

Overseas Figures

It is impossible to obtain up-to-date figures for most overseas countries. In 1935 it was stated that the average beds per 1,000 of population in eighteen countries was 3·51, the minimum being 1·5 in Japan and the maximum being 5·8 for Sweden. In Germany at that time there were 5·6, in the United States of America 3·9, in England and Wales 5·3, and in Scotland 3·7.

United States of America.—In 1940 thirty States had from 1·5 to 3·9 beds per 1,000 of population. Seventeen States had from 4 to 5·6 beds per 1,000, Nevada had 6·2, and District of Columbia had 10 beds per 1,000, the latter including large Army and veterans' hospitals.

Canada.—In 1940 the following beds per 1,000 population were available, excluding mental, tuberculosis, and Dominion hospitals:—

Province.	Beds per 1,000 Population.
Prince Edward Island	3·0
Nova Scotia	4·6
New Brunswick	3·5
Quebec	4·5
Ontario	4·3
Manitoba	5·5
Saskatchewan	4·8
Alberta	6·6
British Columbia	7·5

The tuberculosis beds were 8,902 in special hospitals and 2,090 included in the above-mentioned acute hospitals, while the Dominion hospitals provided 9,493 beds.

The population of Canada was 11,489,713, so that the tuberculosis and Dominion beds each add less than 1 per 1,000 to the above table.

England and Wales (population, 39,889,000) had in 1939 the following beds:—

Voluntary hospitals	77,000
Local authorities	70,000
Poor law, chronic, sick, &c.	60,000
Isolation, infectious, and smallpox	38,000
Tuberculosis institutions	28,000

i.e., between 6 and 7 beds per 1,000. To these the emergency scheme added some 50,000 beds during the war, some of which are temporary.

Apart from New Zealand, the two countries which appear to have the highest number of beds are Norway, with rather over 8 beds per 1,000, and Australia, with 8 beds per 1,000, made up as follows:—

—	Population in Thousands.	Government and Subsidized Hospitals.	Private Hospitals.	Beds per 1,000 of Population.
New South Wales	2,822	210	448	7·9
Victoria	1,964	81	338	7·5
Queensland	1,030	117	149	8·7
South Australia	606	53	121	7·9
Western Australia	465	83	60	9·6
Tasmania	240	22	49	8·7
Capital Territory	2	1	1	17·6
Northern Territory	9	4	..	14·6
	7,148	571	1,166	8·0

Last year a Medical Survey Committee set up by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia adopted as a standard of hospital-bed establishment to be aimed at the following:—

General beds	5·0
Maternity	1·0
Children	0·5
Infectious	0·5
Convalescent	0·5
Subacute	0·5
Chronic	1·0

Total 9 per 1,000, excluding tuberculosis.

The tuberculosis beds should be 2 per annual death. If it may be allowed to translate this figure into 1 bed per 1,000, the total Australian recommendation for all purposes except mental diseases becomes 10 beds per 1,000 of population.

The Department is not aware that any authority has ever recommended more than 10 beds per 1,000 as an ideal.

New Zealand Figures

In the absence of a recent census it is impossible to say how accurate are the figures given for the populations of the various Hospital Board districts. The Appendix to the annual report is nearly a year out of date when published, and considerable changes can occur in a year.

For example, a recent statement by the Chairman of the Wellington Hospital Board shows that it has provided a total of 1,910 beds. To this should be added about 330 private-hospital beds and 33 beds at St. Helens Hospital.

This gives a total of 2,273 beds for a stated population of 176,620, or a ratio of about 13 beds per 1,000 of population. The figure given for population is almost certainly too low, but the figures for beds do not include the Home for the Aged Needy and the Home of Compassion.