

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND**  
**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**  
**2011-12 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** 7

**Question No:** 231

**Topic:** Monitoring Report

**Hansard Page:** 3 June 2011, CA 8

**Senator Siewert** asked:

Please provide the hospitalisation data for children (broken down by condition), as has been reported in previous Indigenous Expenditure Reports.

**Answer:**

See Attachment A: Table 1a: Indigenous hospital separations (excluding dialyses), by selected principal diagnosis aged 0–14 years, Northern Territory, 2001–02 to 2008–09. The table presents the data as absolute or raw numbers.

Data Note: In line with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) rules around raw number small cell size suppression, if a cell contains 5 or fewer counts it is suppressed and if the table only has two cells in a row/column and one cell is suppressed the other also has to be suppressed as you would be able to figure out the value given the total.

The latest NTER Monitoring Report June-December 2010 presents data as a rate per 1,000 children. Presenting absolute numbers rather than a rate has limitations. Hospital separations may increase or decrease for reasons unrelated to changes in the health status of children. For example, the population of children may be going up or there may be changes occurring in the availability or type of treatment either in hospital or in a community setting. Data from one or two years may also be different to the long term trend because of random variation. To help identify real change that may be attributable to underlying change in the rate of health conditions among children, it is desirable to use data over a longer time period and to take account of underlying population change.

It was with these considerations in mind, that the Department of Health and Ageing asked the AIHW to produce a customised version of hospitalisation data from National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework for the Northern Territory. This was included in the latest closing the Gap in the NT Monitoring Report.