JQ15 – Hospital beds by function and type

Hospital beds data is compiled by the Department of Health as part of the Non-Monetary Health Care Statistics, administered jointly by Eurostat, OECD and WHO in fulfilment of the European regulation (EU) 2022/2294. These statistics are compiled and published on an annual basis and refer to the stock of beds by their function and type, as at end of the reference year.

Source:

Data is compiled from the Health Service Executive (https://www.hse.ie/eng/), the Department of Health (https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-health/), the Mental Health Commission (https://www.mhcirl.ie/) and the Health Research Board (https://www.hrb.ie/) administrative records.

Definitions:

Hospital beds refer to those beds which are regularly maintained and staffed and immediately available for the care of admitted patients. Both occupied and unoccupied beds are included in this concept. Excluded are recovery trolleys and beds for same day care (day case care and outpatient care), as well as provisional and temporary beds.

Year (or also referred to as data reference year) is taken as at end of year (i.e. 31st December).

Type of function refers to the function of intended type of care use of the bed. The types of functions are defined as follows:

i. **Beds for curative care function** – refers to the beds aimed at or used for healthcare services where the principal intent is to relieve symptoms or to reduce the severity of an illness or injury, or to protect against complication that could threaten life or normal function.
ii. **Beds for long-term care function** – refers to the beds aimed at or used for the range of medical and personal care services that are consumed with the primary goal of alleviating pain and suffering and reducing or managing the deterioration in health status in patients with a degree of long-term dependency.
iii. **Beds for rehabilitative care function** – refers to the beds aimed at or used for the services to stabilise, improve or restore impaired body functions and structures, compensate for the absence or loss of body functions and structures, improve activities and participation and prevent impairments, medical complications and risks.
iv. **Beds for other care function** – refers to beds aimed at or used for any other healthcare service not classified above.

Bed type refers to the type of care that the bed is being assigned and/or used for. The types categories are as follows:

i. **Psychiatric care type beds** – refers to beds in hospitals accommodating patients with mental health problems. Beds for social long-term care are excluded.
ii. **Somatic care type beds** – refers to beds in hospitals that are not classified as being for curative care, rehabilitative care or long-term care.

Unit refers to the unit of measure applied, which in this case refers to a numerical count of beds in each respective category as at end of the data reference year.

Value refers to the amount of number of beds falling within their respective categories as at the end of the respective data reference year.

Flag indicates any particular caution or issues with the data worth of note for further data use. The following flags may be applied, along with their definition:

- **Flag M** indicates that the value is missing as it was not collected for that particular instance. This may be due to legal requirements, unavailability of data or data quality issues, among many reasons.
- **Flag B** indicates that the values from that data reference point onwards are not directly comparable with previous data points due to methodological issues which are explained in the coverage section below.
- **Flag E** indicates that the particular data point is based on an estimate and should be compares with other non-estimate data points with caution. Estimation methods applies are explained in the coverage section below.
- **Flag S** indicates that the particular data point has been supressed for confidentiality and/or quality purposes, such as; very small counts or very high variation. This should not be treated as a true zero. Whenever a value is a true zero, this has been indicated and not supressed.

Coverage:

Data refers to all beds (excluding recovery trolleys, beds for same day care), provisional beds and temporary beds) in public/private acute hospitals and psychiatric hospitals, for the use of; curative care, rehabilitative care, long-term care and any other relevant type of care beds not specified.

Estimation:

Not applicable.

Breaks in series:

Data prior to reference year 2015 includes only bed figures from public acute and psychiatric hospitals. From data reference 2015 onwards, figures include beds in private acute hospitals.

Suppression:

Not applicable.

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Period of time	As at end of year from 2009-2021.