



What is a separation?

Separation is the process by which an episode of care for an admitted patient is completed. A separation may be formal or statistical. An episode of care may be completed because the patient’s treatment is complete, the patient no longer requires care, has deceased, is transferred to another hospital/care facility or the patient leaves the hospital against medical advice.

(Sources: [Queensland Health Data Dictionary 2021, Identifier: QH 040017](#) and Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection (QHAPDC): Admission and Separation date/time).

A separation is also known as a ‘discharge’, is comprised of date and time values and is collected via the Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection (QHAPDC).

A separation can be either:

- **formal separation:** the administrative process by which a hospital records the completion of treatment and/or care and/or accommodation of a patient
- **statistical separation:** the administrative process by which a hospital records the completion of an episode of care for a patient within the one hospital stay.

A separation *cannot* be a:

- date and time before the related admission
- date and time after a deceased date and time
- date before a date of birth
- date and time after a patient has been transferred to another facility.

Data definitions and further information can be found in the [Admission and Separation date/time information sheet](#) and the [QHAPDC Manual](#).

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