

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Admission

The process by which a person commences a period of residential care in a health facility.

Admitted patients

Individuals accepted by a hospital for inpatient care.

Average length of stay (ALOS)

The average number of days each admitted patient stays in hospital. This is calculated by dividing the total number of occupied bed days for the period by the number of actual separations in the period.

Accrual accounting

Recognises revenues and expenses in the accounting period in which goods and services are provided or consumed, rather than in periods when cash is received or paid. In addition, it provides information on the assets and liabilities of an economic entity.

Ambulatory care

Any form of care other than as a hospital inpatient.

Best practice

Identifying and matching the best performance of others.

Bed days

The total number of bed days of all admitted patients accommodated during the reporting period. It is taken from the count of the number of inpatients at midnight (approximately) each day. Details for Same Day patients are also recorded as Occupied Bed Days where one Occupied Bed Day is counted for each Same Day patient.

Bed occupancy rate

The percentage of available beds which have been occupied over the year. It is a measure of the intensity of the use of hospital resources by inpatients.

Clinical pathways

The systematic approach to achieving particular outcomes for an inpatient, which identifies the amount and sequence of resources for that type of case.

Chargeable inpatients

Any admitted patient or registered non-inpatient for whom a charge can be raised by a hospital or Area Health Service for the provision of health care.

Dashboard Indicator

A set of indicators for the NSW public health system focus on a limited number of high-level issues that are designed to provide a broad overview of NSW Health. This core set of indicators forms part of other major indicator sets used by NSW Health, such as performance agreements with NSW Treasury and with Area Health Services. A number of dashboard indicators are still under development.

Diagnosis related groups (DRGs)

A system designed to classify every acute inpatient episode, from admission to discharge, into one of approximately 500 coding classes. Each group contains only patients who have similar clinical conditions and treatment costs.

Day of surgery admission (DOSA)

Involves patients who require an overnight stay in hospital following their procedure but who are admitted to hospital on the day of surgery.

Inpatient

A person who is admitted to hospital.

Multi-purpose service (MPS)

See Rural Hospital and Health Service.

Non-admitted patient services (NAPS)

Services provided to clients/patients who are not admitted to hospital, eg emergency department services, outpatient department services and community health services.

Performance agreement

An agreement between the Director-General and public health organisations, as outlined under the *Health Services Act 1997*. The agreement contains agreed objectives and goals and defines accountabilities and measures performance.

Same-day surgery

Involves the patient being admitted and discharged on the day of surgery.

Specialist

A doctor who has extra qualifications in one or more clinical areas of practice. Some examples of specialists are gynaecologists, ophthalmologists and neurosurgeons.

Specialty

The term used to describe the particular field of medicine in which a specialist doctor practises, eg orthopaedics, urology, gynaecology.

Telehealth

A network currently connecting health facilities around NSW. It improves access to health care services for patients, especially those living in rural and remote communities. It uses telecommunications to carry pictures, videos and information across long distances, so that health professionals and patients can decide treatment options without the need for travel.

Triage

An essential function of emergency departments where many patients may present at the same time. Triage aims to ensure that patients are treated in order of their clinical priority and that their treatment is timely.

Waiting time

The amount of time that a patient has waited for admission to hospital. It is measured from the day the hospital receives a 'recommendation for admission' form for the patient until the day the patient is admitted.