12
<b>New South Wales<sup>(b)</sup></b>							
Outpatient-related	6,549,516	6,450,592	6,022,466	6,428,747	6,962,125	1.5	8.3
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	13,137,117	12,523,328	12,827,589	15,095,464	14,869,309	3.1	-1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,686,633</b>	<b>18,973,920</b>	<b>18,850,055</b>	<b>21,524,211</b>	<b>21,831,434</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Victoria<sup>(b)(d)</sup></b>							
Outpatient-related	2,939,829	3,094,084	3,334,130	2,962,630	3,643,485	5.5	23.0
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	3,081,479	3,246,556	3,393,818	2,439,196	2,622,975	-3.9	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,021,308</b>	<b>6,340,640</b>	<b>6,727,948</b>	<b>5,401,826</b>	<b>6,266,460</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>16.0</b>
<b>Queensland</b>							
Outpatient-related	3,190,117	3,344,905	3,259,578	3,329,408	3,288,162	0.8	-1.2
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	6,023,488	6,155,172	6,267,074	6,147,142	5,799,561	-0.9	-5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,213,605</b>	<b>9,500,077</b>	<b>9,526,652</b>	<b>9,476,550</b>	<b>9,087,723</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>-4.1</b>
<b>Western Australia</b>							
Outpatient-related	1,775,362	1,902,060	2,021,564	2,243,413	1,975,763	2.7	-11.9
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	1,969,478	2,195,464	2,458,701	2,706,973	2,880,566	10.0	6.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,744,840</b>	<b>4,097,524</b>	<b>4,480,265</b>	<b>4,950,386</b>	<b>4,856,329</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>-1.9</b>
<b>South Australia</b>							
Outpatient-related	1,130,999	1,136,319	1,142,192	1,172,450	1,167,791	0.8	-0.4
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	444,769	482,368	458,092	489,635	453,621	0.5	-7.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,575,768</b>	<b>1,618,687</b>	<b>1,600,284</b>	<b>1,662,085</b>	<b>1,621,412</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>-2.4</b>
<b>Tasmania<sup>(e)</sup></b>							
Outpatient-related	454,806	334,946	358,322	326,013	304,860	-9.5	-6.5
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	453,849	295,280	30,335	23,308	17,685	-55.6	-24.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>908,655</b>	<b>630,226</b>	<b>388,657</b>	<b>349,321</b>	<b>322,545</b>	<b>-22.8</b>	<b>-7.7</b>
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>							
Outpatient-related	343,383	379,974	396,566	229,768	550,332	12.5	139.5
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	158,941	169,808	170,225	1,294,070	1,200,511	65.8	-7.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>502,324</b>	<b>549,782</b>	<b>566,791</b>	<b>1,523,838</b>	<b>1,750,843</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>14.9</b>
<b>Northern Territory</b>							
Outpatient-related	131,993	146,607	147,188	175,162	195,052	10.3	11.4
Other non-admitted <sup>(c)</sup>	203,994	223,292	237,874	251,847	259,001	6.2	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>335,987</b>	<b>369,899</b>	<b>385,062</b>	<b>427,009</b>	<b>454,053</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>6.3</b>
<b>Total</b>							
<b>Outpatient-related</b>	<b>16,516,005</b>	<b>16,789,487</b>	<b>16,682,006</b>	<b>16,867,591</b>	<b>18,087,570</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>7.2</b>
<b>Other non-admitted<sup>(c)</sup></b>	<b>25,473,115</b>	<b>25,291,268</b>	<b>25,843,708</b>	<b>28,447,635</b>	<b>28,103,229</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>-1.2</b>
<b>Occasions of service</b>	<b>41,989,120</b>	<b>42,080,755</b>	<b>42,525,714</b>	<b>45,315,226</b>	<b>46,190,799</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1.9</b>

(a) Reporting arrangements have varied significantly across years and across jurisdictions.

(b) From 2009–10, the data for the Albury Base Hospital have been included in statistics for Victoria, whereas they were formerly reported by, and included in statistics for New South Wales.

(c) *Other Pharmacy, Pathology, Radiology and organ imaging, Mental health, Alcohol and drug, Community health and Outreach and District nursing.*

(d) For 2011–12, Victoria was not able to report all *Dental, Mental health and Community health* occasions of service.

(e) For 2009–10 and 2011–12, Tasmania was not able to provide occasions of service data for one hospital that reported about 180,000 non-admitted patient occasions of service to the NPHEd in 2010–11. From 2010–11, Tasmania excluded counts of outpatient occasions of service provided at public hospitals by private specialists. In previous years, these were included in Tasmania's public hospital counts.

Note: See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods.

Source: National Public Hospital Establishments Database.

**Table 5.6: Non-admitted patient occasions of service, public acute hospitals, states and territories, 2012–13**

Type of non-admitted patient service	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT <sup>(a)</sup>	Total
<b>Individual occasions of service</b>									
Emergency	2,580,878	1,658,736	1,746,928	966,901	546,588	159,701	118,975	145,534	7,924,241
Outpatient care									
Allied health	759,428	1,009,769	671,857	890,159	171,262	62,666	159,522	17,590	3,742,253
Dental	439,492	455,473	..	12,832	9,135	..	..	..	916,932
Dialysis	22,667	127,656	..	..	..	..	..	5,262	155,585
Endoscopy and related procedures	24,381	3,497	8,307	..	26,901	..	3,139	1,104	67,329
Other medical/surgical/obstetric <sup>(b)</sup>	5,716,157	2,047,090	2,607,998	1,072,772	960,493	242,194	387,671	171,096	13,205,471
<i>Total outpatient occasions of service</i>	<i>6,962,125</i>	<i>3,643,485</i>	<i>3,288,162</i>	<i>1,975,763</i>	<i>1,167,791</i>	<i>304,860</i>	<i>550,332</i>	<i>195,052</i>	<i>18,087,570</i>
Pharmacy <sup>(c)</sup>	3,765,178	421,723	539,330	234,006	..	..	42,880	35,283	5,038,400
Pathology	3,244,984	877,350	3,840,715	837,049	..	..	683,066	132,045	9,615,209
Radiology and organ imaging	631,210	644,895	986,772	434,404	193,615	..	41,577	91,673	3,024,146
Mental health	1,017,711	..	30,782	96,596	12,908	4,105	262,860	..	1,424,962
Alcohol and drug	1,293,842	87,747	39,694	..	..	..	..	..	1,421,283
Community health	2,543,707	426,022	227,451	1,058,187	..	13,580	170,128	..	4,439,075
District nursing <sup>(c)</sup>	1,636,103	159,594	..	114,674	..	..	..	..	1,910,371
Other outreach	736,574	5,644	134,817	105,650	247,098	..	..	..	1,229,783
<b>Total individual occasions of service</b>	<b>24,412,312</b>	<b>7,925,196</b>	<b>10,834,651</b>	<b>5,823,230</b>	<b>2,168,000</b>	<b>482,246</b>	<b>1,869,818</b>	<b>599,587</b>	<b>54,115,040</b>

(continued)

**Table 5.6 (continued): Non-admitted patient occasions of service, public acute hospitals, states and territories, 2012–13**

Type of non-admitted patient service	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT <sup>(a)</sup>	Total
<b>Group sessions</b>									
Outpatient care									
Allied health	10,621	34,212	11,940	130,233	6,757	..	14,042	261	208,066
Dental	46	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	46
Other medical/surgical/obstetric <sup>(b)</sup>	32,944	2,879	7,162	7,496	6,472	..	3,145	511	60,609
<i>Total outpatient occasions of service</i>	<i>43,611</i>	<i>37,091</i>	<i>19,102</i>	<i>137,729</i>	<i>13,229</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>17,187</i>	<i>772</i>	<i>268,721</i>
Mental health	34,543	..	2	20,720	460	..	5,648	..	61,373
Alcohol and drug	292	..	165	..	..	..	..	..	457
Community health	25,161	1,836	12,538	31,033	..	..	38,241	..	108,809
District nursing	2,608	36	..	758	..	..	..	..	3,402
Other outreach	2,568	..	136	1,439	69,094	..	..	..	73,237
Other	98	32	..	..	..	..	..	..	130
<b>Total group sessions<sup>(d)</sup></b>	<b>108,881</b>	<b>38,995</b>	<b>31,943</b>	<b>191,679</b>	<b>82,783</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>61,076</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>516,129</b>

(a) *Radiology* figures for the Northern Territory are underestimated and *Pathology* figures relate only to 3 of the 5 hospitals.

(b) *Other medical/surgical/obstetric* relates to the NOCD outpatient services of *Gynaecology, Obstetrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Oncology, Respiratory, Gastroenterology, Medical, General practice primary care, Paediatric, Plastic surgery, Urology, Orthopaedic surgery, Ophthalmology, Ear, nose and throat, Chemotherapy, Paediatric surgery* and *Renal medical*.

(c) Justice Health (formerly known as Corrections Health) in New South Wales reported a large number of occasions of service for *Pharmacy* and *District nursing* that may not be typical for other hospitals.

(d) Includes any group sessions for *Dialysis* and *Endoscopy* and related procedures.

*Note:* See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods.

*Source:* National Public Hospital Establishments Database.

## How long did people wait for care?

### Waiting times for emergency department care—proportion completed within four hours

The proportion of patients whose emergency department visit is completed within 4 hours is considered to be an indicator of accessibility. The information presented in Table 5.7 relates to emergency department care between 1 January 2012 and 31 December 2013.

Patients are considered to have completed their visit to the emergency department when they physically leave the emergency department (regardless of whether they were admitted to the hospital, referred to another hospital, departed without being admitted or referred to another hospital, or left at their own risk). Included are all hospitals reporting to the NAPEDC NMDS.

During 2013, overall, 71% of patients presenting to a public hospital emergency department had their visit completed in 4 hours or less (Table 5.10). The proportion of presentations completed within 4 hours varied among states and territories, ranging from 59% in the Australian Capital Territory to 78% in Western Australia.

Between 2012 and 2013, the proportion of presentations completed in 4 hours or less increased for New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

Information on the proportion of presentations completed within 4 hours for each quarter of 2013 is available in Table S5.1, accompanying this report online.

**Table 5.7: Emergency department presentations<sup>(a)</sup>, proportion with a length of stay<sup>(b)</sup> of 4 hours or less, states and territories, 2012 to 2013**

Calendar year	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Presentations with length of stay of 4 hours or less</b>									
2012 <sup>(c)</sup>	1,388,084	989,168	847,114	592,939	297,059	96,636	67,869	92,617	4,371,486
2013	1,836,945	1,039,983	995,011	582,431	299,155	98,859	72,444	91,880	5,016,708
<b>Total presentations</b>									
2012 <sup>(c)</sup>	2,270,081	1,521,872	1,266,468	754,911	450,355	144,324	119,666	144,144	6,671,821
2013	2,594,678	1,544,455	1,315,802	748,207	459,448	147,401	121,880	146,949	7,078,820
<b>Proportion of presentations with length of stay of 4 hours or less (%)</b>									
2012 <sup>(c)</sup>	61.1	65.0	66.9	78.5	66.0	67.0	56.7	64.3	65.5
2013	70.8	67.3	75.6	77.8	65.1	67.1	59.4	62.5	70.9

(a) Excludes records for which the emergency department length of stay could not be calculated due to missing date or time data.

(b) The emergency department length of stay is the amount of time between the patient presenting to the emergency department (arrival) and the physical departure of the patient.

(c) As reported in *Australian hospital statistics: national emergency access and elective surgery targets 2012* (AIHW 2013g).

Source: National Emergency Access Target Database.

## Outpatient and other non-admitted occasions of service

In 2012–13, public hospitals provided almost 18.1 million service episodes for outpatient-related care (Table 5.6), including:

- 3.7 million services for *Allied health*
- 13.2 million service episodes delivered in specialist outpatient clinics for *Other medical/surgical/obstetric*.

The proportion of non-admitted patient occasions of service that are related to outpatient care varied across states, from 29% in New South Wales to 63% in Tasmania. However, there was considerable variation in activity for other non-admitted patient service types across states and territories, which may in part reflect differences in data recording practices. For example, Justice Health in New South Wales reported a large number of occasions of service for *Pharmacy* and *District nursing* that may not be typical for other hospitals.

In 2012–13, 516,000 non-admitted patient care occasions of service were reported to the NPHED for group sessions (care provided to more than one patient at a time), with *Mental health*, *Community health* and *Other Outreach* accounting for 47% of these sessions.

### Outpatient clinic services

In 2012–13, outpatient clinic-level data were provided to the NOCD for almost 14.9 million occasions of service for individuals (Table 5.8, see Box 5.1). The public hospital peer groups presented in Table 5.8 reflect the new AIHW public hospital peer group classification. See Appendix C for more information.

The estimated proportions of individual occasions of service reported to the NOCD for 2012–13 varied significantly by state and territory, ranging from 77% for New South Wales and Queensland to 100% for the Australian Capital Territory. For group occasions of service, the estimated proportion reported to the NOCD for 2012–13 ranged from 21% in the Australian Capital Territory to 100% for the Northern Territory.

### Individual occasions of service

Around 52% of individual outpatient occasions of service reported to the NOCD were provided by *Allied health*, *Medical* and *Obstetrics* clinics (Table 5.9).

There were large variations in the types of services reported and in the volume of activity reported. For example, the Northern Territory reported a relatively high number of occasions of service for *Paediatric* outpatient clinics and Victoria reported a relatively low number compared with other states and territories. For 2012–13, the large number of *Dialysis* occasions of service for Victoria reflects the reporting of dialysis training activity.

### Group occasions of service

In 2012–13, there were about 230,000 group sessions reported for non-admitted patient outpatient clinic care (Table 5.10). Over 77% of group sessions reported to the NOCD were provided by *Allied health* clinics.

## Additional material

An additional table accompanies this report online:

Table S5.1: Emergency department presentations, proportion with a length of stay of 4 hours or less by quarter, states and territories, 2013.

**Table 5.8: Outpatient occasions of service, by public hospital peer group<sup>(a)</sup>, states and territories, 2012–13**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Principal referral and women's and children's hospitals</b>									
Hospitals reporting to NOCD									
Individual occasions of service	14	9	8	4	3	1	1	1	41
Group occasions of service	11	9	5	4	3	0	1	1	34
Occasions of service									
Individual	3,741,620	1,361,036	1,353,268	881,425	551,004	186,618	552,429	131,086	8,758,486
Group	7,676	34,203	5,258	51,743	8,239	0	3,398	629	111,146
<b>Large acute hospitals</b>									
Hospitals reporting to NOCD									
Individual occasions of service	21	16	12	3	4	2	1	1	60
Group occasions of service	19	12	11	3	4	0	1	1	51
Occasions of service									
Individual	1,387,659	1,042,107	1,034,719	359,024	398,002	145,866	36,111	45,561	4,449,049
Group	18,019	10,339	8,575	21,622	3,745	0	221	143	62,664
<b>Medium acute hospitals</b>									
Hospitals reporting to NOCD									
Individual occasions of service	9	7	3	5	1	1	..	..	26
Group occasions of service	8	7	2	5	1	0	..	..	23
Occasions of service									
Individual	352,649	336,842	127,964	186,822	11,071	45,656	..	..	1,061,004
Group	2,260	6,502	561	23,188	151	0	..	..	32,662
<b>Other hospitals</b>									
Hospitals reporting to NOCD									
Individual occasions of service	0	4	0	7	0	0	0	0	11
Group occasions of service	0	2	0	7	0	0	0	0	9
Occasions of service									
Individual	0	403,377	0	220,783	0	0	0	0	624,160
Group	0	187	0	24,000	0	0	0	0	24,187

(continued)

**Table 5.8 (continued): Outpatient occasions of service, by public hospital peer group<sup>(a)</sup>, states and territories, 2012–13**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Total</b>									
Hospitals reporting to NOCD									
Individual occasions of service	44	36	23	19	8	4	2	2	138
Group occasions of service	38	30	18	19	8	0	2	2	117
Occasions of service									
Individual	5,481,928	3,143,362	2,515,951	1,648,054	960,077	378,140	588,540	176,647	14,892,699
Group	27,955	51,231	14,394	120,553	12,135	0	3,619	772	230,659
Estimated proportion of occasions of service in NOCD									
Individual	77	79	77	83	82	95	100	91	80
Group	64	42	75	87	92	..	21	100	73

(a) The AIHW public hospital peer group classification (AIHW forthcoming) has been updated since *Australian hospital statistics 2011–12* (AIHW 2013a). See Appendix C for more information.

Note: See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods.

Source: National Outpatient Care Database.



**Table 5.9: Outpatient care individual occasions of service<sup>(a)</sup>, by outpatient clinic type, selected public hospitals, states and territories, 2012–13**

<b>Clinic type</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Tas</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>NT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Allied Health	613,573	477,588	541,417	579,239	149,764	88,642	104,053	16,551	2,570,827
Dental	279,910	402,132	0	12,294	9,122	0	0	0	703,458
Gynaecology	63,935	56,115	49,157	20,784	42,498	10,989	4,321	6,642	254,441
Obstetrics	927,542	509,892	415,253	161,078	104,139	39,908	48,175	29,043	2,235,030
Cardiology	64,292	15,302	58,806	42,217	28,330	17,052	8,006	1,722	235,727
Endocrinology	207,341	64,763	58,421	40,703	35,565	18,630	13,656	3,067	442,146
Oncology	304,421	245,581	103,297	75,880	19,213	6,230	59,339	4,223	818,184
Respiratory	136,487	8,913	36,463	24,628	39,305	7,356	10,282	2,991	266,425
Gastroenterology	74,490	23,094	35,160	17,978	28,565	5,433	10,988	1,123	196,831
Medical	1368803	537,540	399,562	260,591	124,384	45,753	150,812	24,978	2,912,423
General practice/primary care	238,419	433	27,066	203	0	0	123,474	0	389,595
Paediatric	69,019	14,101	53,655	13,164	17,910	9,118	7,017	8,117	192,101
Endoscopy	22,421	3,544	8,205	0	17,208	1,441	0	0	52,819
Plastic surgery	56,133	80,049	27,673	48,401	20,788	29,951	8,453	1,952	273,400
Urology	22,002	48,178	48,300	23,478	16,465	4,382	0	508	163,313
Orthopaedic	359,188	195,986	239,566	99,017	73,099	28,461	19,967	15,857	1,031,141
Ophthalmology	106,280	87,982	81,827	61,855	71,666	11,315	0	13,287	434,212
Ear, nose and throat surgery	36,078	40,600	43,510	27,135	21,554	3,838	2,506	5,653	180,874
Pre-admission and pre-anaesthesia	198,058	98,793	88,507	52,556	31,393	13,130	8,612	8,716	499,765
Chemotherapy	97,983	0	13,715	1,951	20,175	8,296	0	4,666	146,786
Dialysis	19,879	87,762	0	849	0	0	0	5,237	113,727
Surgery	104,712	138,383	126,865	64,633	76,672	21,210	8,841	18,257	559,573
Paediatric surgery	2,151	6,631	5,543	4,162	852	2,063	0	0	21,402
Renal medicine	108,811	0	53,983	15,258	11,410	4,942	38	4,057	198,499
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,481,928</b>	<b>3,143,362</b>	<b>2,515,951</b>	<b>1,648,054</b>	<b>960,077</b>	<b>378,140</b>	<b>588,540</b>	<b>176,647</b>	<b>14,892,699</b>

(a) Variations among jurisdictions in the reporting of occasions of service may reflect differences in admission practices and in the types of facilities offering these services.

Note: See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods.

Source: National Outpatient Care Database.

**Table 5.10: Outpatient care group occasions of service<sup>(a)</sup>, by outpatient clinic type, selected public hospitals, states and territories, 2012–13**

<b>Clinic type</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Tas</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>NT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Allied Health	8,976	36,211	8,450	116,112	6,186	0	1,699	261	177,895
Dental	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Gynaecology	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Obstetrics	1,654	12,742	2,241	2,301	931	0	1,226	0	21,095
Cardiology	77	0	2,272	171	320	0	0	0	2,840
Endocrinology	1,175	1,116	351	848	245	0	304	0	4,039
Oncology	262	0	279	28	0	0	0	0	569
Respiratory	3,638	0	125	0	22	0	112	0	3,897
Gastroenterology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	7,582	120	319	1,090	3,890	0	17	511	13,529
General practice/primary care	117	0	0	0	0	0	240	0	357
Paediatric	426	2	104	0	10	0	0	0	542
Endoscopy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plastic surgery	0	0	0	0	335	0	0	0	335
Urology	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Orthopaedic	318	3	52	0	31	0	0	0	404
Ophthalmology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ear, nose and throat surgery	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pre-admission and pre-anaesthesia	3,305	763	83	0	0	0	21	0	4,172
Chemotherapy	23	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	26
Dialysis	2	226	0	0	0	0	0	0	228
Surgery	50	48	109	2	165	0	0	0	374
Paediatric surgery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Renal medicine	341	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	347
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,955</b>	<b>51,231</b>	<b>14,394</b>	<b>120,553</b>	<b>12,135</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,619</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>230,659</b>

(a) Variations among jurisdictions in the reporting of occasions of service may reflect differences in admission practices and in the types of facilities offering these services.

Note: See boxes 5.1 and 5.2 for notes on data limitations and methods.

Source: National Outpatient Care Database