

12,000 people rate their experiences of care in outpatient cancer clinics

Results that reflect the experiences of more than 12,000 people who attended 51 outpatient cancer clinics across NSW were published by the Bureau of Health Information (BHI) today.

The results of the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey show that patients had positive experiences of care, but there are also areas where improvements can be made.

Results from the survey include:

- Almost all (98%) patients rated the care they received as either 'very good' (85%) or 'good' (13%).
- Most patients (92%) said they would 'speak highly' of the clinic they attended and 96% of patients said they were 'always' treated with respect and dignity.

"More than 40,000 people in NSW are diagnosed with cancer every year and it is vital that these people receive excellent treatment and care. The results in this survey are very reassuring for the thousands of people who attend these clinics every year, as patients rated their experiences of care very highly," BHI Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson said.

"However, patients also identified certain areas where improvements can be made, such as the provision of information by clinics and ensuring that they have the opportunity to fully discuss their worries and fears, at what is a very concerning time for patients and their families."

The survey found:

- Two-thirds (65%) of patients said their worries and fears were 'completely' discussed with them.
- Six in 10 (62%) patients said they did not have a written care plan for their treatment.

More than one in 10 patients (12%) said they experienced a complication or problem during or shortly after their outpatient cancer clinic visit. The complication or problem most commonly reported by patients was severe anxiety or worry, followed by an infection or an unexpected negative reaction to medication.

The most recent results of two more patient surveys were also published by BHI today: the Emergency Department Patient Survey 2016–17, reflecting the experiences of almost 18,000 people across 82 public hospital emergency departments, and the Outpatient Survey 2016, reflecting the experiences of more than 13,000 people across 74 public outpatient facilities.

"It is important that we listen to the voices of all 43,000 people whose experiences informed the results of the three surveys we are releasing today. Patients provide a unique and valuable perspective on the healthcare system that can only come from asking people about their personal experiences," Dr Watson said.

The full results for all three surveys, and a chartpack and data tables summarising the results of the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey, are available at bhi.nsw.gov.au