

## THE NEW ZEALAND OFFICIAL YEAR-BOOK, 1955

### 5 C—MENTAL HOSPITALS

THE legislative authority relating to mental hospitals is the Mental Health Act 1911 and its amendments, its administration under the direction of the Minister of Health devolving upon the Mental Hygiene Division of the Department of Health. Hospital Boards have no jurisdiction over mental hospitals which are under the direct control of the Mental Hygiene Division.

There are eleven public mental hospitals in New Zealand maintained wholly or in part out of the public revenue. There is also one private hospital licensed for the reception of the mentally afflicted.

The patients on the register at the end of 1953 were distributed as shown below. Numbers given throughout this subsection are inclusive of Maoris. Figures for Maoris are also given separately toward the end of the subsection.

Statistics showing the numbers of voluntary patients are excluded from the following series of tables, though they are given later under the appropriate heading.

Mental Hospital	Males	Females	Totals
Auckland	753	740	1,493
Kingseat (Papakura)	465	453	918
Raventhorpe (Drury)	12	258	270
Tokanui	447	427	874
Lake Alice (Marton)	165	..	165
Levin Farm	228	82	310
Porirua	576	796	1,372
Nelson	582	477	1,059
Seaview (Hokitika)	229	306	535
Sunnyside (Christchurch)	756	792	1,548
Seacliff, Waitati, and Cherry Farm	637	533	1,170
Ashburn Hall (private mental hospital)	15	13	28
Totals	4,865	4,877	9,742

The number of patients remaining at the end of each of the last five years is shown in the following table. During the period covered by the table the number of patients shows an increase of 708, or 7.8 per cent, but the proportion per 10,000 of population has fallen from 48.27 to 47.77.

Year	Patients Remaining at 31 December			Proportion per 10,000 of Mean Population		
	Males	Females	Totals	Males	Females	Totals
1949	4,686	4,348	9,034	49.92	46.59	48.27
1950	4,724	4,445	9,169	49.30	46.75	48.03
1951	4,758	4,537	9,295	48.66	46.79	47.73
1952	4,797	4,648	9,445	47.81	46.82	47.32
1953	4,865	4,877	9,742	47.22	47.88	47.55
Average of five years	4,766	4,571	9,337	48.55	46.98	47.77

The total number of patients under supervision, care, or control during 1952 and 1953 was 11,267 (5,654 males and 5,613 females) and 11,639 (5,770 males and 5,869 females) respectively. The average number resident in mental hospitals was 8,584 in 1952, and 8,783 in 1953.

**ADMISSIONS.**—The total admissions to mental hospitals during the year 1953 was 1,928 (864 males and 1,064 females), this number not including 266 transfers from one institution to another. A new system of compilation of statistics of patients treated in mental hospitals was introduced in 1953, together with a new classification of causes of mental illness based on the International Classification issued by the World Health Organization. Statistics of the principal causes of admission are therefore not strictly comparable with previous years. The figures given in the following table relate to first admissions only.

Cause	1953
Heredity	63
Other natal and pre-natal influences	143
Puerperal state	22
Other emotional stress or trauma	119
Senility	339
Epilepsy	28
Syphilis	5
Factors in the structure of the personality	142
Alcohol	55
Organic brain disease	8

Cause	1953
Other disease, injury, or illness of patient	124
Other factors	7
Cause of mental illness unknown	397
Total	1,452

Of the 1,928 persons admitted to mental hospitals during 1953 those admitted for the first time to any mental hospital in New Zealand numbered 1,452 (662 males, 790 females), and those readmitted 476 (202 males, 274 females). First admissions for the year 1952 totalled 1,419 (663 males and 756 females), and readmissions 338 (122 males and 216 females).

The figures for 1953 represent one first admission for every 1,411 persons of the mean population of New Zealand. The number of first admissions and the rate per 10,000 of mean population for each of the last five years were as follows.

Year	Number of First Admissions			Proportion per 10,000 of Mean Population		
	Males	Females	Totals	Males	Females	Totals
1949	514	632	1,146	5.48	6.77	6.12
1950	547	658	1,205	5.71	6.92	6.31
1951	574	709	1,283	5.87	7.31	6.59
1952	663	756	1,419	6.61	7.61	7.11
1953	662	790	1,452	6.43	7.76	7.09
Average of five years	592	709	1,301	6.03	7.29	6.66

**AGES OF INMATES.**—A summary is now given showing the ages of patients admitted to mental hospitals during the year 1953. The figures include voluntary boarders.

Age in Years	Males	Females	Totals
Under 10	36	23	59
10 and under 20	86	66	152
20 and under 30	266	299	565
30 and under 40	275	342	617
40 and under 50	190	234	424
50 and under 60	179	208	387
60 and under 70	157	205	362
70 and under 80	158	197	355
80 and over	70	91	161

Age in Years	Males	Females	Totals
Age not stated	16	8	24
Totals	1,433	1,673	3,106

Probably symptomatic to some extent of the ageing of the New Zealand population, the number of patients aged sixty years or over has attained a high proportion of admissions during recent years. Of those admitted to mental hospitals during 1953, patients in this age group numbered 878—i.e., 28.3 per cent of the total.

**DISCHARGES AND DEATHS.**—The next table gives the average number resident, those who were discharged as recovered, and those who died, during the period 1949–53.

Year	Average Number Resident	Discharged as Recovered		Died	
		Number	Percentage of Number Admitted	Number	Percentage of Average Number Resident
1949	8,287	511	34.48	549	6.64
1950	8,384	558	36.64	616	7.35
1951	8,507	583	36.59	635	7.46
1952	8,584	609	34.66	752	8.76
1953	8,783	699	36.26	610	6.95
Average of five years	8,509	592	35.73	632	7.43

The recovery rate has been satisfactorily maintained, particularly when it is considered that approximately 20 per cent of admissions suffer from senility and a further 5 per cent suffer from heredity conditions.

Old age and diseases of the circulatory and respiratory systems are the principal causes of death among mental hospital patients. The figures for the principal causes and groups of causes for the year 1953 are as follows.

Cause	1953
Tuberculosis	16
Syphilis (including 3 general paralysis of insane)	5
Other infective and parasitic diseases	3
Malignant neoplasms	18
Diseases of metabolism, endocrine system, and haematopoietic system	4
Mental disorders	17

Cause	1953
Epilepsy	10
Other diseases of the nervous system	5
Arteriosclerosis and hypertensive disease	275
Other cardiovascular disease	42
Diseases of the respiratory system	66
Diseases of the digestive system	8
Diseases of the genito-urinary system	3
Puerperal causes	1
Senility	62
Trauma and poisoning	9
Other and ill-defined diseases	22
Died on probation	44
Total	610

**PRIVATE MENTAL HOSPITAL.**—A licence may be granted to enable a private mental hospital to receive patients for treatment. Stringent conditions are attached to the issue of such a licence, which may be revoked at any time. The Director of the Mental Hygiene Division of the Department of Health has wide powers in the regulation and control of private institutions, which are placed practically on the same footing as public mental hospitals in regard to inspection and other matters.

There is only one licensed private mental institution in New Zealand, that at Wakari (Ashburn Hall), near Dunedin, established in 1882. Particulars for the last five years of admissions, discharges, deaths, and patients remaining, are as follows. These figures are included in preceding tables.

Year	Admissions (Including Transfers)	Discharges (Including Transfers)	Deaths	Patients Remaining at End of Year
1949	15	10	4	30
1950	11	9	2	30
1951	17	14	3	30
1952	16	18	..	28
1953	18	16	2	28

**MAORIS IN MENTAL HOSPITALS.**—The number of Maoris admitted as patients to mental hospitals is small. The figures for the last five years were as follows.

Year	Admitted During Year			Remaining at End of Year		
	Males	Females	Totals	Males	Females	Totals
1949	23	24	47	128	104	232
1950	24	19	43	134	115	249
1951	46	40	86	133	107	240
1952	42	37	79	157	123	280
1953	59	63	122	164	132	296

The above figures are also included in the tables covering all inmates of mental hospitals.

The number of Maoris remaining in mental hospitals at the end of 1953 represented a rate of only 23.84 per 10,000 of the mean Maori population, as compared with a rate of 46.97 in the case of the European population.

**VOLUNTARY PATIENTS.**—A person labouring under mental defect, but capable of understanding the meaning of the procedure, may seek admission to a mental hospital as a voluntary boarder. At the beginning of 1953 there were 525 such patients on the books (231 males, 294 females), and during the year 1,178 (565 males, 613 females) were admitted. If a voluntary boarder should after admission show mental defect sufficiently pronounced and sustained to render it improper to classify him any longer as such, application for a reception order is made to a Magistrate. During the year 1953, 22 (11 males, 11 females) were transferred from the voluntary to the ordinary register, and 21 males and 16 females died, while 1,131 (562 males, 569 females) were discharged, leaving 781 (349 males, 432 females) on the records at the end of the year.

A feature of interest has been the tendency for voluntary admissions to increase, both in absolute numbers and also in proportion to total first admissions. The following series illustrates this trend.

—	Voluntary Patients First Admissions	
	Numbers	Percentage of All First Admissions
1915	32	4.7
1920	64	8.1
1925	123	14.1
1930	236	20.2
1935	217	19.2
1940	252	21.5
1945	359	24.3
1947	534	30.6

—	Voluntary Patients First Admissions	
	Numbers	Percentage of All First Admissions
1948	578	33.8
1949	576	33.4
1950	595	33.1
1951	653	33.7
1952	771	35.2
1953	793	35.3

**EXPENDITURE, ETC.**—The total expenditure on maintenance of public mental hospitals (not including the cost of new buildings and additions) and particulars of receipts during the last eleven financial years are shown in the next table. As from 1 April 1939 free maintenance and treatment have been provided in all public mental hospitals in accordance with the provisions of the Social Security Act 1938. The consequent loss of revenue through the operation of the Act was recoverable from the Social Security Fund, but as from 1 April 1945 such recoveries ceased, and from that date all maintenance expenditure has been borne by the Consolidated Fund. The amounts shown as receipts on account of patients' fees for the years subsequent to 1939–40 represent in part the recovery of accounts outstanding at 31 March 1939. The Mental Health Amendment Act 1950 provides that the cost of maintenance of any person who is not ordinarily resident in New Zealand and who is detained in any public institution shall be a debt due to the Crown. These provisions became effective on and after 23 November 1950.

Year Ended 31 March	Total Expenditure	Receipts			Net Expenditure	Gross Average Cost per Patient		
		Patients' Fees	Sale of Produce, etc.	Social Security Fund		£	s.	d.
	£	£	£	£	£			
1944	766,530	13,218	66,198	183,199	503,915	95	4	2
1945	827,128	8,207	67,433	187,942	563,546	100	6	1
1946	940,167	5,859	70,500	..	863,808	113	8	2
1947	1,072,130	8,228	87,065	..	976,837	128	10	2
1948	1,243,332	8,958	88,397	..	1,145,977	147	12	3
1949	1,476,768	7,993	38,427	..	1,430,348	173	13	11
1950	1,766,659	1,602	177,152	..	1,587,905	203	0	0
1951	1,810,285	2,956	125,771	..	1,681,558	206	2	0
1952	2,288,589	4,983	138,465	..	2,145,141	257	6	0
1953	2,446,344	1,849	55,210	..	2,389,285	272	2	0
1954	2,510,886	1,218	71,528	..	2,438,140	231	8	8

In the period covered by the foregoing table total expenditure increased by £1,744,356, or 227 per cent, while the gross average cost per patient rose by £136 4s. 6d. per annum, or 143 per cent.

As already stated the expenditure included in the foregoing table does not include amounts spent on new buildings, additions, etc., the cost of which is met by the Ministry of Works. The sums spent in this connection fell away considerably in the later war years. Expenditure for the last three financial years, however, has amounted to £259,289 in 1951–52, £382,647 in 1952–53, and £560,275 in 1953–54, while the aggregate expenditure from 1 July 1877 to 31 March 1954 was £5,327,459.