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Glossary

ABS – Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Acute myocardial infarction (AMI) – Commonly known as a heart attack, an AMI is an interruption of blood supply to a part of the heart, which causes heart cells to die.

Age-standardisation – A method of adjusting data to correct for differences in population age structures when comparing disease and mortality rates for different periods of time, different geographic areas and/or different population sub-groups.

AIHW – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Angina – Chest pain due to an inadequate supply of oxygen to the heart muscle.

Appropriateness – In performance measurement terms, the extent to which effective care was delivered in accordance with patients' needs.

Asthma – An inflammatory disease of the air passages, making them prone to narrowing and increased mucus production. It becomes difficult to move air in and out of the lungs. Symptoms include wheeze, shortness of breath, chest tightness and cough.

Atherosclerosis – A process where a fatty deposit (plaque) builds up in the lining of the arteries. Atherosclerosis is most serious when it affects the blood supply to the heart (causing angina or heart attack) or to the brain (which can lead to stroke).

BMI (body mass index) – Calculated from height and weight information, using the formula weight (kg) divided by the square of height (m). BMI values are grouped according to the table.

Body Mass Index (ADULT)

Underweight	Less than 18.5
Normal range	18.5 to less than 25.0
Overweight	25.0 to less than 30.0
Obese	30.0 and greater

Note: ABS definitions

Separate BMI classifications were produced for children. BMI scores were created taking into account the age and sex of the child.

Cancer – A group of diseases characterised by the uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells.

Caesarean section – The surgical delivery of a baby through the mother's abdomen.

Cholesterol – Cholesterol is a fatty substance found in the blood. Produced primarily in the liver, cholesterol is essential for the production of hormones, vitamin D and bile and is important for protecting nerves and in cell structure. Cholesterol is carried from the liver to the rest of the body in low density lipoproteins (LDL, or "**bad**" cholesterol) and back to the liver in high density lipoproteins (HDL, or "**good**" cholesterol). High levels of LDL cholesterol are associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease.

Circulatory disease – Disorders that affect the heart and blood vessels (including stroke and heart attack).

COAG – Council of Australian Governments

Community care (mental health) – Specialised public psychiatric services delivered in a community setting. It includes residential and non-residential psychiatric services which provide specialised treatment, rehabilitation or care for people affected by a mental illness or a psychiatric disability.

COPD – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. COPD refers to chronic bronchitis and emphysema, which are co-existing diseases of the lungs in which the airways become narrowed. This narrowing leads to a limitation of the flow of air to and from the lungs causing shortness of breath. In clinical practice, COPD is defined by its characteristically low airflow on lung function tests. In contrast to asthma, this limitation is poorly reversible and usually gets progressively worse over time.

ED – Emergency Department.

Effectiveness – In performance measurement terms, the use of medical treatments, services and preventive actions that are known to improve health.

Elective surgery – Any form of surgery that a patient's doctor believes to be necessary but which can be delayed by at least 24 hours.

End-stage renal disease (ESRD) – A condition characterised by the complete, or almost complete, failure of the kidneys to function. The main role of the kidneys is to remove waste and excess water from the body. Patients with ESRD require dialysis or a kidney transplant to replace lost kidney function. The most common underlying causes are diabetes and high blood pressure.

GP – General practitioner.

HbA1c – Also known as glycated or glycosylated haemoglobin, HbA1c levels reflect blood glucose (sugar) concentration over the preceding two to three months. Measuring HbA1c in diabetic patients shows how well the blood glucose level has been controlled in the recent past.

HOIST – Health Outcomes Information and Statistical Toolkit. The HOIST system refers to a data access, analysis and reporting facility established and operated by the Centre For Epidemiology and Research, Public Health Division, NSW Ministry of Health.

Hospitalisation – The act of placing a person into the care of a hospital. In this report, the number of hospitalisations is defined by the number of '*separations*' (see separations).

Hypertension – Also called high blood pressure, a chronic condition in which the systemic arterial blood pressure is elevated.

Hysterectomy – The surgical removal of the womb (uterus), with or without the removal of the ovaries.

Incidence – The number of new cases of a condition, symptom, death, or injury that develop during a specific time period, such as a year. The number is often expressed as a percentage of a population.

Income-associated gap – A measure of differences in patient survey responses associated with income levels. The income-associated gap is calculated by stratifying a survey population by income levels and calculating the percentage point difference in mean responses between those with above-average and below-average income.

Life expectancy – The average number of years that a person can be expected to live.

Mortality – A measure of deaths in the population. For Australia, the ABS publishes cause of death data 15 months after the reference period. These data are categorised as '*preliminary*'. There is a subsequent process of revisions at 12 months (categorised as '*revised*') and 24 months (categorised as '*final*').

NHA – National Healthcare Agreement. A bilateral five-year agreement between the Australian Government and each state and territory.

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. An international organisation focused on social and economic issues.

Outcome measure – An indicator which gauges whether there have been improvements in health status or determinants of health. Outcome measures can be immediate, intermediate or long-term in their time horizon.

Out-of-hours – Outside of normal office working hours (i.e. 8:00am to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday).

Potentially preventable hospitalisations (PPH) – Admissions to hospital which could have been avoided with access to quality primary care and preventive care. Include a range of: vaccine-preventable (e.g. tetanus); acute (e.g. dehydration); and chronic (e.g. asthma) conditions.

Prevalence – The number of cases of a specific disease present in a given population at a certain time.

Process measure – An indicator which gauges whether healthcare delivered to patients is consistent with standards or clinical guidelines, or evidence has shown to be associated with improved health.

PYLL – Potential Years of Life Lost. A summary measure of premature mortality calculated by totalling deaths occurring at each age and multiplying this figure by the number of remaining years of life up to a selected age limit.

RACGP – Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Rehabilitation – Restoration of skills to a person who has had an illness or injury so as to regain maximum self-sufficiency and function.

Relative survival – The percentage of patients with a disease that are alive five years after diagnosis divided by the percentage of the general population of corresponding sex and age that are alive after five years.

Renal dialysis – An artificial replacement for lost kidney function in people with renal failure. It involves a process of diffusing blood across a semipermeable membrane to remove substances that a normal kidney would eliminate, including poisons, drugs, urea, uric acid, and creatinine. For chronic kidney disease, renal dialysis is required at regular intervals.

Respiratory disease – The respiratory system supplies the blood with oxygen for delivery to all parts of the body. It includes the airways and the lungs. Respiratory disease comprises both acute (e.g. influenza and pneumonia) and chronic (e.g. chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma) conditions.

Rurality-associated gap – A measure of differences in patient survey responses associated with where they live. The rurality-associated gap is calculated by stratifying a survey population into urban and rural dwellers and calculating the percentage point difference in mean responses between those groups.

Separation – The process by which an admitted patient completes an episode of care either by being discharged, dying, transferring to another hospital or changing the type of care (for example, changing from being recorded as an acute patient to a rehabilitation patient). As a person can have multiple '*separations*' within the same hospitalisation period, separations are not the same as '*admissions*'.

Sicker adults – A term used to describe a group of patients who are likely to have had significant direct experience of the healthcare system in the recent past. It includes patients who met at least one of the following criteria:

- Described their overall health as fair or poor
- Received medical care in the previous year for a serious or chronic illness, injury or disability
- Hospitalised in the previous two years (for any reason other than childbirth)
- Had surgery in the previous two years.

Stroke (or *cerebrovascular accident*) – The sudden death of part of the brain, caused by disruption to blood flow and brain cells being deprived of oxygen.

Vaccination – Injection or ingestion of an agent that resembles a disease-causing microorganism, often made from weakened or killed forms of the microbe or its toxins. The agent stimulates the body's immune system to recognise the agent as foreign, destroy it, and '*remember*' it, so that the immune system can more easily recognise and destroy any of these microorganisms that it later encounters.