

Total operations

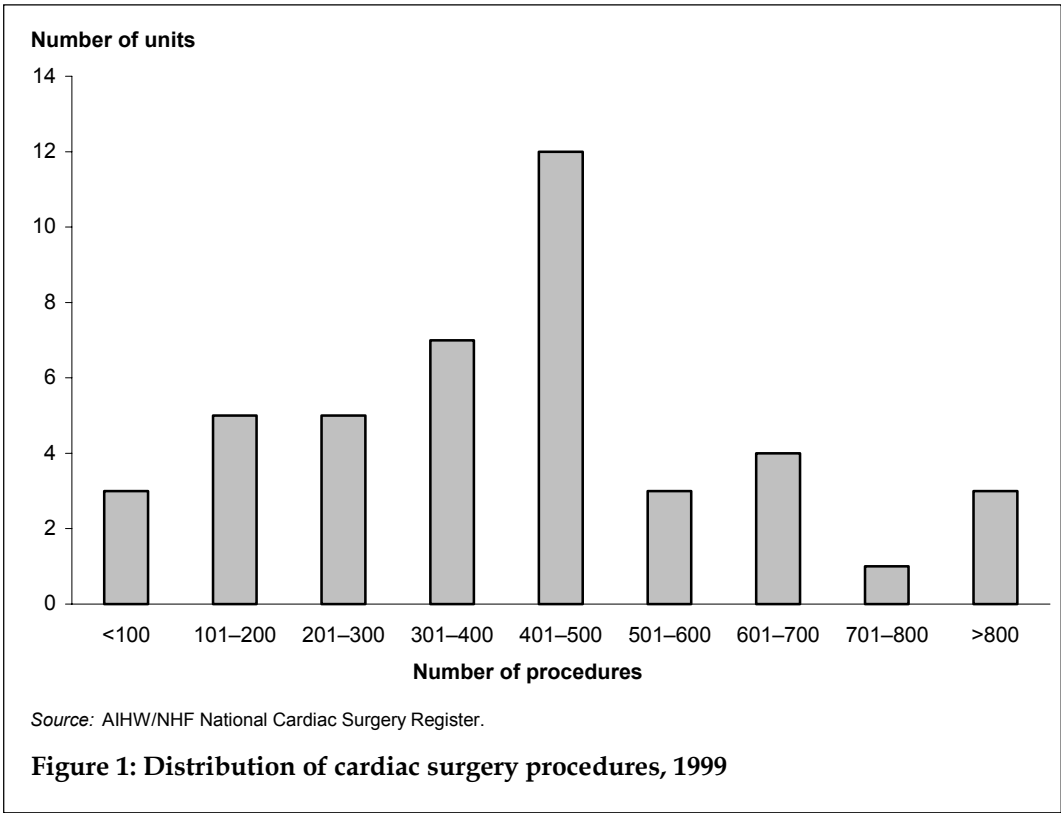
Cardiac surgery units and surgeons

In 1999 there were 74 cardiac surgeons operating in Australia. There were also 11 overseas registrars, 4 service registrars and 26 trainees, 20 of whom were from other countries, operating in Australia.

There were 52 cardiac surgery units operating in Australia in 1999; however, 6 units did not supply data to the Register for inclusion in this report. Of the missing units, 5 units do mostly cardiac surgery for acquired conditions and the remaining unit does congenital cardiac surgery. Based on previous years data the missing congenital unit's procedures accounted for nearly 25% of the total congenital data (around 1,600 procedures). Thus, in the interests of presenting representative data the congenital section of this report has been omitted.

The Register has details from 44 units that were doing cardiac surgery for acquired conditions and their data are presented here.

Figure 1 presents the distribution of cardiac surgery procedures by units based on data from the National Cardiac Surgery Register.



Operations for acquired conditions

An estimated¹ 20,791 cardiac surgery procedures for acquired conditions were performed in 1999. In 1999 there was an average case load of 473 patients per unit, with a range of 34 to 2,014. The estimated national cardiac surgery rate was 1,088 per million population.

The National Cardiac Surgery Register provides details for 17,734 operations for which information was available for acquired conditions in 1999; overall mortality was 2.9%. Mortality has stabilised at just below 3% in the past few years, even though surgery is now performed on a wider range of patients, including some previously considered unsuitable for surgery.

Figure 2 illustrates trends in the rates of acquired operations since 1960. Rates of surgery for acquired heart disease increased dramatically until 1995, and have remained fairly stable since.

¹ Estimated number of operations for all units doing cardiac surgery for acquired conditions in Australia, based on data from the AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database.

