

4. Patient Care Services

4.1. Hospital services

According to the Health Manpower Study of 1971- 1973, 'on an average an inhabitant of Sri Lanka makes 3 visits to government western type medical institutions annually. This includes visits to the outpatient departments and clinics as well'. During the past five years the government curative care institutions have been providing annually, services to about 3-4 million inpatients, 35 to 45 million outpatients and 1 million patients attending various clinics. The hierarchy of institutions providing patient care services are given in chapter 2, section 2.3.

During 2000 an increase in the inpatient and outpatient attendances per 1,000 population is observed compared with 1999 (Table 4.1). This increase is evident in all districts except the districts in the North East Province, Galle and Ratnapura. Anuradhapura district recorded the highest number of inpatients per 1,000 population followed by Colombo and

Vavuniya. Fourteen districts recorded higher rates than the national figure of 207.4 inpatients per 1,000 population (Table 37). The district of Kilinochchi recorded the highest number of outpatients per 1,000 population followed by Mullativu district whereas the lowest was in the Matara district.

The average duration of stay varies with the type of hospital and is significantly longer in the specialized hospitals such as Leprosy, Rehabilitation, Mental, Chest, Cancer, etc. However, a declining trend is observed in the duration of stay in all types of hospitals, except the Mental and the Chest Hospitals (Table 34).

In Sri Lanka, a referral system is not enforced. Hence, patients bypass small medical institutions, particularly those in the rural areas that have only minimal facilities for patient care. This leads to under-utilization of small institutions and overcrowding in the bigger institutions. It is also significant that utilization of hospitals varies from district to district. The most overcrowded institutions are the Mental Hospitals with a bed occupancy rate of 130.9, followed by Cancer Hospital (106.4)

Table 4.1 Trends in Inpatient and Outpatient Attendance and Rates Per 1,000 Population

Year	Inpatients Treated		Outpatient Attendance ¹	
	Number '000	Rate	Number '000	Rate
1960	1,392	140.7	28,852	2,915.5
1965	1,642	150.4	31,258	2,866.9
1970	2,054	164.1	34,895	2,788.0
1975	2,146	159.0	27,654	2,049.1
1980	2,335	158.3	31,892	2,162.6
1985	2,494	157.4	29,570	1,867.1
1990 ²	2,533	174.6	28,401	2,000.5
1995 ³	2,953	179.3	32,084	1,947.7
1996 ⁴	3,339	184.5	35,348	1,953.2
1997 ⁵	3,454	191.7	38,078	2,114.0
1998	3,791	201.9	41,071	2,187.7
1999	3,825	200.9	41,323	2,170.1
2000	4,015	207.4	43,329	2,238.2

Medical Statistics Unit

Excludes:

¹ Clinic Attendance

² Northern and Eastern Provinces

³ Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Ampara Districts

⁴ Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts

⁵ Ampara District

Fig 4.1-Inpatient and Outpatient attendance in Government Medical Institutions: 1965-2000

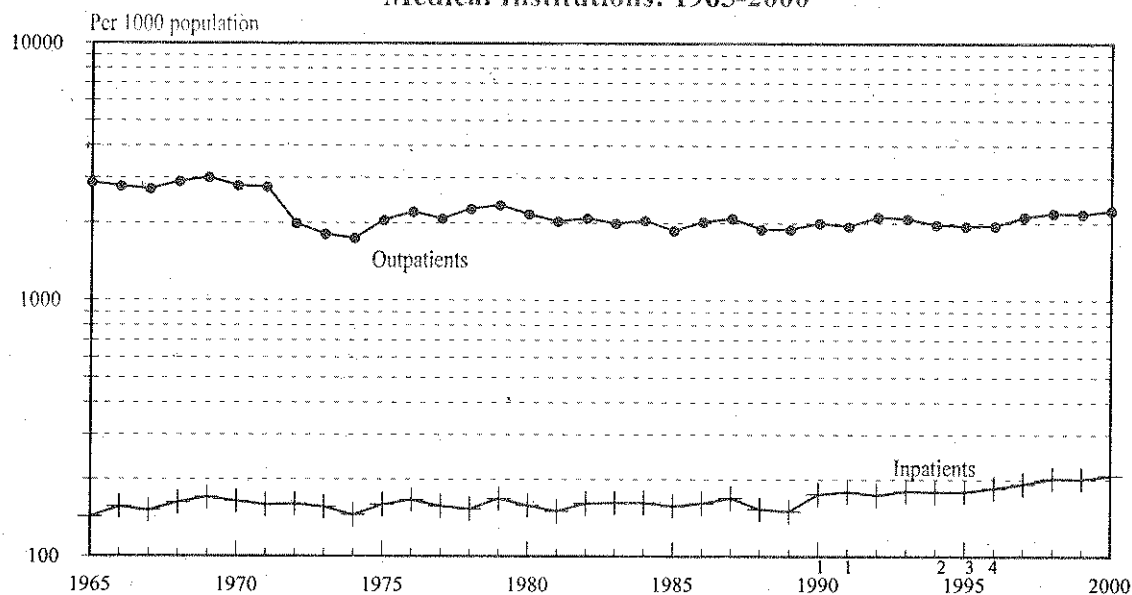
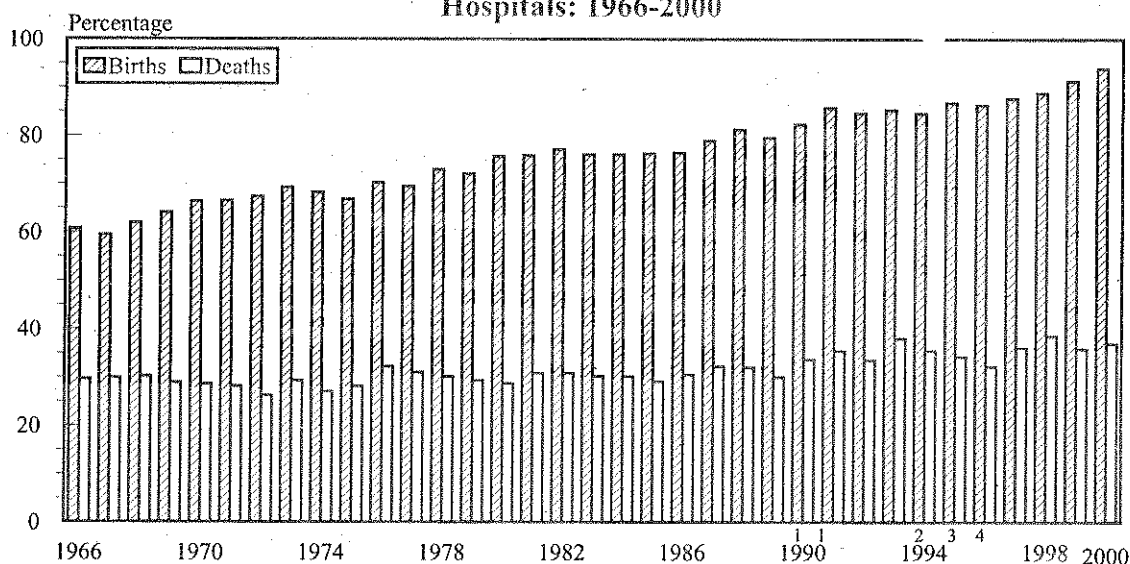


Fig 4.2-Percentage of Live Births & Deaths in Government Hospitals: 1966-2000



Source: Medical Statistics Unit

Excludes: 1 Northern & Eastern Provinces
2 Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu & Ampara Districts
3 Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts
4 Ampara District

and Provincial Hospitals (105.6). As in the past, the lowest occupancy rate was in the Central Dispensaries and Maternity Homes (6.3) (Table 36).

During 2000, a total of 314,352 live births and 4,259 stillbirths took place in government hospitals. The stillbirth rate per 1,000 births in government hospitals for 2000 is 13.4. An increase of 4.5 per cent in the number of live births in government hospitals is observed,

compared to 1999. This suggests that the proportion of births that occurred in government hospitals may have increased. The proportion calculated on registered births during 2000, gives a percentage of 93.9 (Table 35). The proportion of live births that occurred in government hospitals during 1998 by district is presented in Table 40. The highest proportion (98.8%) was recorded in Kurunegala followed by Gampaha district (98.4).

Table 4.2 Maternal Services By Type of Hospital, 2000

Type of Institution	Total Deliveries	Multiple Deliveries	Forceps Deliveries	Caesarean Sections	
				Number	Rate
Teaching Hospitals	62,065	647	1,606	15,533	25.0
Maternity Hospitals ¹	41,220	378	770	11,179	27.1
Provincial Hospitals	48,213	549	450	10,373	21.5
Base Hospitals	90,876	766	1,832	11,361	12.5
District Hospitals	51,189	213	64	117	0.2
Peripheral Units	12,863	84	41	200	1.6
Rural Hospitals	7,320	15	-	-	-
Maternity Homes	2,163	9	-	-	-
Sri Lanka	315,909	2,661	4,763	48,763	15.4

¹ Includes Mahamodara Teaching Hospital

Source: Medical Statistics Unit

Fifteen (15) districts have recorded higher percentages than the national average. Nuwara Eliya district recorded a percentage of 68.1, a lower figure compared with 1997 (70.7). However, it is evident that a large number of births still take place outside medical institutions, especially in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Table 4.2 illustrates the maternal services provided by type of hospital. It is evident that the Teaching Hospitals including the three Maternity Hospitals accounted for 33 per cent of the deliveries. A reduction in the number of deliveries is observed in all types of hospitals except the Teaching, Provincial and Base Hospitals when compared with 1999. The caesarean section rate was highest in the Teaching and Provincial Hospitals. Sri Jayawardenapura Teaching Hospital recorded comparatively a higher caesarean section rate of 47 per 100 deliveries. Over all, the caesarean section rate has increased in all types of institutions.

4.2 Dental Health

The Dental Services in the public sector are provided through the Hospital Dental Clinics, the School Dental Clinic and the Community Dental Clinics. The former is mainly curative while the latter two bear a large component of preventive oral health. The Community Dental Clinics are fast becoming extremely popular.

In total, 331 Dental Clinics manned by Dental Surgeons functioned during 2000. The Hospital Dental Clinics are situated in the Teaching, Provincial and Base Hospitals. In addition, dental clinics functioned in 82 per

cent of the District Hospitals and 55 per cent of the Peripheral Units and 19 per cent of the Rural Hospitals. The School Dental Clinics are located mainly in primary schools, providing dental care to children between 3-13 years of age. During 2000, 280 School Dental Clinics functioned and 461 School Dental Therapists carried out this service. In addition, there were 39 Adolescent Dental Clinics manned by Dental Surgeons providing dental care to school children of all ages, in particular to difficult cases referred by the School Dental Clinics.

The Dental institute in Colombo and the Dental Unit commissioned in 1998 at the premises of Teaching Hospital Peradeniya are the centres of excellence for dentistry in Sri Lanka. Both outdoor and indoor treatment is provided in these institutes.

The treatment for vital bleaching of brown discoloured teeth affected by dental fluorosis developed by the Faculty of Dental Science was introduced to high fluoride areas of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Kurunegala districts. The *atraumatic restorative treatment* technology that commenced in 1998 was introduced to other areas during 2000.

The performance of Dental Surgeons during 2000 by district and by type of institution is presented in Table 41 and 42 respectively. The National Oral Health Survey of 1994-1995 examined approximately 10,000 persons for Oral Health status, according to WHO criteria. The type of dental clinics visited by the surveyed population, by age and sector are given in Table 44.