



INJURY BULLETIN

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INJURIES IN PRISONS

QISPP recorded 686 injuries occurring in prisons during the four year period from July 1988 to June 1992.

OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES IN PRISONS

13% of injuries recorded by QISPP as occurring in prisons were in an occupational context. One quarter of these occurred in the 35 - 39 years age group. More of these injuries occurred in July than in any other month of the year.

The on-the job injuries in prisons reported to QISPP tended to be minor, with only 2% of these injuries requiring admission to hospital. On-the-job injuries decreased noticeably on Saturdays and Sundays.

15% of these injuries were the result of falls

40% of injuries were violence-related

21 people were injured during legal intervention

78% of those injured were prison officers or police

The most common injury scenarios were: restraining prisoner, was punched/
kicked

slipped on wet floor/polished floor

injured while breaking up tights between inmates

closed door/gate on finger/face/arm

assaulted

injured while grinding/welding/sawing

fell down stairs

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* QISU data is based on emergency department presentations to the following hospitals: Mater Children's Hospital, Mater Adult Hospital, Mater Private Emergency Care Centre, Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital, Redland Hospital, Logan Hospital, Royal Children's Hospital, Mt Isa Hospital and Mackay and district hospitals.



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NON-OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES IN PRISONS

87% of QISPP prison injuries fell into the non-occupational category. Over half of these injuries occurred in the 20 - 29 years age group. None of those injured was over 60 years of age. 18% of these injuries required admission to hospital.

The numbers of non-occupational prison injuries showed a sustained increase in November and December. Almost one third of injuries were the result of fights, quarrels and aggression, one fifth of the injuries were the result of intended self harm and almost one fifth of the injuries were related to falls.

Only 8% of injuries occurred during sport, compared with the database average of 13% of injuries occurring during sport.

15% of injuries were cuts and lacerations to the forearm, wrist, hand or fingers,

14% of injuries were cuts and lacerations to the face or head and

12% of injuries were bruising or haematomata to the face or head.

6% of injuries involved foreign bodies in the gastro-intestinal tract,

6% of injuries were fractures to the face or head,

6% of injuries were fractures to the hand, fingers or wrist and

3% of patients suffered back injuries.

3 patients suffered lacerations to the genitalia.

The injuries occurred more often on Fridays than any other day of the week, and the most common time for them to occur was between 6pm and 7 pm, followed by the period between 2 pm and 3 pm.

The following factors were most often reported in the non-occupational injuries:

razors/shavers : 63 cases

football/rugby : 31 cases

drugs/alcohol/pesticides : 21 cases

knives: 18 cases

stairs or steps : 13 cases

power workshop grinders/buffers/polishers : 11 cases

bath tubs/showers etc : 9 cases

batteries : 5 cases

nails/screws/tacks/pins /needles : 5 cases

Four people were injured while handling livestock. The most common injury scenarios were:

stole and ingested drugs

hit by other inmates

slipped and fell in shower

self mutilations

playing sport

fighting with other inmates

intentional overdose

drinking/drunk

hanging

fell over/fell against

swallowed razor blades

lacerations by razor blades

lacerations by broken glass

slipped on wet floors/steps

knife slipped

assaulted

swallowed batteries/safety pins/screws

using equipment eg grinder/welder

hit by cricket bat/broom/baton/chair/wood