



**Queensland
Government**

Ladder-related falls and injuries – public and private hospital admitted patient episodes of care in Queensland 2005/06 – 2009/10

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The incidence of ladder-related falls and injuries in Australia has been shown to be increasing (1,2), with older males comprising the very large majority of these presentations.

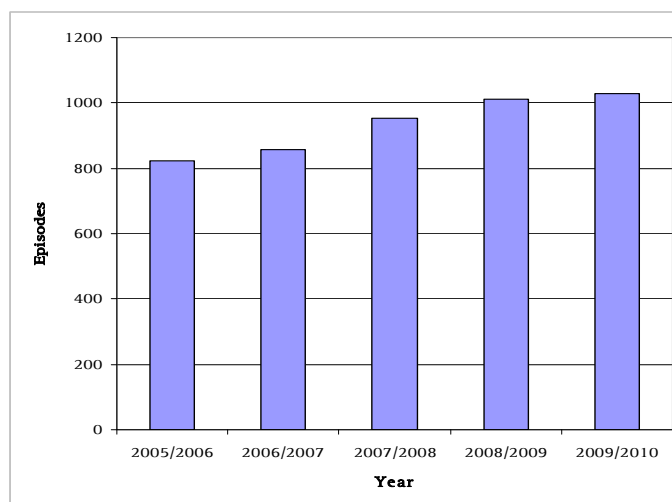
The Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection (QHAPDC) contains data on all admitted patient episodes of care in public and private acute hospitals in Queensland. Data for episodes of care where 'Fall on or from ladder' (ICD10-AM code W11) was coded as an external cause for that episode were extracted from QHADPC and analysed. Both public and private hospital episodes of care were extracted, for years 2005/06 – 2009/10 inclusive.

Between 2005/06 and 2009/10 there were 4,677 admitted patient episodes of care in Queensland public and private hospitals where an external cause code of 'Fall on or from ladder' was coded for that episode (Figure 1).

For the purpose of this paper, only those episodes of care with an admission source of 'Emergency department – this hospital' and 'Private medical practitioner (excl psychiatrist)' were considered (reducing the sample to 3,644 episodes). A later paper examining length of stay and other hospital activity indicators will incorporate all episodes regardless of admission source.

As shown in Figure 2, older males were disproportionately represented in these hospitalisations. During the 5-year period of interest, males accounted for over 80% (2,958) of selected admitted patient episodes for these injuries, with 45.6% of these males being aged 60 years or older.

Figure 1. Admitted patient episodes of care, ladder-related falls and injuries, public and private hospitals, 2005/06 – 2009/10



Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, extracted 14 June 2011

Table 1. Sources of admission, episodes of care, 2005/06 – 2009/10

Sources of admission	Episodes
Emergency department – this hospital	3,105
Private medical practitioner (excl psychiatrist)	539
Outpatient department – this hospital	392
Admitted patient transferred from another hospital	379
Episode change	165
Non-admitted patient referred from another hospital	81
Other	14
Private psychiatrist	1
Routine readmission not requiring referral	1
Total	4,677

Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, extracted 14 June 2011

Fractures of the forearm and fractures of the lower leg, including ankle were the most common principal diagnoses for these episodes of care, with 'Fracture of forearm' (ICD10-AM code S52) and 'Fracture of lower leg, including ankle' (ICD10-AM code S82) accounting for 11.9% and 10.9% of all principal diagnoses respectively (Table 2).

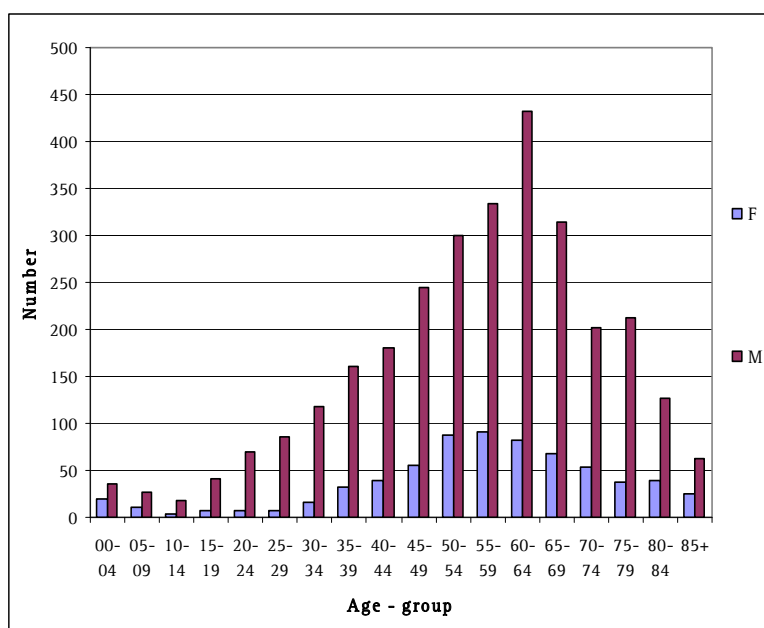
The majority of these episodes of care (82.5%) ended with the individual returning to their home or usual residence, with 0.7% (27) ending with death in hospital (Table 3).

Table 2. Top 10 Principal Diagnoses (3-digit ICD10-AM), episodes of care, selected sources of admission, 2005/06 – 2009/10

Principal Diagnosis	Episodes
Fracture of forearm	434
Fracture of lower leg, including ankle	397
Fracture of lumbar spine and pelvis	304
Fracture of rib(s), sternum and thoracic spine	299
Fracture of foot, except ankle	238
Intracranial injury	211
Fracture of shoulder and upper arm	156
Fracture of femur	147
Open wound of head	98
Care involving use of rehabilitation procedures	94
All other principal diagnoses	1,266
Total	3,644

Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, extracted 14 June 2011

Figure 2. Distribution of age and sex, episodes of care, selected sources of admission, 2005/06 – 2009/10



Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, extracted 14 June 2011

Table 3. Discharge Status, episodes of care, selected sources of admission, 2005/06 – 2009/10

Discharge Status	Episodes
Home/usual residence	3,008
Transferred to another hospital	464
Care type change	103
Died in hospital	27
Discharged at own risk	22
Other health care accommodation	14
Residential Aged Care Service	3
Other	3
Total	3,644

Source: Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection, extracted 14 June 2011

References

1. 1,050 People Treated for Serious Injury after Falling from a ladder in Queensland 2005 – 2009. Queensland Trauma Review, November 2010
2. Bradley C. Ladder-related fall injuries. *NISU Briefing*. AIHW National Injury Surveillance Unit, August 2007.