



As Queensland's population steadily grows, it is important to ensure that our capacity to treat patients also increases.

chapter 3

...enhancing services — treating people



Hospital capacity

The traditional measure of capacity is beds, but with developments in medical care, especially the introduction of same day procedures, more patients can be treated in the same number of beds. Patients can also now be treated intensively at home (as part of the Hospital in the Home program) for conditions that used to require hospital admission. The public sector is also increasingly using spare capacity in private hospitals to treat public patients.

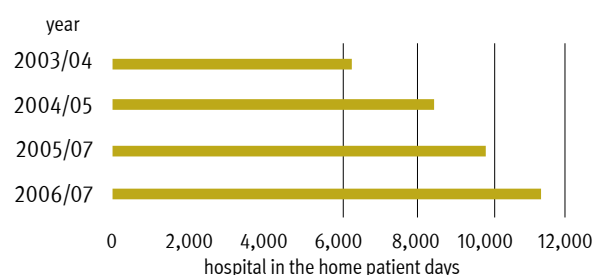
Making beds available

As at June 2006, there were 9629 public hospital beds available across Queensland public hospitals. As at June 2007, we have increased that amount to 9901. This represents an increase of 272 beds over a 12 month period. Our goal is to have almost 750 additional beds available by the year 2011. We are well on the way.

Hospital care is changing. We are now able to provide acute care in the home, freeing up hospital beds. We also contract with the private sector to provide public care when needed. Together the two groups boost the number of available beds per day, giving us a total of 10,042 beds or bed equivalents at the end of June 2007.

Hospital in the home

Our Hospital in the Home (HITH) program is a valuable addition to our service of care and continues to grow with an additional 1,421 patient days occurring in the 2006-07 period. This is the equivalent of providing an average of 33 hospital beds across Queensland for every day of the year. This program delivers acute health care outside the hospital with the patient keeping their admitted status for the duration of the time they are under the care of the hospital and the attending hospital medical practitioner.



Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection (QHAPDC), Queensland Health (extracted 27/09/2007)

The idea of having hospital treatment while remaining in your own home is very attractive, but a patient must meet the criteria for the program. This criteria include assessment that the patient's clinical condition is amenable for outreach services and that the care provided meets the needs and requirements of the patient.

Financial year	Acute public hospital available beds (a) (b)	Contracted public patient activity in private hospitals	Community-based admitted patient services	Total bed capacity
2000/2001	9,471	na	na	na
2001/2002	9,262	255	14	9,531
2002/2003	9,437	127	12	9,576
2003/2004	9,372	119	17	9,508
2004/2005	9,340	112	23	9,475
2005/2006	9,629	106	27	9,762
2006/2007#	9,901	108	33	10,042

Source: Monthly Activity Collection and Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, Queensland Health

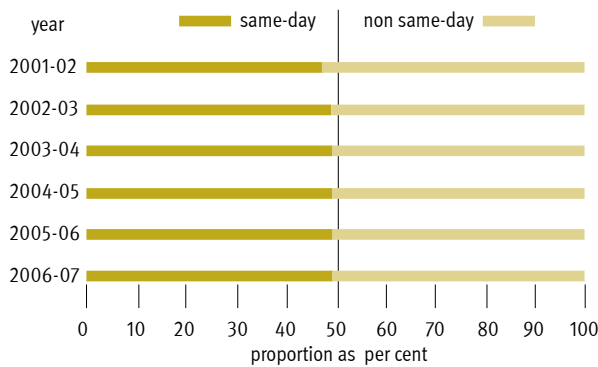
Figures for 2006/2007 are preliminary.

- (a) Includes available bed alternatives (but not cots for normal neonates).
- (b) Available bed figures are as at the last Wednesday of the month of June.
- (c) Community-based services refers to those public hospital admitted patient services provided off-site, e.g. Hospital in the Home
- (d) Total bed capacity is the sum of public hospital available beds and the bed equivalence of other Queensland Health funded admitted patient services.

Going home sooner

Regardless of how friendly and professional health personnel are, nobody enjoys a long stay in hospital and for most patients, the best part of their hospital experience is going home. Our aim is to treat our patients efficiently and reduce their length of stay wherever possible. With this goal in mind, safe same-day procedures have steadily increased to 49.2 per cent in the 2006-2007 period.

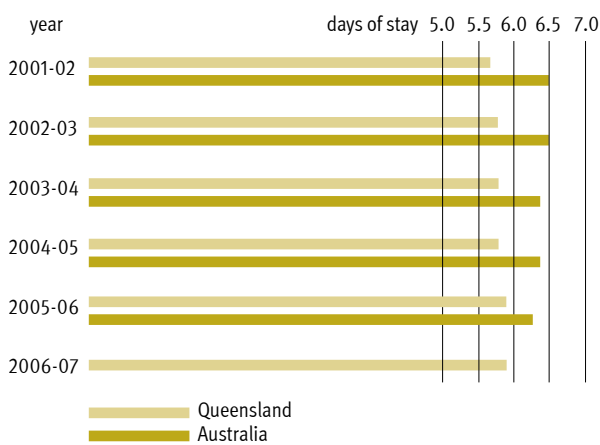
Proportion of same-day and non same-day separations, Queensland



Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection (QHAPDC), Queensland Health

On average, patients who do need to stay in hospital overnight stayed an average of 5.9 days in 2006-07 which is the same as 2005-06.

Average length of stay in days for patients staying overnight or longer in public acute hospitals

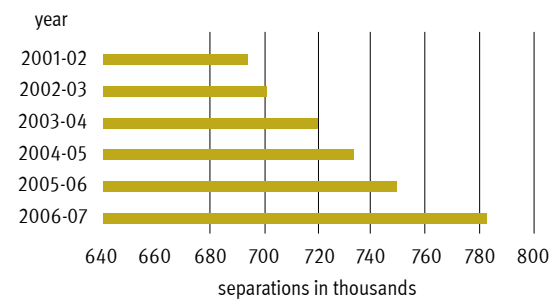


Source: Australian Hospital Statistics, AIHW (1999/00 to 2005/06) and Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, Queensland Health (2006/07)

Growing demand

The number of people seeking treatment or care in Queensland public hospitals continues to grow with an extra 33,304 patients being treated in the 2006-2007 period – an increase of 4.4 per cent. This growth in activity reflects the additional beds and staffing provided under the Health Action Plan.

Separations, public acute hospital, Queensland

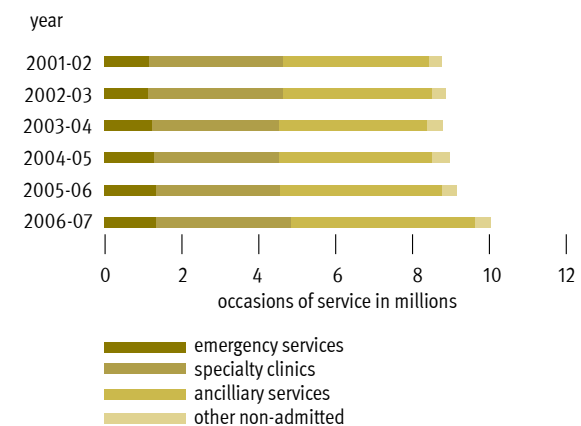


Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection (QHAPDC), Queensland Health

Note: Separations is the standard method of measuring hospital inpatient activity. It includes all discharges, transfers and deaths. In a relatively short stay environment the number of separations roughly equals the number of admissions.

Non-admitted patients are those people that received service from a Queensland public hospital but did not require admission. This category includes outpatient services and care in a hospital emergency department. For the 2006-2007 period, over 10,000,000 non-admitted services were delivered. This is an increase of over 850,000 or 9.3 per cent more non-admitted services from the previous year.

Non-admitted occasions of service, public hospitals, Queensland



Source: Monthly Activity Collection, Queensland Health (extracted 17/09/07 MV)



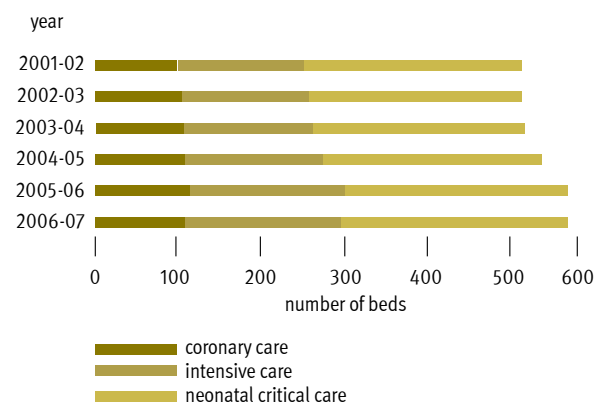
These services included:

- more than 1.3 million emergency services
- more than 3.5 million specialist outpatient clinic services
- more than 4.7 million ancillary services such as pathology, pharmacy and radiology
- more than 0.4 million other non-admitted services

Critical care services

Critical care services include intensive care units (ICUs), coronary care units (CCUs), paediatric intensive care units (PICUs), neonatal intensive care units (NICCUs) and special care nurseries (SCNs). Critical care beds form an integral part of our plan to increase the overall number of beds available in public hospitals. We've been steadily increasing the number of critical care beds since 2002, providing an additional 56 beds in the past five years.

Critical care beds as at June of each year, Queensland



year	total critical care beds
2001-2002	512
2002-2003	512
2003-2004	518
2004-2005	539
2005-2006	569
2006-2007	568

Source: Monthly Activity Collection, Queensland Health (extracted 12-09-07 MV)

The hospital front line – emergency departments

The majority of people who require unexpected hospital treatment will present through an emergency department. These very busy and stressful areas are the first line of care and in many cases the treatment received in an emergency department can influence the successful recovery of the patient.

In recognition of this vital first contact role, all Queensland hospital emergency departments follow strict triage protocols with clear performance targets for five triage categories.

The five triage categories have been established by the Australian College of Emergency Medicine, and set desired treatment time frames for patients who present in emergency situations.

category	treatment acuity	performance target
ATS 1 resuscitation	immediate	100%
ATS 2 emergency	within 10 minutes	80%
ATS 3 urgent	within 30 minutes	75%
ATS 4 semi-urgent	within 60 minutes	70%
ATS 5 non-urgent	within 120 minutes	70%

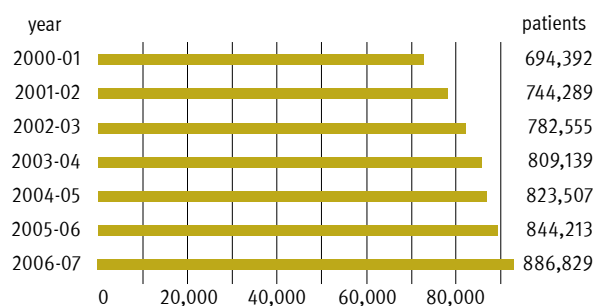
category	Queensland performance						
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
ATS 1 resuscitation	98%	99%	99%	100%	100%	99%	99%
ATS 2 emergency	70%	71%	73%	76%	71%	67%	69%
ATS 3 urgent	59%	56%	55%	54%	53%	54%	55%
ATS 4 semi-urgent	65%	59%	55%	54%	53%	54%	56%
ATS 5 non-urgent	87%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	81%

Generally, Queensland hospitals have met the high standards set by the triage protocol for patients in the most urgent cases, with 99 per cent seen by doctors immediately. Although some more progress is needed in the remaining categories, there is an improvement in performance since last year.

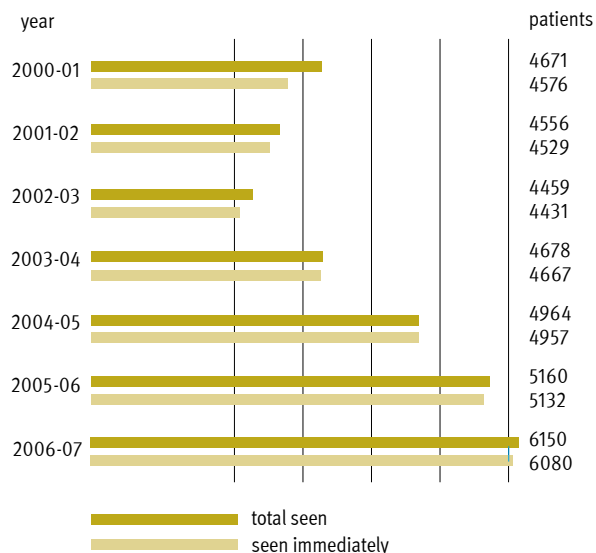
Emergency demand continues to rise

As Queensland's population grows, so too does the demand for emergency health care. In 2006-2007 there were 886,829 patients treated in Queensland's 21 major emergency department reporting hospitals. This represented an increase of 42,616 patients, or 5 per cent on 2005-2006 when 844,213 patients were treated.

Patients treated in emergency departments, public acute hospitals, Queensland



Triage category 1, public acute hospitals, Queensland



Elective surgery demand

Elective surgery is surgery that, in the opinion of the treating clinician, is necessary and admission for which can be delayed for at least 24 hours. It does not include emergency surgery or treatments, nor does it cover medical treatments. Elective surgery information is collected from 31 public hospitals in Queensland. These hospitals represent approximately 95 per cent of elective surgery undertaken in Queensland public hospitals.

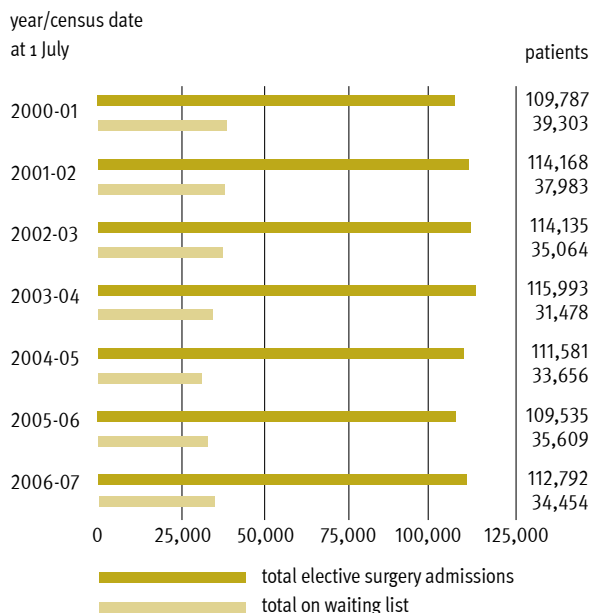
Categories

Categorisation is based on a clinical assessment of the patient. There are three main categories of urgency:

- **Category 1 – urgent**
Admission within 30 days desirable for a condition that has the potential to deteriorate quickly, to the point that it may become an emergency.
- **Category 2 – semi-urgent**
Admission within 90 days desirable for a condition causing some pain, dysfunction or disability, but which is not likely to deteriorate quickly or become an emergency.
- **Category 3 – non-urgent**
Admission at some time in the future acceptable for a condition causing minimal or no pain, dysfunction or disability, which is unlikely to deteriorate quickly and which does not have the potential to become an emergency.

At 1 July 2007 the number of patients on the elective surgery waiting list had decreased from 1 July of the previous year by 1,155 or 3.2 per cent to 34,454.

Elective surgery in public hospitals, Queensland





Elective surgery average waiting time for category 1, acute public hospitals, Queensland

year	days
2000-01	15
2001-02	19
2002-03	20
2003-04	17
2004-05	18
2005-06	19
2006-07	17

The number of patients on the waiting list is not a good measure of the performance of the hospital system as it includes people who have recently been added to the list. Information on 'long waits' is provided in the next section.

The average time to treat urgent admitted patients has consistently been within the 30 days national standard.

Of the 34,454 people on the elective surgery booking waiting list as at 1 July 2007, 8,828 or 25 per cent were waiting longer than was clinically desirable. These 'long waits' are being addressed by a number of strategies designed to ensure that all patients are seen within the clinically authorised time.

Outpatient care

A total of 94,128 surgical outpatients were waiting as of 1 March 2007, which represents 22 per cent of the 404,529 surgical outpatients treated in 2006-07. Surgical outpatient waiting times are subject to the same kind of strategical approach to reducing 'long wait' times as is being applied to elective surgery patients.

See hospital performance chart on following page*.

*** Note:** For the purposes of comparison, hospitals have been grouped into peer hospital groups. Peer group scores indicate the median score of hospitals included in the peer group and the Queensland State score is the median of all hospitals reported. Data for Mater Mothers hospital is reported from 1 July 2007.

Notes for table on page 16.

The Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection (QPAHDC) determines final elective surgery activity.

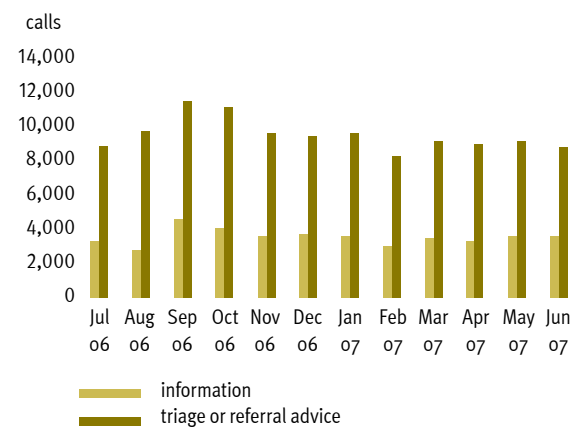
The number of surgical outpatients waiting at 1 March was collected manually from these hospitals via a survey.

The number treated is provided by the Queensland Health Monthly Activity Collection.

13 HEALTH hotline

In April 2006, we launched 13 HEALTH, a 24-hour hotline providing callers with direct contact with a registered nurse to seek information on a range of health questions. This service has steadily grown to now average at 12,935 calls per month. In June 2007, there were 3,641 general information calls and 8,766 calls transferred to nurses for triage or clinical information.

Comparison of call type by month 2006-07



Hospital performance — elective surgery					
Peer group	Hospital	Elective surgery patients		Surgical outpatients	
		Number waiting at 1 July 2007	Number treated 2006-07	Number waiting at survey date 1 March 2007	Number treated 2006-07
Principal referral and specialised	Cairns Base	1,653	4,520	4,166	22,110
	Gold Coast (including Robina)	2,561	11,460	6,041	43,472
	Mater Children's	838	3,202	4,593	17,748
	Nambour General and Noosa	1,801	5,882	3,392	20,052
	Princess Alexandra	4,286	13,949	8,825	50,876
	Royal Brisbane and Women's	5,661	14,014	14,091	52,054
	Royal Children's	1,370	3,787	955	19,607
	The Prince Charles	771	3,530	464	12,289
	The Townsville	2,036	6,436	11,161	33,038
	Peer group total	20,977	66,780	53,688	271,246
Large	Bundaberg Base	580	2,276	2,241	8,263
	Caboolture	321	1,867	458	6,458
	Hervey Bay	214	767	736	6,109
	Ipswich	2,661	6,423	4,597	22,505
	Logan	1,016	3,851	3,710	20,769
	Mackay Base	555	1,760	2,154	10,617
	Maryborough	212	960	1,111	5,329
	Mater Adult	1,996	5,769	6,006	18,729
	Mater Mothers	158			
	Mount Isa	138	666	559	1,325
	Queen Elizabeth II	1,340	4,944	2,248	20,179
	Redcliffe	727	4,059	3,009	22,225
	Redland	354	2,889	1,450	9,388
	Rockhampton Base	1,308	2,229	4,510	15,634
	Toowoomba	1,130	4,005	6,868	23,793
Peer group total	12,710	42,465	39,657	191,323	
Medium and small	Atherton	54	513	74	1,104
	Ayr				859
	Beaudesert	-	64	25	293
	Caloundra	289	1,195	91	3,511
	Dalby				191
	Emerald	47	257	38	642
	Gladstone	94	357	179	1,365
	Goondiwindi				50
	Gympie	136	663	131	2,173
	Ingham				419
	Innisfail	32	243	54	814
	Kingaroy	115	255	191	461
	Mareeba District				531
	Mossman				224
	Proserpine				1,308
	Roma				119
	Thursday Island				535
	Warwick				81
	Peer group total	767	3,547	783	14,680
Queensland State total	34,454	112,792	94,128	477,249	



Patients waiting at 1 July 2007 — Queensland reporting hospitals

Hospital	Category 1			Category 2			Category 3			total waiting
	'long waits'	total waiting	% 'long wait'	'long waits'	total waiting	% 'long wait'	'long waits'	total waiting	% 'long wait'	
Atherton	2	8	25.0%	2	29	6.9%	0	17	0.0%	54
Bundaberg	0	82	0.0%	2	339	0.6%	7	159	4.4%	580
Caboolture	0	52	0.0%	0	190	0.0%	10	79	12.7%	321
Cairns Base	57	189	30.2%	175	646	27.1%	348	818	42.5%	1,653
Caloundra General	0	9	0.0%	4	123	3.3%	2	157	1.3%	289
Emerald	0	4	0.0%	2	20	10.0%	0	23	0.0%	47
Gladstone	0	3	0.0%	1	23	4.3%	0	68	0.0%	94
Gold Coast	25	254	9.8%	205	1,105	18.6%	213	1,202	17.7%	2,561
Gympie General	0	13	0.0%	0	35	0.0%	0	88	0.0%	136
Hervey Bay	0	29	0.0%	1	59	1.7%	12	126	9.5%	214
Innisfail	0	0	-	0	18	0.0%	0	14	0.0%	32
Ipswich	0	151	0.0%	57	1,329	4.3%	462	1,181	39.1%	2,661
Kingaroy	0	2	0.0%	1	18	5.6%	0	95	0.0%	115
Logan	0	53	0.0%	2	315	0.6%	48	648	7.4%	1,016
Mackay Base	4	55	7.3%	42	250	16.8%	57	250	22.8%	555
Maryborough Base	1	18	5.6%	2	74	2.7%	41	120	34.2%	212
Mater Adults	4	107	3.7%	148	649	22.8%	516	1,240	41.6%	1,996
Mater Childrens	0	26	0.0%	43	302	14.2%	152	510	29.8%	838
Mater Mothers'	0	31	0.0%	0	68	0.0%	3	59	5.1%	158
Mt Isa	0	13	0.0%	0	68	0.0%	0	57	0.0%	138
Nambour	44	195	22.6%	250	636	39.3%	97	375	25.9%	1,206
Noosa	9	25	36.0%	53	248	21.4%	119	322	37.0%	595
Princess Alexandra	0	366	0.0%	854	1,897	45.0%	547	2,023	27.0%	4,286
Queen Elizabeth II	0	110	0.0%	21	390	5.4%	75	840	8.9%	1,340
Redcliffe	0	86	0.0%	8	277	2.9%	83	364	22.8%	727
Redland	1	53	1.9%	2	170	1.2%	3	131	2.3%	354
Rockhampton	1	50	2.0%	141	481	29.3%	274	777	35.3%	1,308
Royal Brisbane and Women's	22	540	4.1%	455	1,910	23.8%	1,867	3,211	58.1%	5,661
Royal Children's	8	102	7.8%	194	552	35.1%	303	716	42.3%	1,370
The Prince Charles	10	103	9.7%	34	396	8.6%	15	272	5.5%	771
The Townsville	0	135	0.0%	79	593	13.3%	540	1,308	41.3%	2,036
Toowoomba Base	0	53	0.0%	0	317	0.0%	68	760	8.9%	1,130
Queensland reporting hospitals	188	2,917	6.4%	2,778	13,527	20.5%	5,862	18,010	32.5%	34,454

**Total admitted patient episodes of care,
Public Acute Hospitals, Queensland, 2005/2006 and 2006/2007**

Peer group	Hospital	2005/2006	2006/2007
Principal referral and specialised	Cairns Base	39,381	42,470
	Gold Coast	58,578	61,379
	Mater Mother's	8,794	8,836
	Mater Adult	16,274	17,303
	Mater Children's	13,015	14,057
	Nambour	34,212	36,831
	Prince Charles	22,783	24,253
	Princess Alexandra	67,563	69,040
	Royal Brisbane and Women's (including Rosemount)	72,926	72,576
	Royal Children's	16,783	17,077
	The Townsville	42,567	44,380
	Large	Bundaberg	17,368
Caboolture		15,353	17,247
Hervey Bay		14,375	16,384
Ipswich		31,598	29,937
Logan		30,250	31,503
Mackay		21,173	22,739
Maryborough		5,798	6,676
Mount Isa		5,773	6,068
Queen Elizabeth II		14,912	16,988
Redcliffe		27,191	28,823
Redland		15,052	16,577
Rockhampton Base		23,987	24,437
Toowoomba	27,321	27,295	
Medium and small	Caloundra	6,517	7,379
	Gympie	6,245	7,263
	Atherton	5,210	5,576
	Gladstone	5,366	5,378
	Warwick	3,562	3,749
	Mareeba District	2,661	3,243
	Kingaroy	2,902	3,167
	Proserpine	3,088	3,084
	Innisfail	3,104	3,032
	Dalby	2,266	2,991
	Roma	2,437	2,482
	Beaudesert	1,998	2,473
Emerald	2,209	2,265	
Ayr	2,027	2,231	
Total selected hospitals		692,619	726,463



Notes

- Data include all care types except unqualified newborns, boarders, and posthumous organ procurement.
- Prepared by: Statistical Output, Statistical and Library Services Centre, Ph: 3234 0911
- Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, Queensland Health (extracted 11 December 2007)
- Criteria for hospital inclusion in the above table is hospitals with episodes of care greater than 2,000