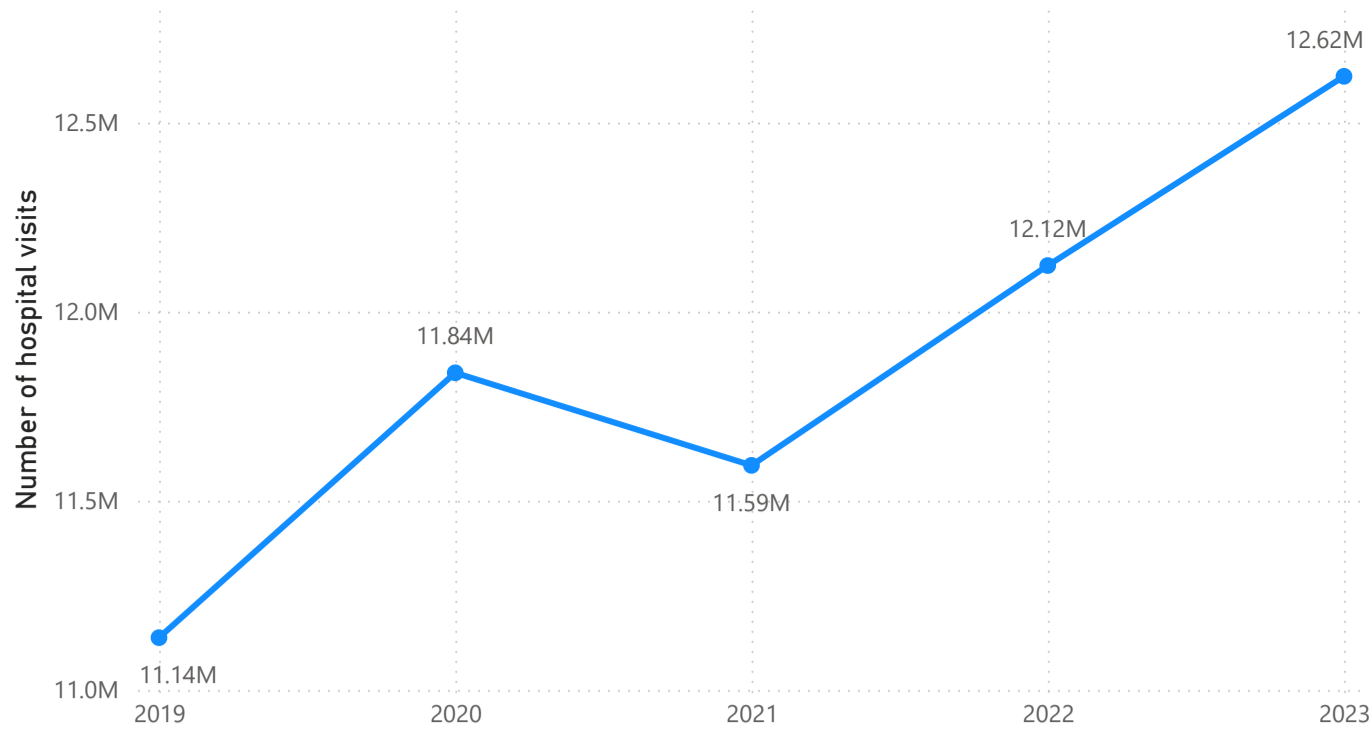


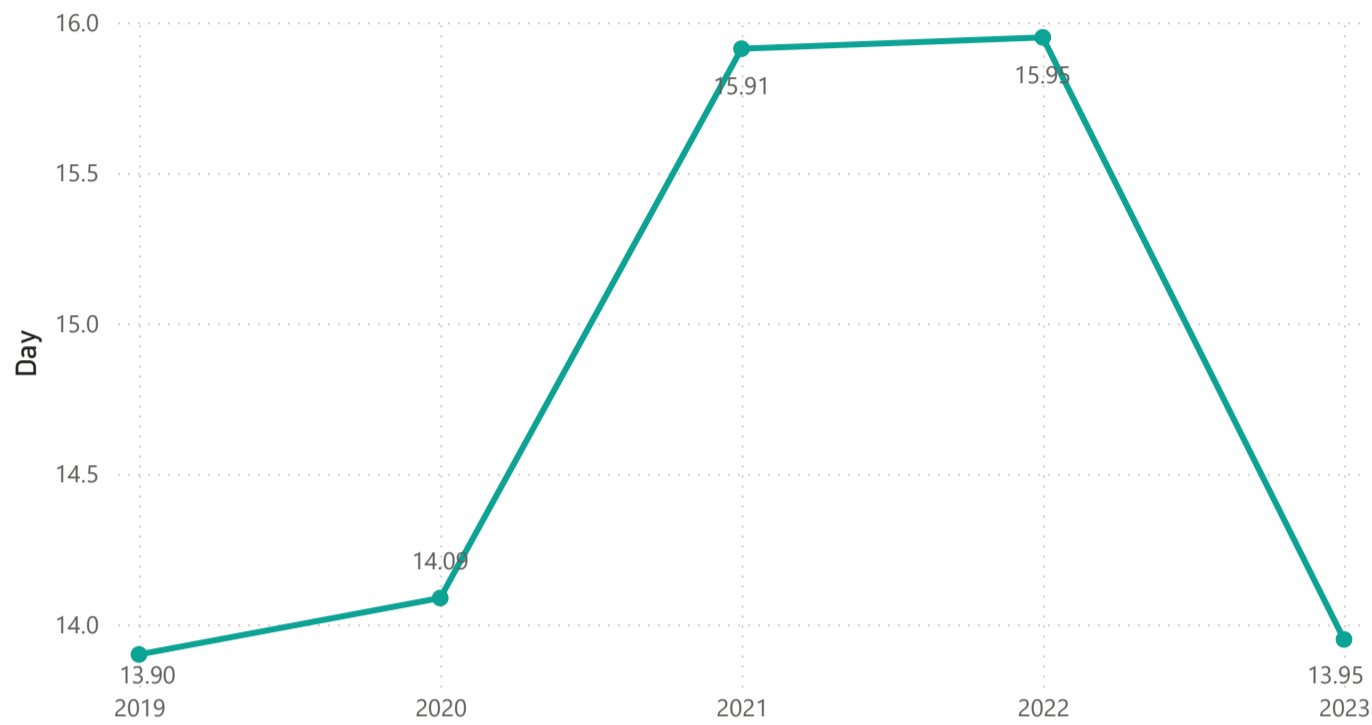
Completed hospital stays in Australia 2019-2024



▲ 1. How has hospital demand in Australia changed from 2019 to 2023? Hospital stays increased from about 11.14 million in 2019 to over 12.6 million in 2023, showing a clear rise in demand for hospital services. Although there was a slight drop in 2021, likely due to COVID-19 disruptions, hospital activity quickly recovered and reached the highest level in 2023.

This trend suggests that pressure on hospitals is growing. Healthcare planners may need to increase capacity, staffing, and resources to meet the rising demand and ensure hospitals can handle future increases in patient admissions.

How Long Patients Stay in Hospital?



▲ 2. Did patients stay longer in hospitals during the COVID-19 years?

The average hospital stay increased significantly during 2021–2022, suggesting hospitals treated more complex cases or experienced operational pressure during the pandemic period. By 2023, the average stay returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Which Australian state has the highest hospital stay rate in 2023-24?



▲ 3. Which state has the highest hospital utilisation?

Queensland has the highest hospital utilisation rate at 507 separations per 1,000 population, followed by Victoria (427.7) and Western Australia (395.4). New South Wales records the lowest rate among the states displayed at 363.3 separations per 1,000 population.

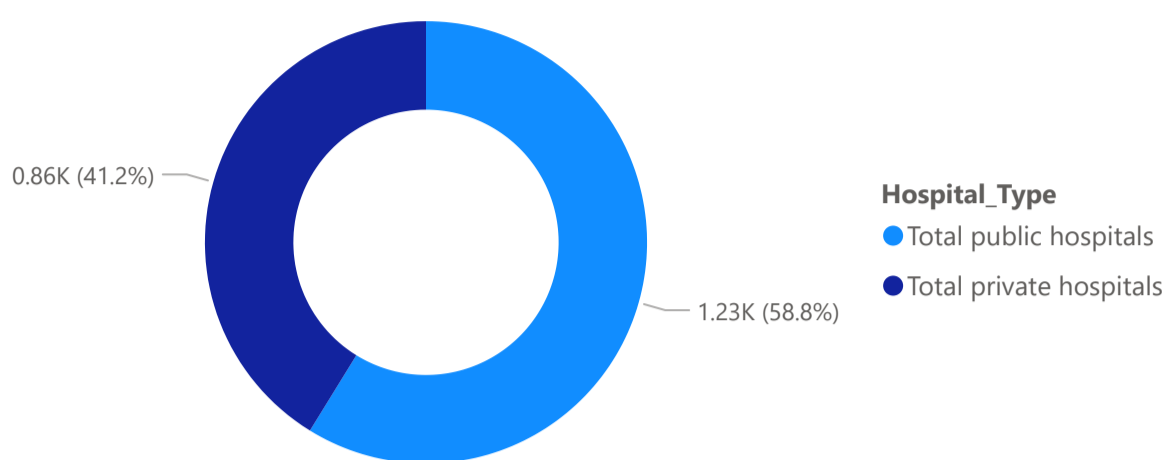
To understand this pattern, further research was conducted. Research from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare suggests that Queensland's higher hospital utilisation is partly due to its large rural and remote population, where access to primary healthcare services is more limited and hospitals are often the main place for treatment. In addition, the Queensland Health reports relatively high levels of potentially preventable hospitalisations, which are admissions for conditions that could often be treated earlier in primary care, contributing to higher overall hospital use.

Understanding Hospital Demand in Australia (2019–2023)

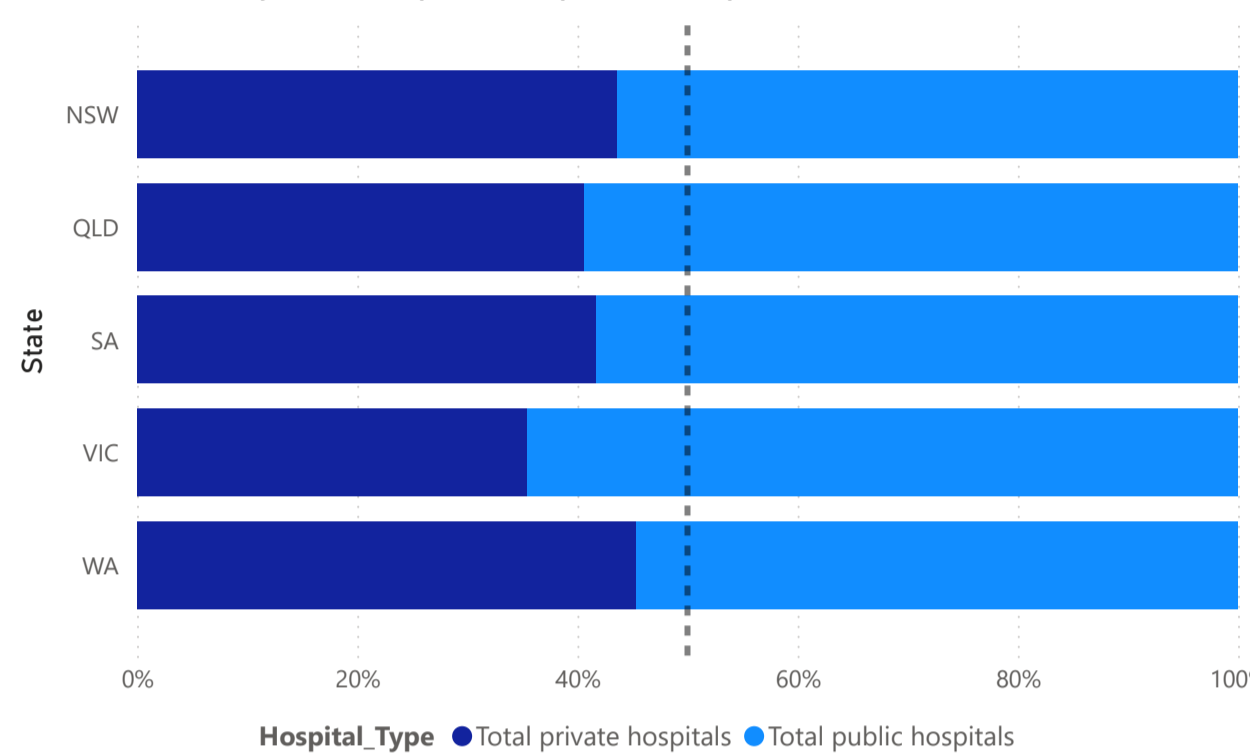
4. Do Australians rely more on public or private hospitals? ▼

Australians rely more heavily on **public hospitals**. In every state, the rate of separations in public hospitals is higher than in private hospitals. For example, in Queensland public hospitals record **301 separations per 1,000 population**, compared with **206 in private hospitals**.

Because most patients depend on public hospitals, governments may need to **increase funding, staffing, and hospital capacity** in the public healthcare system to manage demand and reduce waiting times. Strengthening **primary care and preventive health services** could also help reduce pressure on public hospitals.



Which states rely more on public vs private hospitals in 2023-24?

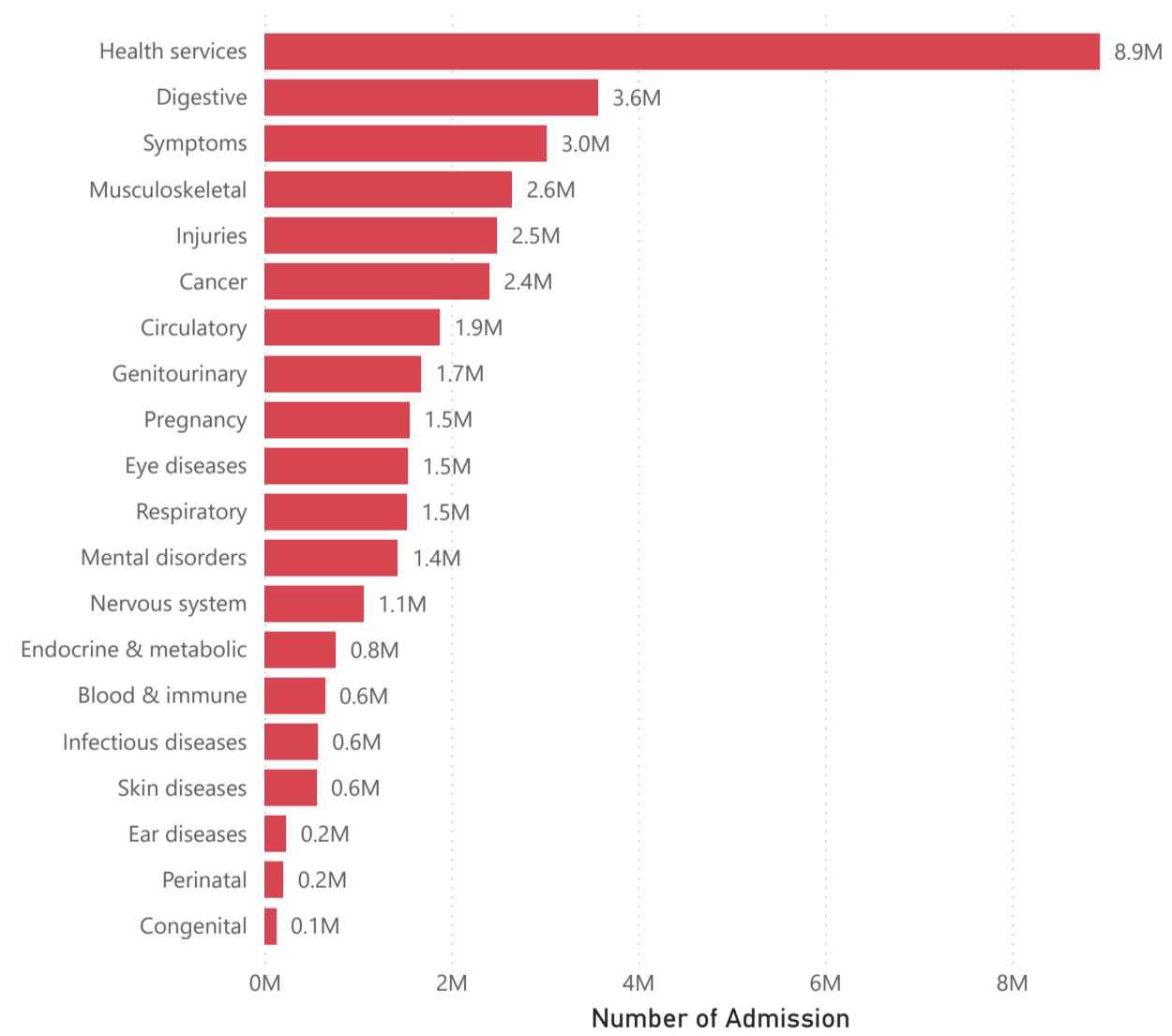


▼ 5. What are the main health conditions leading to hospital admissions?

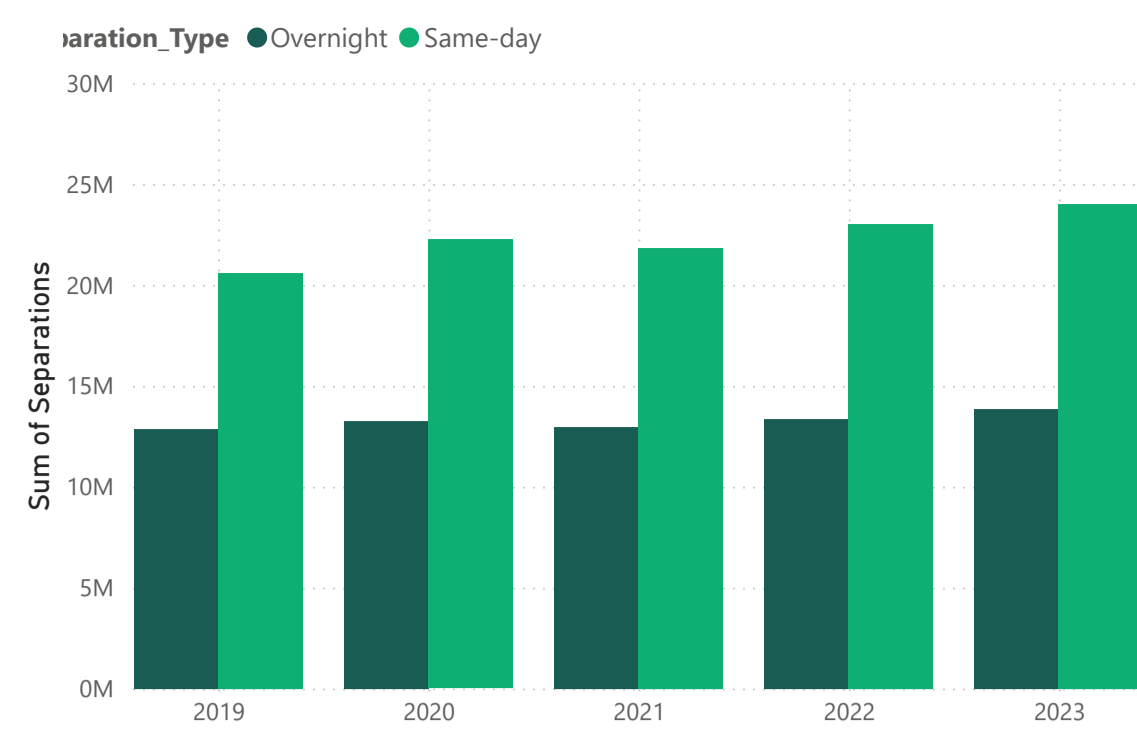
When excluding cases related to healthcare services and follow-up care, **digestive diseases, symptoms and abnormal findings, musculoskeletal conditions, and injuries** are among the most common reasons for hospital admissions. This indicates that both chronic conditions and acute injuries contribute significantly to hospital demand.

Healthcare planners could focus on **preventive care, early diagnosis, and injury prevention programs** to reduce avoidable hospital admissions and improve overall healthcare efficiency.

Which conditions cause the most admissions?



Are most hospital visits in Australia same-day or overnight stays?

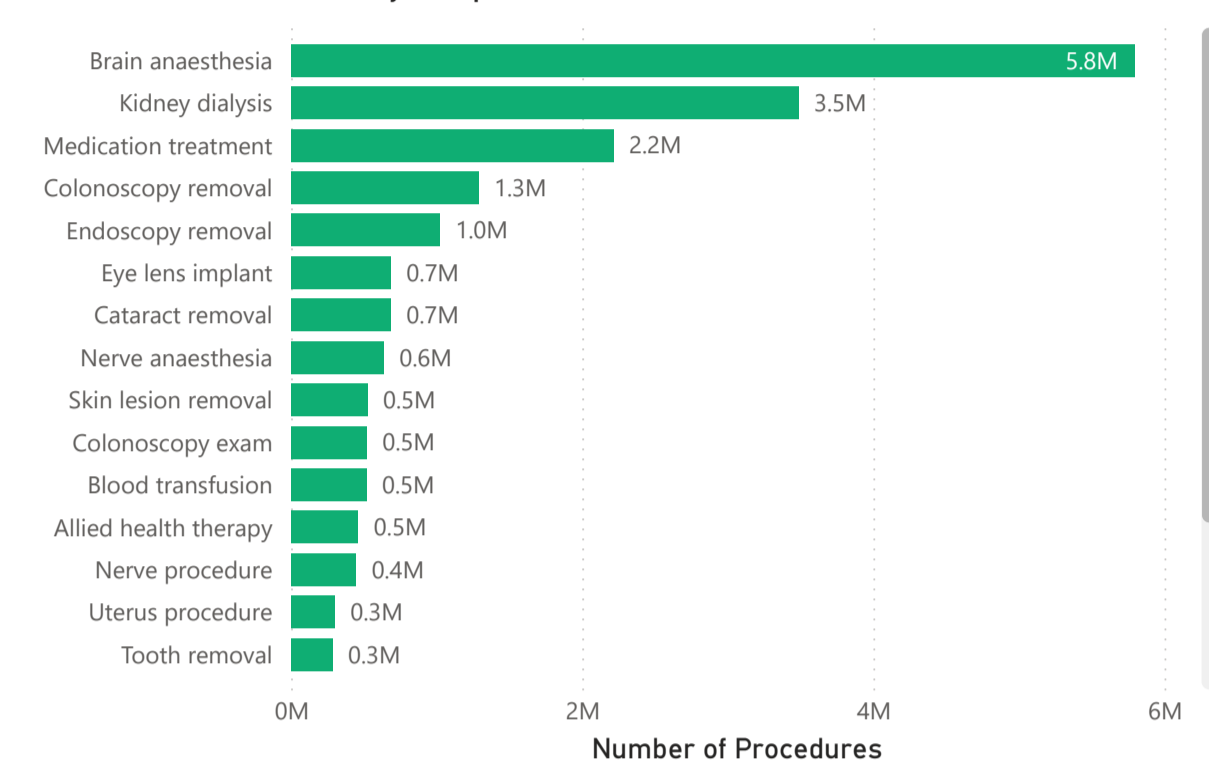


▲ 6. How have same-day and overnight hospital stays changed over time in Australia?

Same-day hospital visits consistently account for the **majority of hospital separations** each year and have steadily increased from around 20 million in 2019 to over 24 million in 2023. Overnight stays are lower but also show a gradual rise over time. This trend suggests that hospitals increasingly rely on **same-day procedures to manage growing patient demand**.

Expanding **day surgery programs and outpatient services** could further improve hospital efficiency and help ensure that inpatient beds remain available for patients requiring more intensive care.

Most Common Same-Day Hospital Procedures in Australia (2023–24)



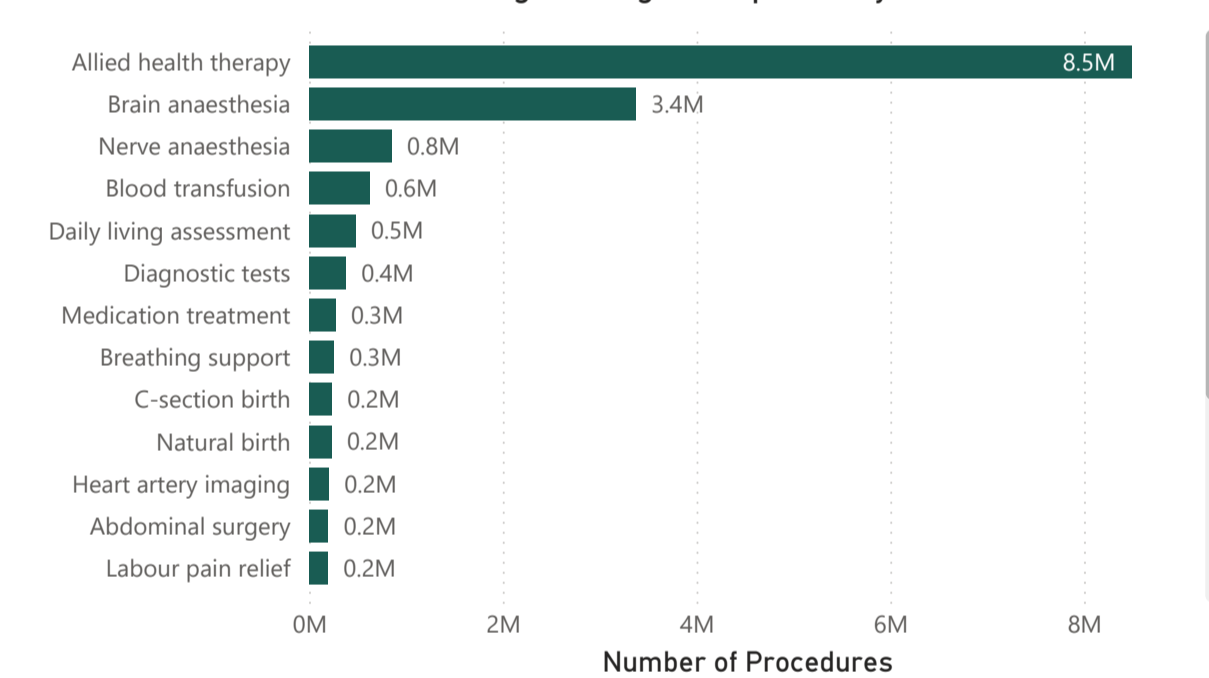
▲ 7. What procedures are most commonly performed during same-day hospital visits in Australia (2023-24)?

The most common same-day hospital procedures include **anaesthesia, haemodialysis, pharmacotherapy, and colonoscopy**, showing that many hospital visits involve routine treatments or diagnostic procedures that do not require overnight admission.

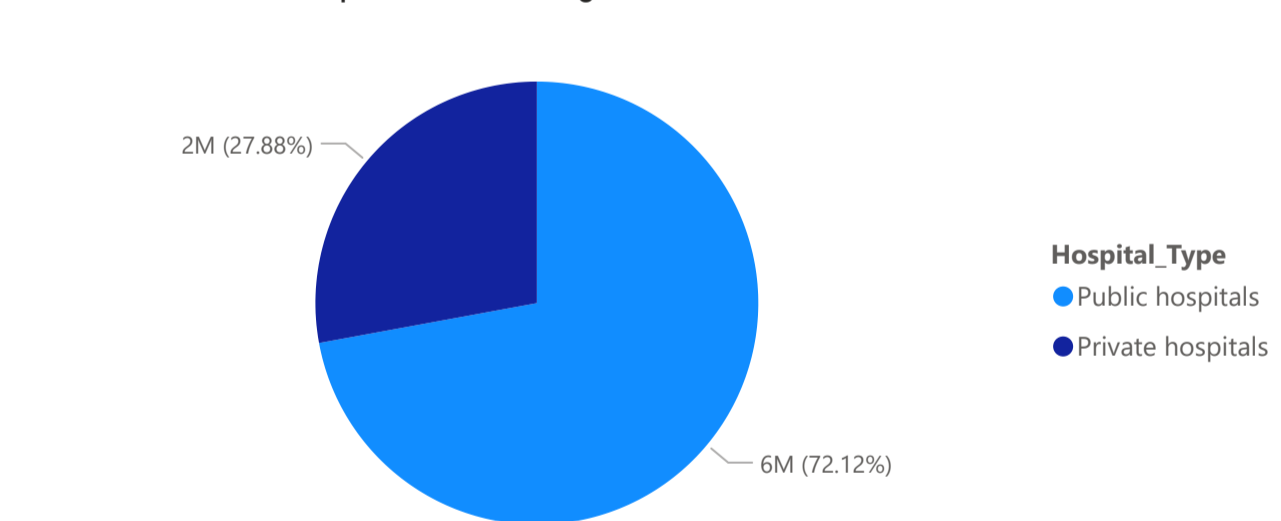
▼ 8. What procedures are most common during overnight hospital stays (2023-24)?

Overnight hospital stays are largely driven by **allied health therapy, anaesthesia, and blood transfusions**, indicating that patients who remain in hospital overnight often require **ongoing treatment, recovery care, or more complex medical support**.

Most Common Procedures During Overnight Hospital Stays (2023–24)



Public vs Private Hospitals for Overnight Admissions (2023–24)



▲ 9. Who Provides Most Overnight Hospital Care in Australia in 2023-24?

Public hospitals account for around **71% of overnight hospital stays**, indicating that Australians rely heavily on the public healthcare system for complex treatments requiring inpatient care.

Because public hospitals manage the majority of overnight care, ensuring adequate **funding, staffing, and bed capacity** is essential to maintain healthcare service quality.