

OPHTHALMOLOGY SERVICES

CHAPTER 39

Ophthalmology Services include the provision of eye surgery, outpatient treatment and acute surgical treatment for traumatic eye injuries. Eye surgery includes surgery for cataract, retinal detachment, corneal disease, glaucoma, strabismus, lid and lacrimal disorders. Acute surgical treatment for traumatic eye injuries is also provided. In addition to clinical services, SWSAHS Ophthalmology is involved in research activities and education of registrars, medical students and allied health professionals.

SWSAHS is 58% self-sufficient in the provision of public sector ophthalmology services, delivering a total of 1,366 episodes of care in 2002/03, 85.5% being provided on a day only basis. During the same period, private sector hospitals delivered 3,909 episodes of care to local residents, representing 67% of total resident demand. With an ageing and growing population in SWS, demand for public ophthalmology services in SWSAHS is projected to grow substantially to 2011. A 34.9% increase in demand for ophthalmology services is forecast to 2006, with an additional 30.1% increase in demand forecast to 2011.

In 2006, at 85% occupancy and assuming no change in flow patterns, it is projected that there will be a need for approximately 7.7 ophthalmology beds for adults.

Current Service

Ophthalmology services are provided at all hospital sites excluding Fairfield and Campbelltown Hospitals. After hours surgery is performed at Liverpool and Bankstown Hospitals.

Bankstown Hospital

Bankstown Hospital provides Level 5 services with 5 VMOs and 1 Registrar.

In 2002/03, there were 398 separations; average LOS was 1.3 days (3.3 days excluding day only). At 95% occupancy this is equivalent to 1.4 beds.

Potential exists to support registrar training by significantly increasing the volume of surgery performed at Bankstown and to thereby reduce waiting times.

Fairfield Hospital

In 2002/03, there were 14 separations; average LOS was 2.4 days (3.9 days excluding day only). At 95% occupancy this is equivalent to 0.1 beds.

Liverpool Hospital

Liverpool Hospital provides a principal tertiary referral Ophthalmology service for complex eye diseases, for SWSAHS, with level 6 ophthalmology services from 7 VMOs. 1 PT Staff Specialist and 2 Registrars. An academic chair in Ophthalmology is to be appointed.

The Ophthalmology Department is involved in postgraduate and undergraduate teaching.

In 2002/03, there were 617 separations; average LOS was 1.6 days (3.5 days excluding day only). At 95% occupancy this is equivalent to 2.8 beds.

Campbelltown and Camden Hospitals

This level 3 service operates mostly at Camden Hospital with 1 appointed VMO. There is a second position to be filled.

In 2002/03, there were 217 separations; average LOS was 1.1 days (7.0 days excluding day only). At 95% occupancy this is equivalent to 0.7 beds. There were 16 separations at Campbelltown.

Bowral Hospital

Bowral Hospital provides a Level 3 service with 1 appointed VMO. The waiting list is 13 months long.

In 2002/03, there were 104 separations; average LOS was 1.0 day. At 95% occupancy this is equivalent to 0.3 beds.

Non-inpatients

Outpatient treatment includes laser for diabetic retinopathy, macula degeneration, glaucoma, and following cataract surgery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- An Area wide department of Ophthalmology for research, teaching and the promotion of eye care be created under the leadership of the Professorial position, based at Liverpool.
- Liverpool retain a focus on emergency and complex surgery.
- Bankstown Hospital be developed as a centre of cataract surgery servicing Liverpool, Fairfield and Bankstown.
- Registrar training program at Bankstown and Liverpool be developed on an Area basis.
- Further consideration be given to developing a second centre for cataract surgery at Camden.
- Bowral continue to offer eye surgery at existing levels.