

Recent expansion of free standing day procedure centres in Australia

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The first modern sophisticated free standing day surgery centre was built in Dandenong, Victoria in 1982 and this was followed soon after by the Campbelltown Day surgery Centre, Sydney, which is one of the very few free standing day surgery centres in a public hospital (it is a separate building close to and linked by an enclosed passageway to the main hospital building). There was only slow development of other day surgery centers during the remainder of the 1980s.

Over the past five years, however, there has been a marked increase in the number of free standing day surgery/endoscopy/medical centres. In January 1993 there were 83 free standing day procedure centres registered with the Commonwealth Department of health, however by January 1996 these had increased to 139. The various types of day procedure centres are listed in Table 1 and it is interesting to note, in particular, the significant increase in general and eye day surgery centres.

Many private hospitals, but fewer public hospitals, have developed specific day surgery units, only a small

Table 2
Free standing day procedure centres in Australia - 1996

Population 18 000 000	
N.S.W.	75
Victoria	22
Queensland	16
South Australia	10
Western Australia	10
A.C.T.	5
Tasmania	1
	139

number being dedicated free functioning units/centres. Recently, however, an increasing number of hospitals have built dedicated free functioning day surgery units/centres e.g. The Adventist Hospital, Sydney (Private), The Mater Hospital, Sydney (Private), The Children's Hospital, Westmead (Public), and Liverpool Hospital, Sydney (Public). The efficiency and cost savings of day surgery are best achieved in these dedicated units.

Initially, most of the day procedure centres were located in the eastern States however in recent years they have expanded into all States. The distribution of these centres, on a State basis, is indicated in Table 2.

In the future, as more major procedures are carried out as day surgery, the concept of hotel style extended recovery units together with the expansion of community home nursing services will need to be addressed. One such hotel style, extended recovery unit (10 beds) has been developed at Surgicentre, Perth, 1995.

All interested organisations and Government should seriously consider the development of these recovery units at both free standing and hospital based day surgery centres to stimulate the expansion of day surgery to reach its maximum potential and improve the quality of care for day surgery patients.

Table 1
Freestanding day procedures centres in Australia

Population 18 million	Jan 93	Jan 96
Day Surgery Centres	36	67
Endoscopy Centres	23	29
Day Plastic Surgery	10	7
Day Eye Surgery	3	18
Day ENT Surgery	—	1
Day Medical Centres	11	17
In Vitro Fertilization	2	3
Oncology	1	1
Cardiac Clinic	1	1
Sleep Disorders	1	2
Sports Medicine	1	1
Rehabilitation	1	—
Dental	—	1
Medical/Diagnostic	4	8
Total	83	139