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VITAL STATISTICS REPORT

Hospital Discharge Survey Data

FROM THE

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Utilization of Short-Stay Hospitals—Summary of Nonmedical Statistics: United States, 1972

Estimates are shown in this report for the utilization of non-Federal short-stay hospitals by inpatients, excluding newborn infants, discharged during 1972. Data are shown for the number and rate of discharges and of days of care, and average length of stay of patients discharged, by sex, age, and color; and by geographic region, bed size, and type of ownership (control) of hospitals.

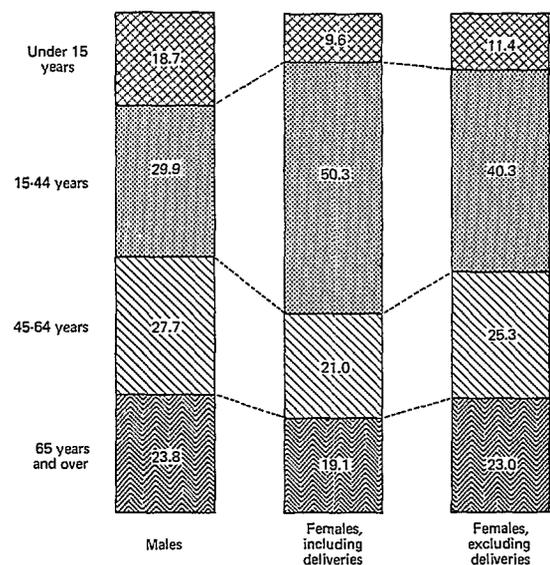
The Hospital Discharge Survey has collected data on short-stay hospital utilization continuously since the beginning of 1965. Estimates for the 1972 survey are based on samples of hospital records on inpatients discharged from a national sample of non-Federal short-stay hospitals. Data were abstracted from about 225,000 hospital records of inpatients discharged from 424 hospitals participating in the survey.

An estimated 31.6 million inpatients were discharged from non-Federal short-stay hospitals in 1972. Approximately 245.1 million days of care were utilized by these patients and their average length of stay was 7.7 days (table 1). The annual rate of discharges for 1972 was 154.9 per 1,000 persons in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. The rate for days of care per 1,000 population was 1,199.9.

Patterns of hospital utilization by age and sex for 1972 were similar to those observed in the data collected by the survey for previous years. The percent distribution of discharges varied by sex for ages under 15 years and 15-44 years, with a significantly larger percentage of males falling in the youngest age category, and conversely, significantly more females represented in the 15-44 year age group (figure 1). Discharge rates increased with age for patients of both sexes (excluding deliveries) (table 1). The overall rate for females excluding deliveries was higher than

for males—149.2 discharges per 1,000 population for females compared to 127.8 for males. Within age groups differences in utilization among males and females were apparent. Males under 15 years of age and 65 years and over had higher discharge rates than did comparably aged females, while the rate for females aged 15-44 years was higher than for males. For both sexes, rates of days of care and average length of stay increased consistently with age for all discharges (table 1).

FIGURE 1. PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF DISCHARGES FROM SHORT-STAY HOSPITALS, BY AGE AND SEX: UNITED STATES, 1972



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Table 1. Number and rate of inpatients discharged from short-stay hospitals, number and rate of days of care, and average length of stay, by age and sex: United States, 1972

[Excludes newborn infants and Federal hospitals]

Age	Both sexes ¹	Male	Female	
			Including deliveries	Excluding deliveries
Number of discharges in thousands				
All ages-----	31,627	12,593	18,996	15,772
Under 15 years-----	4,174	2,354	1,814	1,800
15-44 years-----	13,331	3,759	9,557	6,353
45-64 years-----	7,488	3,485	3,993	3,988
65 years and over-----	6,634	2,995	3,631	3,631
Rate of discharges per 1,000 population				
All ages-----	154.9	127.8	179.7	149.2
Under 15 years-----	73.7	81.6	65.3	64.8
15-44 years-----	156.0	91.0	216.6	144.0
45-64 years-----	177.2	173.8	179.9	179.7
65 years and over-----	332.9	360.8	312.3	312.3
Number of days of care in thousands				
All ages-----	245,060	104,037	140,633	127,658
Under 15 years-----	18,651	10,761	7,851	7,799
15-44 years-----	75,770	25,261	50,393	37,488
45-64 years-----	69,401	32,751	36,524	36,506
65 years and over-----	81,238	35,264	45,865	45,865
Rate of days of care per 1,000 population				
All ages-----	1,199.9	1,056.1	1,330.3	1,207.5
Under 15 years-----	329.5	373.1	282.8	280.9
15-44 years-----	886.8	611.5	1,141.8	849.4
45-64 years-----	1,642.7	1,633.1	1,645.7	1,644.9
65 years and over-----	4,076.8	4,248.7	3,944.7	3,944.7
Average length of stay in days				
All ages-----	7.7	8.3	7.4	8.1
Under 15 years-----	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.3
15-44 years-----	5.7	6.7	5.3	5.9
45-64 years-----	9.3	9.4	9.1	9.2
65 years and over-----	12.2	11.8	12.6	12.6

¹Figures include data for sex not stated.

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Table 2. Number of inpatients discharged from short-stay hospitals and average length of stay, by color, age, and sex: United States, 1972

[Excludes newborn infants and Federal hospitals]

Color and age	Both sexes ¹	Male	Female		Both sexes ¹	Male	Female		
			Including deliveries	Excluding deliveries			Including deliveries	Excluding deliveries	
<u>TOTAL</u>		Number of discharges in thousands				Average length of stay in days			
All ages-----	31,627	12,593	18,996	15,772	7.7	8.3	7.4	8.2	
Under 15 years-----	4,174	2,354	1,814	1,800	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.3	
15-44 years-----	13,331	3,759	9,557	6,353	5.7	6.7	5.3	5.8	
45-64 years-----	7,488	3,485	3,993	3,988	9.3	9.4	9.1	9.2	
65 years and over-----	6,634	2,995	3,631	3,631	12.2	11.8	12.6	12.6	
<u>WHITE</u>									
All ages-----	23,907	9,671	14,229	12,004	7.8	8.2	7.5	8.2	
Under 15 years-----	3,049	1,708	1,340	1,336	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.3	
15-44 years-----	9,602	2,790	6,810	4,591	5.6	6.4	5.2	5.8	
45-64 years-----	5,900	2,752	3,147	3,144	9.2	9.3	9.1	9.1	
65 years and over-----	5,356	2,421	2,932	2,932	12.2	11.7	12.6	12.6	
<u>ALL OTHER</u>									
All ages-----	3,598	1,305	2,290	1,721	7.9	9.6	7.0	7.9	
Under 15 years-----	586	332	254	246	5.7	6.1	5.2	5.2	
15-44 years-----	1,948	474	1,473	912	6.3	8.7	5.5	6.3	
45-64 years-----	632	289	342	341	11.0	12.0	10.1	10.1	
65 years and over-----	432	209	222	222	14.0	13.8	14.3	14.3	
<u>COLOR NOT STATED</u>									
All ages-----	4,123	1,617	2,476	2,048	7.3	7.6	7.1	7.8	
Under 15 years-----	539	314	220	219	3.8	4.0	3.5	3.5	
15-44 years-----	1,781	495	1,275	850	5.5	6.4	5.2	5.8	
45-64 years-----	955	443	504	503	8.9	8.6	9.1	9.1	
65 years and over-----	847	365	476	476	11.7	11.3	12.0	12.0	

¹Figures include data for sex not stated.

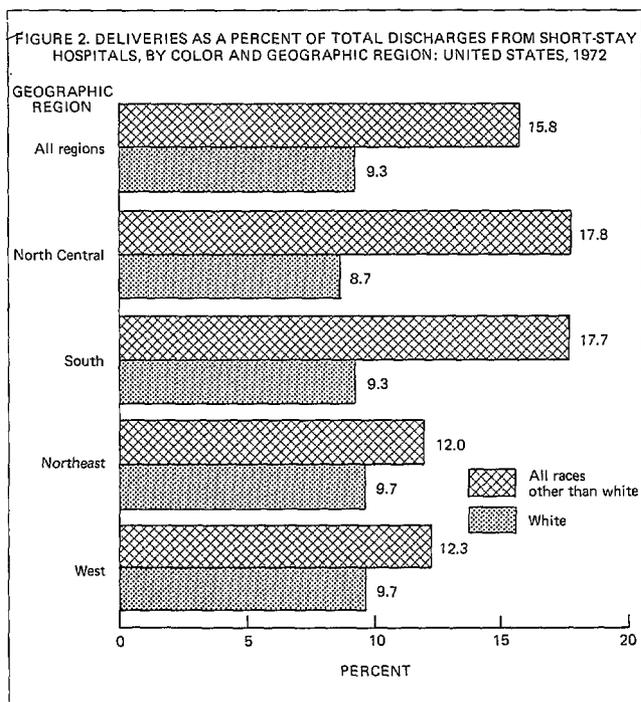
The number of discharges and average length of stay by color and age are shown in table 2. Color was not stated on medical summary sheets which represented approximately 4.1 million discharges, or 13 percent of the total discharges in 1972. The number of discharges with color not stated is greater than the corresponding figures for the "all other" category, and care should be exercised when interpreting the data.

Patients in the white category outnumbered those in the "all other" category by approximately 7 to 1. For white patients, about 1 in 5 were 65 years and over, while this same age group represented only 1 in 8 patients in the "all other" category. The average length of stay for white patients was less than for all other patients in each age group. Deliveries represented a smaller proportion of total discharges for white pa-

tients than for all other patients, 9.3 percent and 15.8 percent, respectively (figure 2).

Variations were apparent in hospital utilization by geographic region. The number and rate of discharges and average length of stay are presented by region and age in table 3. The rate of discharges per 1,000 population varied from 139.3 in the West Region to 166.3 in the North Central Region. The average length of stay ranged from 6.3 days in the West to 9.1 days in the Northeast Region. Average length of stay for each age group was also shortest in the West and longest in the Northeast Region.

The number of discharges, percent distribution, and days of care provided are shown in table 4 by bed size and type of ownership. Discharges varied from 5.4 million for hospitals with 200-299 beds to 7.5 million



for those with 300-499 beds. The average length of stay varied directly with the size of the hospital—being lowest in hospitals with less than 100 beds, 6.3 days, and increasing steadily to 9.0 days in hospitals with 500 beds or more (table 5).

Voluntary nonprofit hospitals, including those operated by church groups and by other nonprofit organizations, accounted for 72.8 percent of all discharges in 1972. Those hospitals operated by State and local governments provided 21.1 percent and privately owned proprietary hospitals, 6.1 percent (table 4). The distribution of days of care was similar to that of the discharges. Length of stay was shortest in the proprietary hospitals and longest in the voluntary nonprofit ones.

Of all the estimated 31.6 million patients discharged in 1972, 96.8 percent or 30.6 million, were discharged alive. Patients discharged dead averaged 12.5 days stay compared to 7.6 days for those discharged alive. This is not unexpected since patients discharged dead are likely to have been admitted with conditions characterized by a severe degree of morbidity.

Table 3. Number and rate of inpatients discharged from short-stay hospitals and average length of stay, by geographic region and age: United States, 1972

[Excludes newborn infants and Federal hospitals]

Age	All regions	Northeast	North Central	South	West
Number of discharges in thousands					
All ages-----	31,627	7,120	9,434	10,179	4,894
Under 15 years-----	4,174	871	1,375	1,343	585
15-44 years-----	13,331	2,935	3,874	4,368	2,154
45-64 years-----	7,488	1,806	2,237	2,264	1,180
65 years and over-----	6,634	1,507	1,948	2,204	975
Rate of discharges per 1,000 population					
All ages-----	154.9	145.3	166.3	160.7	139.3
Under 15 years-----	73.7	67.3	86.1	75.0	59.7
15-44 years-----	156.0	146.2	163.6	164.4	142.4
45-64 years-----	177.2	164.8	194.4	178.5	166.3
65 years and over-----	332.9	299.3	349.4	355.4	313.1
Average length of stay in days					
All ages-----	7.7	9.1	8.0	7.3	6.3
Under 15 years-----	4.5	5.0	4.6	4.4	3.6
15-44 years-----	5.7	6.3	6.0	5.5	4.7
45-64 years-----	9.3	10.9	9.6	8.6	7.6
65 years and over-----	12.2	14.8	12.5	11.3	10.0

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Table 4. Number and percent distribution of inpatients discharged from short-stay hospitals and of days of care, by bed size and type of ownership of hospitals: United States, 1972

[Excludes newborn infants and Federal hospitals]

Bed size and type of ownership	Discharges		Days of care	
	Number in thousands	Percent distribution	Number in thousands	Percent distribution
All hospitals-----	31,627	100.0	245,060	100.0
<u>BED SIZE</u>				
6-99 beds-----	6,825	21.6	43,208	17.6
100-199 beds-----	5,909	18.7	42,945	17.5
200-299 beds-----	5,385	17.0	42,395	17.3
300-499 beds-----	7,509	23.7	62,585	25.5
500 beds or more-----	6,000	19.0	53,928	22.0
<u>TYPE OF OWNERSHIP</u>				
Voluntary nonprofit-----	23,014	72.8	183,152	74.7
Government-----	6,685	21.1	49,517	20.2
Proprietary-----	1,928	6.1	12,392	5.1

Table 5. Average length of stay of inpatients discharged from short-stay hospitals, by bed size and type of ownership of hospitals and age: United States, 1972

[Excludes newborn infants and Federal hospitals]

Bed size and type of ownership	All ages	Under 15 years	15-44 years	45-64 years	65 years and over
	All hospitals-----	7.7	4.5	5.7	9.3
Average length of stay in days					
<u>BED SIZE</u>					
6-99 beds-----	6.3	3.5	4.3	6.9	10.4
100-199 beds-----	7.3	4.2	5.1	8.5	12.1
200-299 beds-----	7.9	4.4	5.7	9.5	12.7
300-499 beds-----	8.3	4.5	6.2	10.2	13.2
500 beds or more-----	9.0	5.9	7.0	11.0	13.7
<u>TYPE OF OWNERSHIP</u>					
Voluntary nonprofit-----	8.0	4.5	5.8	9.5	12.6
Government-----	7.4	4.7	5.6	9.0	11.5
Proprietary-----	6.4	3.3	4.9	7.2	10.5

Technical Notes

SOURCE OF DATA. The Hospital Discharge Survey collects data on patients discharged from noninstitutional short-stay hospitals located in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. This report excludes data for newborn infants and discharges from Federal hospitals. Information in this report is based on a sample of about 225,000 abstracts of medical records of patients discharged from a national sample of 424 short-stay hospitals that participated in the survey in 1972.

SAMPLING ERRORS. The estimates presented are subject to sampling error since a sample rather than the entire population has been surveyed. The standard errors appropriate for the estimates of the number of discharges are shown in table I and those for days of care are shown in table II.

Table I. APPROXIMATE STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF DISCHARGES

Size of estimate	Standard error
200,000-----	12,500
500,000-----	22,000
1,000,000-----	38,000
5,000,000-----	160,000
10,000,000-----	310,000
20,000,000-----	610,000
30,000,000-----	900,000

Table II. APPROXIMATE STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF DAYS OF CARE

Size of estimate	Standard error
1,000,000-----	122,000
5,000,000-----	270,000
10,000,000-----	400,000
50,000,000-----	1,125,000
100,000,000-----	1,920,000
200,000,000-----	3,420,000
300,000,000-----	5,100,000

ROUNDING. Due to rounding, detailed figures within tables may not add to totals. Rates, percents, and average lengths of stay presented were computed from unrounded numbers.

DEFINITIONS. *Short-stay hospitals* are general and short-term special hospitals that have six beds or more for inpatients use and an average length of stay of less than 30 days.

A *patient* or *inpatient* is a person who has been formally admitted to the inpatient service of a short-stay hospital for observation, care, diagnosis, or treatment.

A *discharge* is the formal release of an inpatient by a hospital, that is, the termination of a period of hospitalization by death or by disposition to place of residence, nursing home, or another hospital. The number of discharges does not correspond to persons hospitalized since some patients were hospitalized more than once during the calendar year. "Discharges" and "patients (or inpatients) discharged" are used synonymously.

Discharge rate is the ratio of the number of hospital discharges during a specified year to the number of persons in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population as of July 1 of the specific year.

Days of care denotes the total number of inpatient days accumulated at time of discharge by patients discharged from short-stay hospitals. A stay of less than 1 day (inpatient admission and discharge on the same day) is counted as 1 day in the summation of total days of care.

Rate of days of care is the ratio of the number of inpatient days accumulated by patients discharged during a specified year to the number of persons in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population as of July 1 of the specific year.

Average length of stay is the total number of inpatient days accumulated by patients at time of discharge during a specified year divided by the number of patients discharged.

Color of patient is designated as either "white" or "all other." Mexican and Puerto Ricans are considered white unless specifically identified as a member of another color category.