

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) – 2004/05

NWPHO Monthly - July 2006

HES Key Facts

- A national data warehouse containing cleaned records of all hospital in-patient admissions
- Covers private and NHS work undertaken in NHS hospitals, but not NHS work undertaken in Private Hospitals
- Includes hospital admissions, but not outpatient or Accident & Emergency data
- Now available as rolling outputs but reporting annually for fiscal years

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Key Messages

- The rate of hospital admissions rose in 2003/04 and 2004/05, following a slight reduction in 2001/02 and 2002/03. The recent rise is predominantly due to greater numbers of emergency admissions as a result of increased referrals from Accident and Emergency (A&E).
- A rise in 'frequent fliers' (people having more than 3 emergency admissions in any one year) highlights problems faced today with the management of chronic conditions in primary care.

Introduction

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES¹) is a powerful data warehouse containing healthcare information relating to NHS inpatient admissions in England and is maintained by the Information Centre for health and social care (The IC). The North West Public Health Observatory is a HES Safe Haven* and as such holds a regional extract for the last 10 years with additional access to national data through an on-line system. Within the confines of data protection and confidentiality, the aggregated data can be made available to individuals and organisations for the purposes of research or service development.

Hospital Admission Trends (all episodes*)

In all of England, hospital admission rates have been increasing since 2001/02. This is mainly attributed to higher numbers of emergency admissions and is particularly evident in 2003/04 and 2004/05 (Figure 1; Table 1).

In the North West, overall admission rates decreased between 2000/01 and 2002/03 as the rate of elective admission declined (Figure 2; Table 1). However, rates of emergency admission in the North West follow the national pattern with rates increasing in 2003/04 and 2004/05.

Other admissions, which include maternity, babies & infants and non-emergency transfers, have remained relatively stable both nationally and regionally.

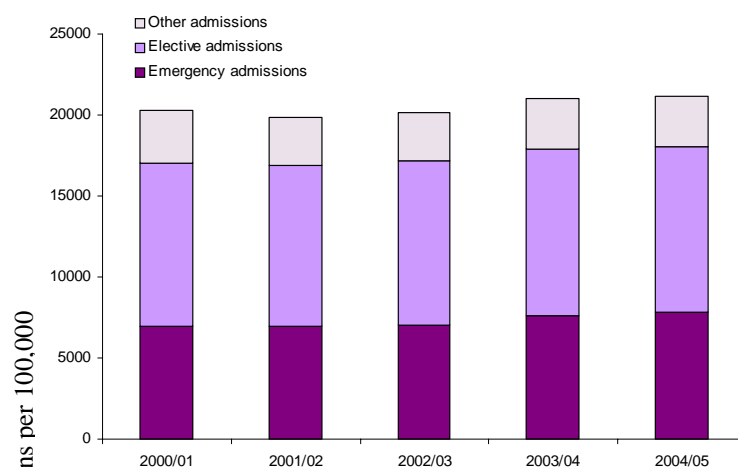


Figure 1. Hospital Admission – England

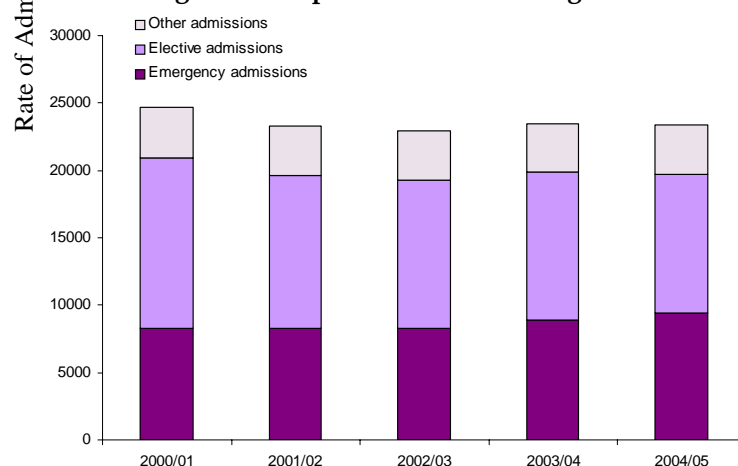


Figure 2. Hospital Admission – North West

¹ www.hesonline.nhs.uk

Table 1. Total number of admissions by year and admission method for the North West (NW) and England

		2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
ELECTIVE	NW	923,812	827,777	809,370	815,962	771,379
	England	5,399,095	5,324,536	5,507,073	5,644,402	5,644,943
EMERGENCY	NW	613,498	614,489	616,284	666,407	703,881
	England	3,789,738	3,823,376	3,877,757	4,144,952	4,368,319
OTHER	NW	233,465	231,931	225,531	221,043	228,365
	England	1,518,501	1,436,052	1,436,518	1,462,384	1,505,614
TOTAL	NW	1,770,775	1,674,197	1,651,185	1,703,412	1,703,625
	England	10,707,334	10,583,964	10,821,348	11,251,738	11,518,876

Source of Emergency Admission

In the North West in 2004/05, the rate of emergency admission to hospital from Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments increased by 30% since 2000/01 and by over 20% since 2002/03 (Figure 3). The other sources of emergency admission, such as from the bed bureau and from out-patients, remained largely stable. Referrals from GPs showed a slight decrease of less than 10% in admissions from 2000/01 to 2001/02 but have remained relatively stable since.

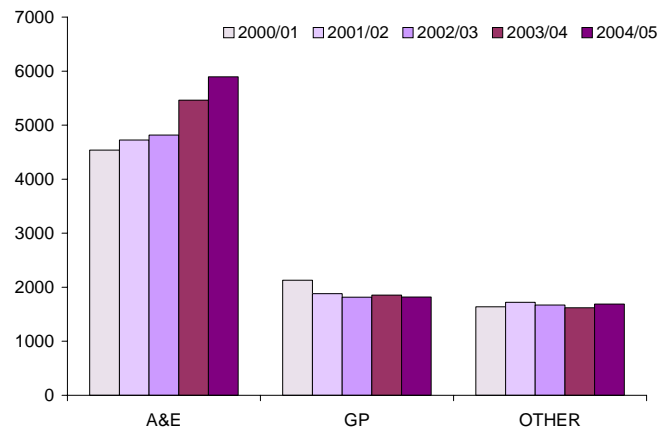


Figure 3. Rate of admission by source - North West

Table 2. Top 10 admissions by diagnosis*

ICD Code (3-digit)	ICD Code Description	Number of Admissions
R69	Unknown & unspecified causes of morbidity	46,300
R07	Pain in throat & chest	41,278
R10	Abdominal & pelvic pain	39,029
O26	Other condition related to pregnancy	23,876
H26	Other cataract	23,030
O70	Perineal laceration at delivery	20,203
Z38	Live born infants	20,015
J44	Other COPD	19,475
Z34	Normal pregnancy	18,344
H25	Senile cataract	17,983

Top 10 Causes of Admission

The top cause of admission is morbidity recorded as unknown or unspecified (Table 2). After this, the main reasons for admission are pain in throat, chest, abdomen or pelvis (30% of top admissions) and pregnancy / births (31% of top admissions); cataracts and COPD account for the remainder. Of all admissions, 6.5% also have an external cause identified (Table 3). Falls account for 57% of the top ten external causes; abnormal reaction to surgery or exposure to analgesic for 27%; and assault, self-harm or struck by an object for the rest (17%).

Frequent Fliers*

‘Frequent Fliers’ is a term used to describe a person who has more than three emergency admissions in any one year of HES reporting. This can be an indication of poor management of individuals with chronic conditions within either primary or secondary care.

The rate of ‘Frequent Fliers’ in the North West as a whole increased gradually from 538 / 100,000 in 2000/01 to 764 / 100,000 in 2004/05 (see website link below). Similar patterns of increasing trends in ‘Frequent Fliers’ are seen in around 50% of North West Local Authorities while just under 20% show a stable or decreasing trend. The remaining 30% of authorities show an inconsistent picture over time. For example, in Burnley and Pendle there was a dramatic increase in 2001/02, while Halton, Knowsley and Liverpool showed major increases in 2003/04 (see website link below).

Table 3. Top 10 admissions by external cause*

ICD Code (3-digit)	ICD Code Description	Number of Admissions
W19	Unspecified fall	18,712
W01	Fall on same level from slipping, tripping & stumbling	11,338
Y83	Abnormal reaction to surgery	9,383
X60	Exposure to analgesic	5,226
Y04	Assault by bodily force	4,961
X61	Intentional self poisoning by anti-epileptic and other drugs	4,306
W10	Fall on & from stairs & steps	4,217
W18	Other fall on same level	3,635
X59	Exposure to unspecified factor	3,325
W22	Strike/struck by other object	1,866

* Further information and data for North West Local Authorities can be found at: www.nwpho.org.uk/monthly/july06