

INFECTIOUS DISEASES SERVICES

In SWSAHS, all Infectious Diseases staff specialists are qualified Medical Microbiologists and are responsible to both the Division of Medicine at Liverpool Hospital and the Director of South Western Area Pathology Service (SWAPS).

The prevalence of some gastrointestinal and hepatological diseases is significantly higher for SWS residents. For example, although comprising 3.5% of the Australian population, 25% of notifications for Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C were from SWS residents.

Statistics from NSW Health separately identify a group of Diagnosis Related Groups as Infectious Diseases and Immunology and those statistics are used in this discussion.

Patients with infectious diseases are seen at all six SWSAHS hospitals. In 2002/03, SWSAHS was 78% self-sufficient in public sector infectious diseases, providing a total of 1,786 separations and 9,227 beddays. Most resident outflows were to Westmead, St Vincent's and Royal Prince Alfred Hospitals. The private sector provided 6% of total resident demand for infectious diseases.

At a planned occupancy of 85% and assuming no change in flows, it is projected that adult infectious diseases services in SWSAHS Hospitals will increase by 26% to 2006 and a further 19% to 2011.

Current Services

The Area Infectious Diseases and Microbiology service is provided by six staff specialists (5.4 FTE) and one infectious diseases registrar, based at Liverpool Hospital. It cares for a small number of inpatients with infections at Liverpool Hospital and provides a consultative service in all SWSAHS hospitals. The Department also provides medical and laboratory support for infectious control services in all hospitals in SWSAHS. Staff specialists supervise the Microbiology services, one of the largest in NSW. Staff specialists play a significant role in infection control, as members of the Infectious Control committees in each SWSAHS hospital and the Area committee. In addition, they meet regularly with infection control staff from each hospital and help with the management of specific problems and outbreaks of hospital infection, prevention and control of hospital associated infections, control of antibiotic resistant organisms in SWSAHS hospitals and promotion of effective antibiotic use.

There were approximately 1,200 new inpatient consultations in 2003, an average of 101 new consultations per month, with additional follow-up sessions. This is double the activity of 2000.

New Consultations to Area Infectious Diseases Service 2000/03

	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total for year	606	794	881	1,213
Average per month	50.5	56.2	73.4	101.0

Bankstown Hospital

In 2002/03, there were 423 separations, including 37% day only, occupying 2,140 beddays at an average LOS of 5.1 days.

Fairfield Hospital

There were 239 separations for infectious diseases in 2002/03, of which 29% were day only, occupying 1,163 beddays at an average LOS of 4.9 days.

Liverpool Hospital

In 2002/03, there were 465 separations, including 3% day only, occupying 3,372 beddays at an average LOS of 7.3 days.

Campbelltown Hospital

There were 397 separations in 2002/03, of which 9% were day only, occupying 1,902 beddays at an average LOS of 4.8 days.

Camden Hospital

In 2002/03, there were 142 infectious diseases separations, of which 40% were day only, occupying 505 beddays at an average LOS of 3.6 days.

Bowral Hospital

There were 120 separations, of which 84% were day only, occupying 145 beddays at an average LOS of 1.2 days.

Non-inpatient

Patients are seen at nine outpatient and privately referred non-inpatient clinics per week, mainly at Liverpool Hospital. Referrals are by other specialists, VMOs, and General Practitioners in SWSAHS, as well as from rural NSW. There is a weekly outpatient clinic for follow up of patients found to be Hepatitis B surface antigen positive at routine antenatal clinics. In 2003, there was an average of 180 outpatient attendances per month for a total of over 2,000 attendances in the year. This number has been fairly constant over the past few years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Infectious diseases clinical services be enhanced and based at Liverpool Hospital with inpatient beds established.
- Additional infectious diseases positions to be appointed to the Area Service.
- The Area Infection Control service be enhanced with both a Medical and Nursing Director who will co-ordinate the service.