

NHS beds in Wales, 2014-15

Background

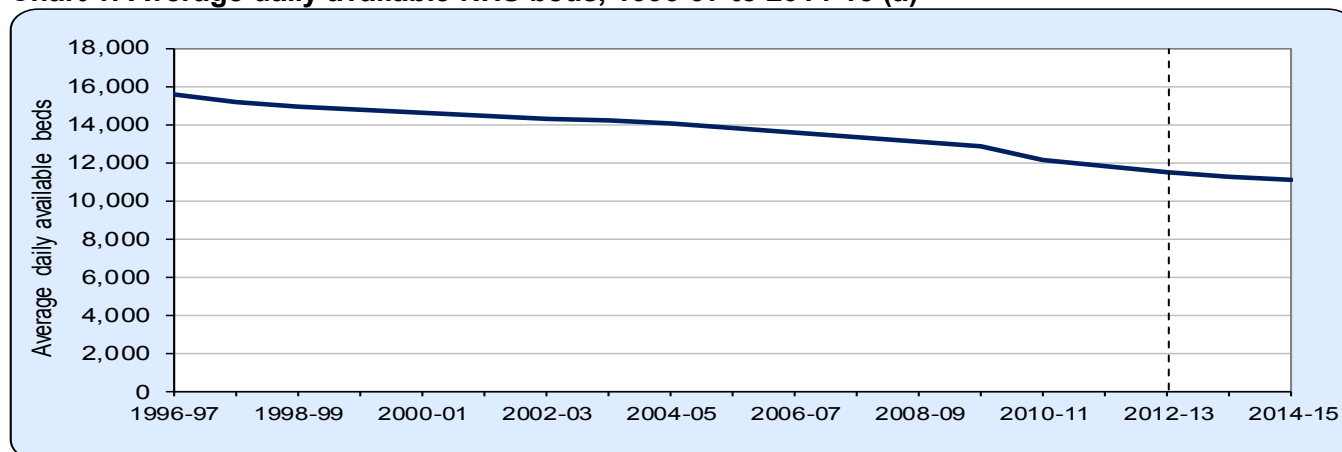
This annual release presents summary information, provided by the NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS), on bed use in Wales. The latest data relates to 2014-15 (1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015) but notes comparisons with earlier years.

This release presents data at Wales and Local Health Board (LHB) level for average daily available beds, average daily occupied beds and occupancy rates. The data quality issues identified in 2013 with the calculated fields (average length of stay, turnover interval and bed use factor) have not been resolved. Further information on this is provided in the Key Quality Information section.

Key facts:

- The average daily available NHS beds in 2014-15 was 11,062.
- Between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the total fell by 180 (1.6%) and since 1996-97, the total fell by 4,521 (29%).
- Between 2013-14 and 2014-15 the largest falls were in the specialties of rehabilitation (down 70) and geriatric medicine (down 54) whilst trauma & orthopaedic (up 29) and general medicine (up 19) had the largest increases.
- Since 1996-97 the largest falls have been in Geriatric Medicine (down 1,632), GP other than Maternity (down 693) and Learning Disabilities (down 627). Rehabilitation (up 509), Cardiology and Thoracic Medicine (both up 190) had the largest increases over this period. However, some of this change may be due to reclassifications of beds between specialties.
- The percentage occupancy in 2014-15 was 86.7%.
- Between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the percentage occupancy increased by 0.8 percentage points from 85.9% and since 1996-97, the percentage occupancy increased by 8.3 percentage points from 78.3%.

Chart 1: Average daily available NHS beds, 1996-97 to 2014-15 (a)



(a) Methodology change in 2012-13, see Key Quality Information

Statistician: Rachel Rees

Tel: 029 2082 5080

E-mail: stats.healthinfo@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Next update: October 2016 (provisional)

Twitter: www.twitter.com/statisticswales | www.twitter.com/ystadegaucymru

Cyhoeddwyd gan Y Gwasanaethau Gwybodaeth a Dadansoddi

Llywodraeth Cymru, Parc Cathays, Caerdydd, CF10 3NQ

Ffôn – Swyddfa'r Wasg **029 2089 8099**, Ymholiadau Cyhoeddus **029 2082 3332**

www.llyw.cymru/ystadegau

Issued by Knowledge and Analytical Services

Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

Telephone – Press Office **029 2089 8099**, Public Enquiries **029 2082 5050**

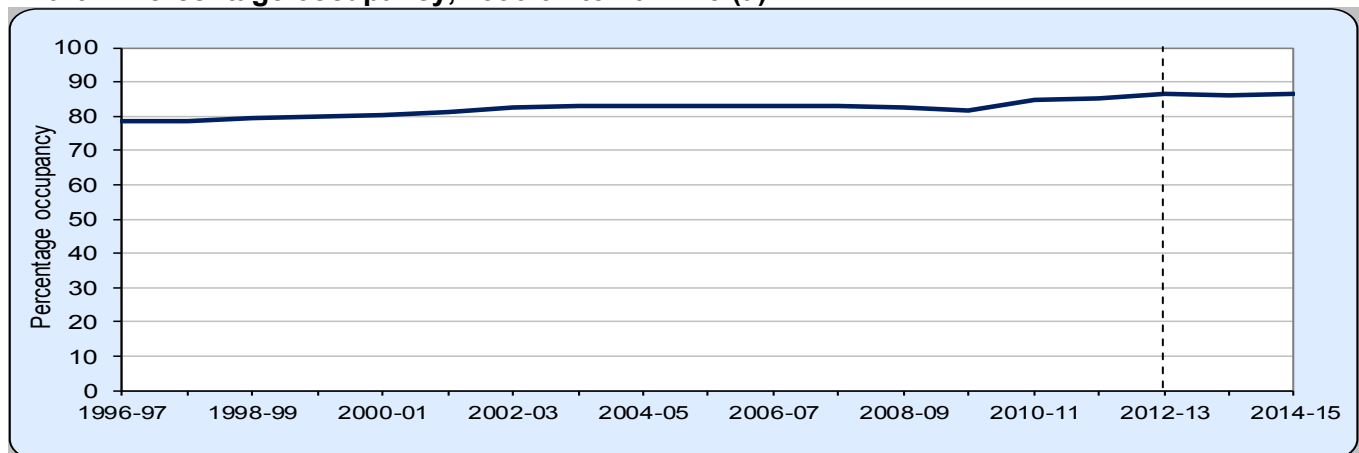
www.gov.wales/statistics



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

- Between 1996-97 and 2014-15, the average daily available beds decreased from 15,582 to 11,062, a decrease of 4,521 (29.0%). The total number has also fallen each year since 1996-97.

Chart 2: Percentage occupancy, 1996-97 to 2014-15 (a)



(a) Methodology change in 2012-13, see Key Quality Information

- Overall since 1996-97, despite falls in some years, there has been a slight increase in the percentage occupancy. In 2014-15 the percentage occupancy was 86.7% compared with 78.3% in 1996-97, an increase of 8.3 percentage points.

Table 1: Summary statistics by Local Health Board (a)

Local health board	Average daily available beds			Average daily occupied beds			Percentage occupancy (b)	
	2013-14	2014-15	Percentage change	2013-14	2014-15	Percentage change	2013-14	2014-15
Betsi Cadwaladr University	2,305.4	2,270.5	-1.5	1,916.2	1,902.9	-0.7	83.1	83.8
Hywel Dda University	1,189.6	1,159.5	-2.5	1,017.4	1,021.1	0.4	85.5	88.1
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University	2,329.1	2,337.4	0.4	2,026.9	2,066.6	2.0	87.0	88.4
Cardiff and Vale University	1,960.5	1,870.9	-4.6	1,706.4	1,655.7	-3.0	87.0	88.5
Cwm Taf University	1,348.2	1,301.0	-3.5	1,121.4	1,088.1	-3.0	83.2	83.6
Aneurin Bevan University	1,833.9	1,860.0	1.4	1,635.6	1,635.5	0.0	89.2	87.9
Powys Teaching	228.8	223.3	-2.4	190.8	185.4	-2.8	83.4	83.1
Velindre	46.0	38.9	-15.5	38.4	33.5	-12.8	83.4	86.1
Wales	11,241.5	11,061.5	-1.6	9,653.2	9,588.7	-0.7	85.9	86.7

(a) LHB figures may not sum exactly to Wales figures due to rounding.

(b) The proportion of average daily occupied beds to average daily available beds.

- In Wales, as a whole, the average daily available and occupied beds decreased by 1.6% and 0.7% respectively between 2013-14 and 2014-15. During the same time period, percentage occupancy increased by 0.8 percentage points.
- The average daily available beds decreased between 2013-14 and 2014-15 in 6 out of the 8 local health boards/trusts in Wales. However, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University and Aneurin Bevan University health boards had an increase in beds during this time period.
- Percentage occupancy increased in 6 of the local health boards/trusts whilst Aneurin Bevan and Powys Teaching health boards experienced a decrease in percentage occupancy.

Table 2: Summary statistics by top 10 specialties

Specialty (a)	Average daily available beds			Average daily occupied beds			Percentage occupancy (b)	
	2013-14	2014-15	Percentage change	2013-14	2014-15	Percentage change	2013-14	2014-15
General Medicine	2,132.4	2,151.5	0.9	1,979.7	2,062.8	4.2	92.8	95.9
Geriatric Medicine	1,273.6	1,219.6	-4.2	1,199.6	1,165.4	-2.8	94.2	95.6
General Surgery	971.3	965.7	-0.6	834.2	829.9	-0.5	85.9	85.9
Trauma & Orthopaedic	900.4	929.5	3.2	723.0	770.8	6.6	80.3	82.9
Old Age Psychiatry	789.3	766.7	-2.9	684.8	659.6	-3.7	86.8	86.0
Mental Illness	771.8	736.5	-4.6	686.2	660.5	-3.7	88.9	89.7
Rehabilitation	743.5	673.8	-9.4	711.9	642.4	-9.8	95.7	95.3
Paediatrics	490.3	479.9	-2.1	266.6	245.7	-7.8	54.4	51.2
Obstetrics For Patients Using Hosp Bed	389.2	396.8	1.9	177.9	190.2	6.9	45.7	47.9
GP Other Than Maternity	304.7	289.8	-4.9	260.5	254.5	-2.3	85.5	87.8

(a) Only the top 10 specialties based on average daily available beds in 2014-15 are shown

(b) The proportion of average daily occupied beds to average daily available beds.

- The top ten specialties in 2014-15 made up 77.8% of Wales' average daily available beds.
- The top 10 specialties accounted for 157 of the 180 decrease in beds between 2013-14 and 2014-15.
- The specialty in 2014-15 with the largest average daily available beds was General Medicine, with 2,152 beds. In this specialty the percentage occupancy increased by 3.0 percentage points from 2013-14 to 2014-15.

Key Quality Information

Source

The information presented in this release is derived from the QueSt 1 (QS1) return. The QS1 return, introduced in its current form in 1996, provides aggregate data on bed availability and occupation in NHS hospitals in Wales. Data are collected from individual Local Health Boards in Wales by NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS) and are subject to validation checks centrally prior to publication. It is the responsibility of these organisations to ensure that the figures have been compiled correctly in accordance with central definitions and guidelines.

The QS1 return saw a change in January 2013, when the reporting of bed usage and clinic information went from being a quarterly requirement to a monthly one. QS1 data items that were able to be derived from other NHS Wales datasets (such as patient level datasets) were retired from this point onwards. The main impact of this change is that the data for deaths and discharges (used in calculations for average length of stay, turnover interval and bed use factor) will be derived from the Patient Episode Database for Wales (PEDW) for 2012-13 data onwards. Further information on PEDW is available from: <http://www.infoandstats.wales.nhs.uk/page.cfm?pid=41010&orgid=869>

The amendments to the QS1 return in January 2013 have resulted in some changes to this beds release for 2013-14 onwards. Details of this and other relevant information about this dataset are provided below.

Coverage

The data covers all beds in NHS hospitals in Wales.

Deaths and discharges (inpatients) data

This continues to be a shorter release than in previous years, because although information on average daily available beds and on occupancy rates is shown, it doesn't present data on average length of stay, turnover interval and bed use factor. These indicators are calculated using data on deaths and discharges, which as mentioned above, is no longer collected via the QS1 return, and now need to be derived from the Patient Episode Database for Wales (PEDW) for 2012-13 onwards. When carrying out more detailed analysis of the deaths and discharges data from PEDW in preparation for the 2012-13 release, data quality issues arose in relation to assessment unit (AU) activity reporting in QS1 and in PEDW and how this should be treated in the data. It was identified that there is inconsistency in the reporting of assessment units, with some LHBs reporting AU activity within their beds data, and others omitting them.

The indicators noted above (average length of stay, turnover interval and bed use factor) each need to be calculated using a combination of deaths and discharges data from PEDW and bed data from QS1. However, for each LHB, the PEDW data needs to be matched to the QS1 data in order to ensure that AU activity is reported on the same basis. For example, if an LHB includes AU activity within the QS1 bed data, the PEDW data will need to be derived so that AU activity is included within the deaths and discharges figure, so that the indicator can be calculated on a consistent basis. This exercise of matching the PEDW data to the QS1 data requires data quality work, and therefore this release only presents those indicators derived from QS1 alone, i.e. average available daily and occupied beds.

Despite the fact that this release only presents data from the QS1 return on average available daily and occupied beds, the quality assurance has highlighted that not all LHBs have reported AU activity in the same way for their beds data. Although this inconsistency in the reporting of AU activity was identified for the 2012-13 release, it is likely that historic data could also be affected. Steps are currently being undertaken to implement an agreed standard in order to measure AU activity consistently across all LHB's.

Due to the data quality issues, users are advised to use caution when making data comparisons, particularly at LHB level.

Methodology

There is a different methodology for calculating the average annual available and occupied daily beds in order to take into account of the change from the reporting of quarterly QS1 information to monthly in January 2013. From 2013-14, the methodology is as follows:

Annual average daily available beds =

$$\frac{M1 + M2 + M3 + M4 + M5 + M6 + M7 + M8 + M9 + M10 + M11 + M12}{12}$$

Where M = Monthly data. The same methodology is applied to the annual average daily occupied beds.

In 2012-13, the methodology was:

$$\text{Annual average daily available beds} = \frac{Q1 + Q2 + Q3 + ((M10 + M11 + M12)/3)}{4}$$

In previous years, when the QS1 was collected quarterly the methodology was:

$$\text{Annual average daily available beds} = \frac{Q1 + Q2 + Q3 + Q4}{4}$$

Where Q = Quarterly data, M = Monthly data. The same methodology was applied to the annual average daily occupied beds.

Specialties

Each bed and patient attendance is classified by specialty. Information by specialty can be found on [StatsWales](#), and these can be aggregated if needed to align with those specialty groups presented in the [NHS Wales Data Dictionary](#). A number of specialties are excluded from the totals for average daily available beds, average daily occupied beds and percentage occupancy. These are: Special Care Baby Unit, High Dependency Care, Intensive Care, Paediatric Intensive Therapy Unit and Bone Marrow Unit. Data for these are included under the appropriate specialty.

Mental health beds in Powys

From 1st April 2010, Powys Teaching LHB transferred mental health services to Aneurin Bevan LHB, Betsi Cadwaladr University LHB and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University LHB. For the data in this release and StatsWales, the data for the relevant hospitals affected by this in Powys are shown against Powys LHB (individually and in the LHB total) rather than against the LHB that the management of the service has been transferred to.

Future Plans

Steps are currently being undertaken to implement an agreed standard in order to measure AU activity consistently across all LHB's, to ensure the indicators: average length of stay, turnover interval and bed use factor can be consistently calculated from the deaths and discharges data from PEDW and bed data from the QS1 return.

Change of data source for Outpatient Activity (not analysed in this release)

As noted previously, following data quality assessments and reviews of the data we plan to change to using the Outpatient Activity Data Set (OPA DS) as the source of the official statistics for outpatient activity in the NHS in Wales as this data is no longer collected by the QS1 return. The reasons for this are to:

- Have just one definitive source of data for outpatient activity data;
- Remove the burden on data providers of supplying data for two similar data sets;
- Remove the confusion for analysts and users which exists by having two similar data sets, containing different data in some cases; and
- Allow more granularity for research and data mining (the OPA DS provides patient level data, whereas the QS1 data collection provides high level, summary data).

We plan to publish a Statistical Article alongside the release of the OPA DS later this year.

Users and uses

We believe the key users of these statistics are:

- Ministers and their advisors;
- Assembly members and Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
- Policy makers of the Welsh Government;
- Other government departments;
- NHS Wales;
- Students, academics and universities;
- Media; and
- Individual citizens.

The statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these include:

- To provide advice to Ministers;
- To inform debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond;
- To monitor bed use across the different specialties and in different areas of Wales; and
- To help determine the service that the public may receive from the relevant organisations.

If you are a user and do not feel the above list adequately covers you please let us know via the contact details below.

Further information

The data presented in this release can be downloaded from our [StatsWales](#) tables. These tables also include further data breakdowns such as by specialty and hospital.

More information on the definitions of terms used in this release, and on data sources, can be found in the [NHS Wales Data Dictionary](#).

NHS England publish statistics on bed use on their website:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/bed-availability-and-occupancy/>

The Information Services Division (ISD) in NHS Scotland publish statistics on bed use on their website:

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Hospital-Care/Beds/>

In Northern Ireland, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPSNI) publish bed use statistics on their website:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/statistics/hospital/hospital-activity/inpatient-and-day-case-activity.htm>

Feedback

We actively encourage feedback from our users. If you have any comments or require further information please contact us on the details below.

Rachel Rees,
Health Statistics and Analysis Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ
Tel: (029) 2082 5080
Fax: (029) 2082 5350
E-mail: stats.healthinfo@wales.gsi.gov.uk



All content is available under the Open Government Licence v3.0 , except where otherwise stated.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>