Delayed Discharges in NHSScotland

Figures for January 2018

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

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About this release

This release by Information Services Division (ISD) provides a monthly update on the number of hospital bed days associated with delayed discharges for a full calendar month. Information is also provided on the number of people experiencing a delay in discharge from hospital at the monthly census point. The data relate to people aged 18 and over.

Main Points

• In January 2019, 43,863 days were spent in hospital by people whose discharge was delayed. This is an increase of 9% compared with 40,152 days in January 2018.

• In January 2019, the average number of beds occupied per day due to delayed discharges was 1,415. In December, the daily average was 1,378.

• At the January 2019 census point, there were 1,474 people delayed. This is an increase of 8% compared with 1,360 delayed at the census point in January 2018.

• Of those delayed at the January 2019 census point, 1,156 were delayed more than three days. The most common reason for delays over three days was health and social care reasons (73%, 841), followed by complex needs (24%, 281), then patient and family-related reasons (3%, 34).
Background

Timely discharge from hospital is an important indicator of quality and is a marker for person-centred, effective, integrated and harm free care. A delayed discharge occurs when a hospital patient who is clinically ready for discharge from inpatient hospital care continues to occupy a hospital bed beyond the date they are ready for discharge.

The average daily number of beds occupied is calculated by dividing the total monthly number of delayed discharge bed days by the number of days in the calendar month. ISD considers this daily average a better statistic for comparing month on month differences as the number of days in a month varies.

Revised data definitions and national data requirements came into effect on 1 July 2016. These align census information and associated bed days and ensure more robust and consistent reporting across Scotland. Reports published using data prior to July 2016 cannot be used in direct comparison to figures published in this report.

The census figure reflects the position as at the last Thursday of the month.

It should be noted that figures presented in this publication are not directly comparable with other UK countries, due to differences in definitions and data reporting.

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Further Information

The data from this publication are available to download from our web page along with a background information and glossary, and metadata document.

For more information on delayed discharges see the delayed discharge section of our website. For related topics, please see the health and social community care pages.

The next release of this publication will be 2 April 2019.

NHS Performs

A selection of information from this publication is included in NHS Performs. NHS Performs is a website that brings together a range of information on how hospitals and NHS Boards within NHSScotland are performing.

ISD and Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of 'Official Statistics'. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further information about our statistics.