

Question on Notice

No. 1233

Asked on 12 December 2024

MS C MCMILLAN ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON T NICHOLLS)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise the number of long stay patients currently occupying beds in Queensland hospitals, reported separately by (a) hospital and (b) Hospital and Health Service?

ANSWER

Queensland Health conducts a statewide long-stay patient census on a quarterly basis as a point-in-time snapshot. Long-stay patients are patients who no longer require in-hospital care but are awaiting appropriate supports to transition to the community. These patients are clinically fit for discharge, however, typically require access to appropriate aged care or disability supports that are primarily a Commonwealth Government responsibility. Regrettably, since 2022, the Commonwealth has failed to adequately address this need.

I am advised that as per the most recent long-stay patient census, held on 26 August 2024, there were 1,076 long-stay patients in Queensland public hospitals, reported by the hospital and health services (HHSs), costing the system approximately \$2.2 million per day. This comprised of:

- 321 long-stay younger patients; and
- 755 long-stay older patients.

Disappointingly, this number has almost doubled since May 2022, from 553 long-stay patients to 1,076 in August 2024.

I am advised that as patients transfer across different hospital settings, the most appropriate data aggregation is by HHS, rather than at the facility level. See below:

HHS	28-Aug-24
Cairns and Hinterland	75
Central Queensland	71
Central West	4
Children's Health Queensland	7
Darling Downs	63
Gold Coast	113
Mackay	59
Mater public	17

HHS	28-Aug-24
Metro North	182
Metro South	185
North West	12
South West	4
Sunshine Coast	50
Torres and Cape	0
Townsville	118
West Moreton	49
Wide Bay	67
Grand Total	1,076

At this time, a further 284 patients (four younger patients and 280 older patients) occupied interim care beds purchased by Queensland Health. These beds are in community settings external to public hospitals but remain under HHS management.