

National Healthcare Agreement: PI 21a-Waiting times for emergency department care: proportion seen on time, 2015 QS

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
METEOR identifier:	559105
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Data quality

Data quality statement summary:

- The scope of the data used to produce this indicator is non-admitted patients registered for care in emergency departments in public hospitals classified as either *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* (peer group A) or *Large hospitals* (peer group B). Most of the hospitals in peer groups A and B are in major cities. Therefore, disaggregation by remoteness, socioeconomic status and Indigenous status should be interpreted with caution.
- For 2012–13, the coverage of the National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database (NNAPEDCD) collection is complete for public hospitals in peer groups A and B. It is estimated that 2013–14 has similar coverage, although final coverage cannot be calculated until the 2013–14 National Public Hospital Establishments Database (NPHEd) data are available.
- The quality of Indigenous status data in the NNAPEDCD has not been formally assessed for completeness; therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting these data.
- Caution should be used in comparing these data with earlier years as the number of hospitals classified as peer groups A or B, and the peer group for a hospital, may vary over time.
- Remoteness data for 2011–12 and previous years are not directly comparable to remoteness data for 2012–13 and subsequent years.
- SEIFA data for 2010–11 and previous years are not directly comparable with SEIFA data for 2011–12, and SEIFA data for 2011–12 and previous years are not directly comparable with SEIFA data for 2012–13 and subsequent years.

Institutional environment: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government under the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent corporate Commonwealth entity governed by a management board, and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio.

The AIHW aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. It collects and reports information on a wide range of topics and issues, ranging from health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury, and mental health, to ageing, homelessness, disability and child protection.

The Institute also plays a role in developing and maintaining national metadata standards. This work contributes to improving the quality and consistency of national health and welfare statistics. The Institute works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to these standards in administrative data collections to promote national consistency and comparability of data and reporting.

One of the main functions of the AIHW is to work with the states and territories to improve the quality of administrative data and, where possible, to compile national datasets based on data from each jurisdiction, to analyse these datasets and disseminate information and statistics.

The *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*, in conjunction with compliance to the *Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*, ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

For further information see the AIHW website www.aihw.gov.au.

Data for the NNAPEDCD were supplied to the AIHW by state and territory health authorities under the terms of the National Health Information Agreement (see the following links):

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/nhissc/>
[/content/index.phtml/itemId/182135](http://www.aihw.gov.au/nhissc/content/index.phtml/itemId/182135)

The state and territory health authorities received these data from public hospitals. States and territories use these data for service planning, monitoring and internal and public reporting. Hospitals may be required to provide data to states and territories through a variety of administrative arrangements, contractual requirements or legislation.

Timeliness: The reference period for these data is 2012–13 and 2013–14.

Accessibility: The AIHW provides a variety of products that draw upon the NNAPEDCD. Published products available on the AIHW website are: *Australian hospital statistics* suite of products with associated Excel tables. These products may be accessed on the AIHW website at: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/hospitals/>.

Interpretability: Metadata information for the Non-Admitted Patient Emergency Department Care (NAPEDC) National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) is published in the AIHW's online metadata repository, METeOR, and the *National health data dictionary*.

The *National health data dictionary* can be accessed online at:

[/content/index.phtml/itemId/268110](http://www.aihw.gov.au/nhissc/content/index.phtml/itemId/268110)

The Data Quality Statement for the 2012–13 NNAPEDCD can be accessed on the AIHW website at:

[/content/index.phtml/itemId/546749](http://www.aihw.gov.au/nhissc/content/index.phtml/itemId/546749)

Relevance:

The purpose of the NNAPEDCD is to collect information on the characteristics of emergency department care (including waiting times for care) for non-admitted patients registered for care in emergency departments in selected public hospitals classified as either *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* (peer group A) or *Large hospitals* (peer group B).

In 2013–14, hospitals in peer groups A and B provided about 80 per cent of all public hospital emergency presentations.

The data presented here are not necessarily representative of the hospitals not included in the NNAPEDCD. Hospitals not included do not necessarily have emergency departments that are equivalent to those in hospitals in peer groups A and B.

The analyses by remoteness and socioeconomic status are based on the Statistical Area level 2 (SA2) of usual residence of the patient. However, data are reported by jurisdiction of presentation, regardless of the jurisdiction of usual residence. Hence, data represent the proportion of patients living in each remoteness area or Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) population group (regardless of their jurisdiction of residence) seen within the benchmark time in the reporting jurisdiction. This is relevant if significant numbers of one jurisdiction's residents are treated in another jurisdiction.

The SEIFA categories for socioeconomic status represent approximately the same proportion of the national population, but do not necessarily represent that proportion of the population in each state or territory (each SEIFA decile or quintile represents 10 per cent and 20 per cent respectively of the national population). For 2012–13 and 2013–14, the SEIFA scores for each SA2 are derived from 2011 Census data and represent the attributes of the population in that SA2 in 2011.

Other Australians includes separations for non-Indigenous people and those for whom Indigenous status was not stated.

Accuracy:

For 2012–13, the coverage of the NNAPEDCD was 100 per cent in all jurisdictions for public hospitals in peer groups A and B. For 2013–14, the preliminary estimate of the proportion of emergency occasions of service reported to the NNAPEDCD was 100% for public hospitals in peer groups A and B.

In the baseline year (2007–08), the Tasmanian North West Regional Hospital comprised the combined activity of its Burnie Campus and its Mersey Campus. This hospital was a Peer Group B hospital. There was then a change in administrative arrangements for Mersey and it became the only hospital in the country owned and funded by the Australian Government and, by arrangement, operated by the Tasmanian Government. This administrative change necessitated reporting of these campuses as separate hospitals from 2008–09 onwards. On its own the North West Regional Hospital (Burnie Campus only) is a Peer Group B hospital, whilst, on its own the Mersey Community Hospital is a Peer Group C hospital. Burnie and Mersey did not substantially change their activity, rather, it is simply a case that activity is now spread across two hospitals. For National Healthcare Agreement purposes, although it is a Peer Group C hospital, the Mersey Community Hospital continues to be included in reporting for Peer Group B hospitals to ensure comparability over time for Tasmania.

From 2009–10, the data for the Albury Base Hospital (previously reported in New South Wales hospital statistics) was reported in Victorian hospital statistics. This change in reporting arrangements should be factored into any analysis of data for New South Wales and Victoria.

States and territories are primarily responsible for the quality of the data they provide. However, the AIHW undertakes extensive validations on data. Data are checked for valid values, logical consistency and historical consistency. Where possible, data in individual data sets are checked against data from other data sets. Potential errors (including waiting time outliers) are queried with jurisdictions, and corrections and resubmissions may be made in response to these queries. The AIHW does not adjust data to account for possible data errors or missing or incorrect values.

The quality of Indigenous status data in the NNAPEDCD has not been formally assessed for completeness; therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting these data.

As this indicator is limited to public hospitals classified in peer groups A and B, most of the data relates to hospitals within major cities. Consequently, the data may not cover areas where the proportion of Indigenous Australians (compared with other Australians) is higher than average. Similarly, disaggregation by socioeconomic status and remoteness should be interpreted with caution.

Comparability across jurisdictions may be impacted by variation in the assignment of triage categories.

Coherence:

The data reported for 2012–13 and 2013–14 are consistent with data reported for the NNAPEDCD for previous years for individual hospitals.

In addition, the data reported to the NNAPEDCD in previous years has been consistent with the numbers of emergency occasions of services reported to the National Hospital Establishments Database (NPED) for each hospital for the same reference year.

Time series presentations may be affected by changes in the number of hospitals reported to the collection and changes in coverage.

The information presented for this indicator are calculated using the same methodology as data published in *Australian hospital statistics: emergency department care* (report series) and the *National Healthcare Agreement: performance report 2012–13*.

However, 2012–13 data reported previously in these publications are different from the equivalent data published here because the hospitals classified as peer groups A and B were based on 2011–12, rather than 2012–13 peer groups.

Caution should be used in comparing data across reference years, as the number of hospitals classified as peer group A or B, or the peer group of a hospital, may vary over time.

Methodological variations also exist in the application of SEIFA to various data sets and performance indicators. Any comparisons of the SEIFA analysis for this indicator with other related SEIFA analysis should be undertaken with careful consideration of the methods used, in particular the SEIFA Census year, the SEIFA index used and the approach taken to derive quintiles and deciles.

National level data disaggregated by Indigenous status for 2007–08 included data from NSW, Qld, WA, SA and NT. National level data disaggregated by Indigenous status for 2008–09, 2009–10 and 2010–11 included data from NSW, Victoria, Qld, WA, SA and NT. National level data disaggregated by Indigenous status for 2011–12 and subsequent years includes data from all eight states and territories. Therefore, data disaggregated by Indigenous status from 2007–08 is not comparable to 2008–09, 2009–10 and 2010–11, and data for 2011–12 and subsequent years are not comparable with data for 2010–11 and prior years.

In 2011, the ABS updated the standard geography used in Australia for most data collections from the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) to the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). Also updated at this time were remoteness areas and the Socio-Economic Indices for Areas (SEIFA), based on the 2011 ABS Census of Population and Housing. The new remoteness areas will be referred to as RA 2011, and the previous remoteness areas as RA 2006. The new SEIFA will be referred to as SEIFA 2011, and the previous SEIFA as SEIFA 2006.

Data for 2007–08 through to 2011–12 reported by remoteness are reported for RA 2006. Data for 2012–13 and 2013–14 are reported for RA 2011. The AIHW considers the change from RA 2006 to RA 2011 to be a series break when applied to data supplied for this indicator, therefore remoteness data for 2011–12 and previous years are not directly comparable to remoteness data for 2012–13 and subsequent years.

Data for 2007–08 through to 2010–11 reported for SEIFA quintiles and deciles are reported using SEIFA 2006 at the Statistical Local Area (SLA) level. Data for 2011–12 are reported using SEIFA 2011 at the SLA level. Data for 2012–13 and 2013–14 are reported using SEIFA 2011 at the Statistical Area level 2 (SA2). The AIHW considers the change from SEIFA 2006 to SEIFA 2011, and the change from SLA to SA2 to be series breaks when applied to data supplied for this indicator. Therefore, SEIFA data for 2010–11 and previous years are not directly comparable with SEIFA data for 2011–12, and SEIFA data for 2011–12 and previous years are not directly comparable with SEIFA data for 2012–13 and subsequent years.

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [National Healthcare Agreement: PI 21a-Waiting times for emergency department care: proportion seen on time, 2014 QS](#)

[Health!](#), Superseded 14/01/2015

Has been superseded by [National Healthcare Agreement: PI 21a-Waiting times for emergency department care: proportion seen on time, 2016 QS](#)

[Health!](#), Superseded 31/01/2017

Indicators linked to this Data Quality statement:

[National Healthcare Agreement: PI 21a-Waiting times for emergency hospital care: Proportion seen on time, 2015](#)

[Health!](#), Superseded 08/07/2016