Delayed Discharges in NHSScotland

Annual summary of occupied bed days and census figures

Figures up to March 2019

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

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About this release

This annual publication by Information Services Division presents a summary of delayed discharge information across NHSScotland up to March 2019. Detailed information is available for 2018/19, including the number of bed days occupied by people delayed in their discharge from hospital and the average number of delays across monthly census points. The data relate to people aged 18 and over.

Main Points

• In 2018/19 there were 521,772 bed days occupied by people delayed in their discharge in NHSScotland. Of these 69% were occupied by people aged 75 years and over.

• There has been a 6% increase in delayed discharge bed days between 2017/18 and 2018/19.

• Approximately 1 in 12 (8.5%) beds in NHSScotland were occupied by people who were delayed in their discharge.

• The reasons for delay are:
  - awaiting completion of care arrangements
  - awaiting place availability
  - complex delay reasons
  - awaiting community care assessment
  - other including funding, transport, patient and family related reasons

Note due to rounding the percentages do not add up to 100%

• In 2017/18 the estimated cost of delayed discharges in NHSScotland was £122 million, with an estimated average daily bed day cost of £248.
**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.

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. Some annual comparisons are available throughout the publication. However due to these definitional changes comparisons are limited.

Reason for delay figures are based on an average of the number of delays at each monthly census across the year which reflect the position as at the last Thursday of the month. Complex delay reasons include delays due to adults with incapacity legislation.

The latest available cost information is 2017/18.

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**

Data from this publication are available to view on excel data tables along with the full publication report.

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 September 2020.

**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.](#)