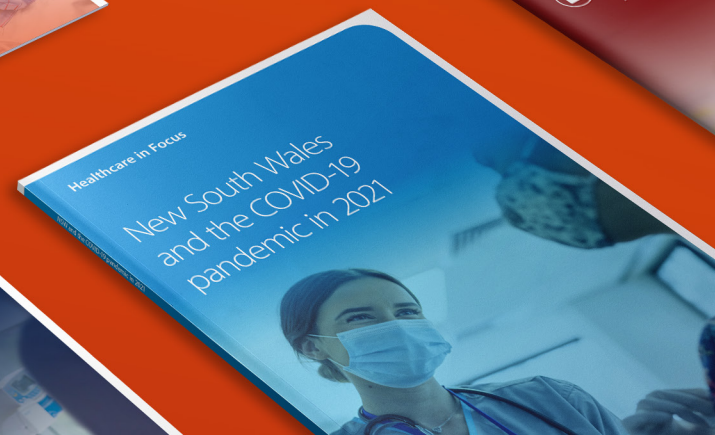


Year in Review 2021-22





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The Bureau of Health Information is a board-governed organisation that produces independent reports on the performance of the healthcare system in NSW.

Using advanced data analytics and visualisation, we deliver reports and information products that describe key aspects of healthcare performance for a range of consumer, healthcare and policy audiences.

We provide this information to strengthen accountability and support system-wide and local improvements in patients' healthcare experiences and outcomes. Public reporting of this information enhances transparency and understanding of healthcare performance for consumers and local communities.

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) is led by the Board, which is chaired by Professor Carol Pollock AO, and Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson.

**Trusted
information**

**Informed
decisions**

**Improved
healthcare**



From the Board Chair and Chief Executive



Professor Carol Pollock AO
Board Chair



Dr Diane Watson
Chief Executive

In 2021–22, BHI shaped its work program to ensure we responded to areas of high priority for patients and the healthcare system.

NSW experienced some of the most difficult periods of the COVID-19 pandemic and we continued to provide insights into system performance during this time while also focusing extensive efforts on further innovative reporting initiatives.

The annual *Healthcare in Focus* and *Healthcare Quarterly* series included wide-ranging insights into the impact of the pandemic on activity and performance in the NSW healthcare system.

A major focus of our work was, and will continue to be, on ensuring we are agile in response to health system needs. Our surveys experts developed flexible questionnaire modules in areas such as virtual and GP care, while our analysts and report specialists delivered tailored analyses on specific patient groups, including those in rural and urban areas.

We are acutely aware that all the reporting in the world is of little value if those tasked with delivering and improving care are not supported to interpret and use it.

BHI increased support for health system managers and clinicians to make greater use of our patient survey results by providing new, tailored summaries to local health districts and piloting awareness and education sessions.

We are just getting started with these new collection, reporting and capability building initiatives to which we have committed in our new *Strategic Plan 2023–2026*.

Through this work, BHI will continue to provide the community, healthcare professionals and policymakers with independent healthcare performance information to inform improvement and strengthen accountability for the State's health system.

We thank all BHI staff, who have remained committed to excellence during a challenging time; their dedication and expertise is what allows us to achieve what we did in 2021–22.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank the Board for their guidance and advice during the year.

NSW Patient Survey Program

In 2021–22, more than 56,500 people provided feedback as part of the survey program, creating a rich source of information to support efforts to improve patients' experiences.

As part of our commitment to delivering high-value insights that align with health system priorities, BHI's survey experts developed flexible questionnaire modules, inviting feedback from outpatient cancer clinic and adult admitted patients about their virtual care experiences, and hospital outpatients about their experiences of virtual care with general practitioners (GPs). A module was also developed for the Adult Admitted Patient Survey to invite Aboriginal people to tell us about their experiences of care. BHI will implement more of these modules in the future.

We continued work to improve the timeliness of our reporting on patients' experiences by sending questionnaires to people sooner after their hospital stay and promoting completion online.

BHI gives patients a voice through the NSW Patient Survey Program, the principal source of statewide, robust and representative information about patients' experiences of the NSW public healthcare system.

BHI published results from four surveys, including on patients' experiences of emergency, admitted and virtual care, and care in outpatient cancer clinics. These results were presented in information products ranging from Snapshot reports to full, detailed results on the **BHI website**.

These were the first survey results to be loaded into the BHI Data Portal, making the results more accessible to the public and healthcare professionals.

As the results included feedback provided at a time when NSW was dealing with COVID-19, they provided extensive insights into how the pandemic affected patients' experiences. To support these insights, BHI's expert analysts and reporting specialists provided monthly analyses of patients' overall experiences during this time.

Additional special analyses included insights into differences in patients' experiences in urban and rural hospitals.

Adult Admitted Patient Survey questionnaire, with module for Aboriginal people

The image shows two overlapping survey questionnaires. The top questionnaire is titled 'NSW Patient Survey: Adult Admitted Patients' and includes a module for Aboriginal people. It features a header with the NSW logo and a title 'Your feedback will help improve healthcare services for Aboriginal people'. The main text explains the purpose of the survey and provides instructions for completion. The bottom questionnaire is titled 'VIRTUAL CARE' and includes a module for GP appointments. It features a header with the title 'VIRTUAL CARE' and a title 'Your feedback will help improve healthcare services for Aboriginal people'. The main text explains the purpose of the survey and provides instructions for completion. Both questionnaires include sections for 'ARRIVAL' and 'THE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT' with various questions and checkboxes for responses.

Virtual Care Survey questionnaire, with GP module

Aboriginal patient experience

In July 2021, BHI published a major report, *Aboriginal people's experiences of hospital care*, reflecting the experiences of more than 8,000 Aboriginal people who were admitted to, or gave birth in, a NSW public hospital.

It provided valuable insights, including differences in Aboriginal people's experiences in urban and rural hospitals; the benefits of contact with Aboriginal Health Workers; and the gap between the experiences of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

The report provided government, system managers and healthcare professionals with actionable insights to support programs to improve care for Aboriginal patients.

In collaboration with the Centre for Aboriginal Health, BHI will invite feedback from thousands more Aboriginal patients from 2022 to 2024 to support further reporting. Analyses of this feedback will be presented in a range of future BHI reports.

Hearing from Aboriginal people about their experiences of care is fundamental to efforts to tailor care to their needs and help improve health outcomes.



Surveys

Survey reports highlighting key patient experience findings at NSW level were published for four BHI patient surveys in 2021–22. For the larger surveys, more detailed results at hospital, local health district and NSW levels are available on the BHI website.



Adult Admitted Patient Survey 2020

More than 16,000 people told us about their experiences of care in one of 75 NSW public hospitals in 2020.

Overall, 95% of patients rated their care as



Emergency Department Patient Survey 2020–21

Almost 21,000 patients told us about their experiences of care in one of 77 large NSW emergency departments in 2020–21.

Overall, 89% of patients rated their care as



Surveys



Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey 2020

Almost 9,000 patients told us about their experiences of care at one of 43 NSW outpatient cancer clinics in 2020.

Overall, 99% of patients rated their care as



Virtual Care Survey 2020

More than 2,500 patients told us about their virtual healthcare outpatient appointment with a NSW public hospital during 2020.

Overall, 91% of patients rated the virtual care they received as



Healthcare Quarterly

This report series underwent a major revamp in 2021–22, with a new format to ensure we are effectively delivering key insights about the performance of the healthcare system.

Healthcare Quarterly tracks activity and performance for emergency department, admitted patient, elective surgery and ambulance services in NSW. It also includes reporting on seclusion and restraint in public hospitals with specialised acute mental health units.

In 2021–22, the main report was redesigned into a single, more streamlined document focused on key findings for the quarter. This complemented enhanced reporting in the BHI Data Portal, launched in June 2021.

Healthcare Quarterly continued to provide additional insights into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic such as weekly emergency department and elective surgery activity, and case and testing numbers.

The report also included further insights into activity and performance in rural and urban areas.

Healthcare Quarterly results were presented in the main report, with more detailed information, including at hospital and local health district level, available on the Data Portal and in activity and performance profiles.



Healthcare Quarterly

Behind the key findings

Figure 1
Emergency department attendances
April 2016 to June 2021

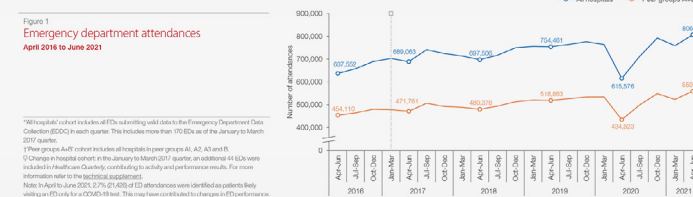


Figure 2
Emergency department attendances, by mode
of leaving
April 2016 to June 2021



Healthcare in Focus

BHI's annual healthcare performance report focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health system during 2021.

A companion to the *Healthcare in Focus* report published a year earlier, this report further examined how successive waves of the pandemic changed patterns of activity and performance across the State.

The 2021 report focused on community-based healthcare services, emergency departments, elective surgery, admitted patients and ambulance services. It included insights at NSW level, and for metropolitan and rural and regional areas.

Key findings included:

- a major increase in virtual GP consultations as COVID-19 cases rose.
- increases in overall ambulance activity – with more responses to patients with the most serious conditions.
- elective surgery waiting lists up following the suspensions of non-urgent surgery.
- 94% of the NSW population aged 16+ received at least two COVID-19 vaccine doses by the end of 2021.



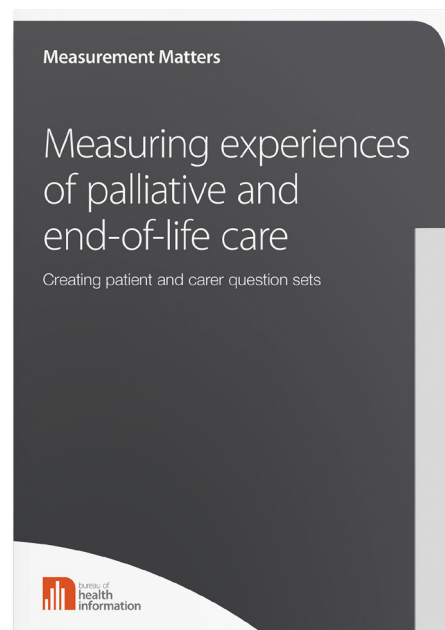
Measurement Matters

This report series provides in-depth analyses of methods and technical issues relevant to performance measurement.

This report outlined the development of tailored question sets for palliative care patients and carers about their experiences with NSW healthcare services.

The question sets will support the collection of information about these patients' and carers' experiences with NSW healthcare services, which can be used to drive improvements.

The development of these question sets is the result of extensive research and consultation, including a literature review, a review of relevant NSW policy, consultation with palliative care professionals, and focus groups and cognitive testing with patients and carers.



Bureau of Health Information Data Portal

During 2021–22, the BHI Data Portal continued to become a richer source of data with survey results for emergency department, adult admitted and outpatient cancer clinic patient experiences uploaded for the first time.

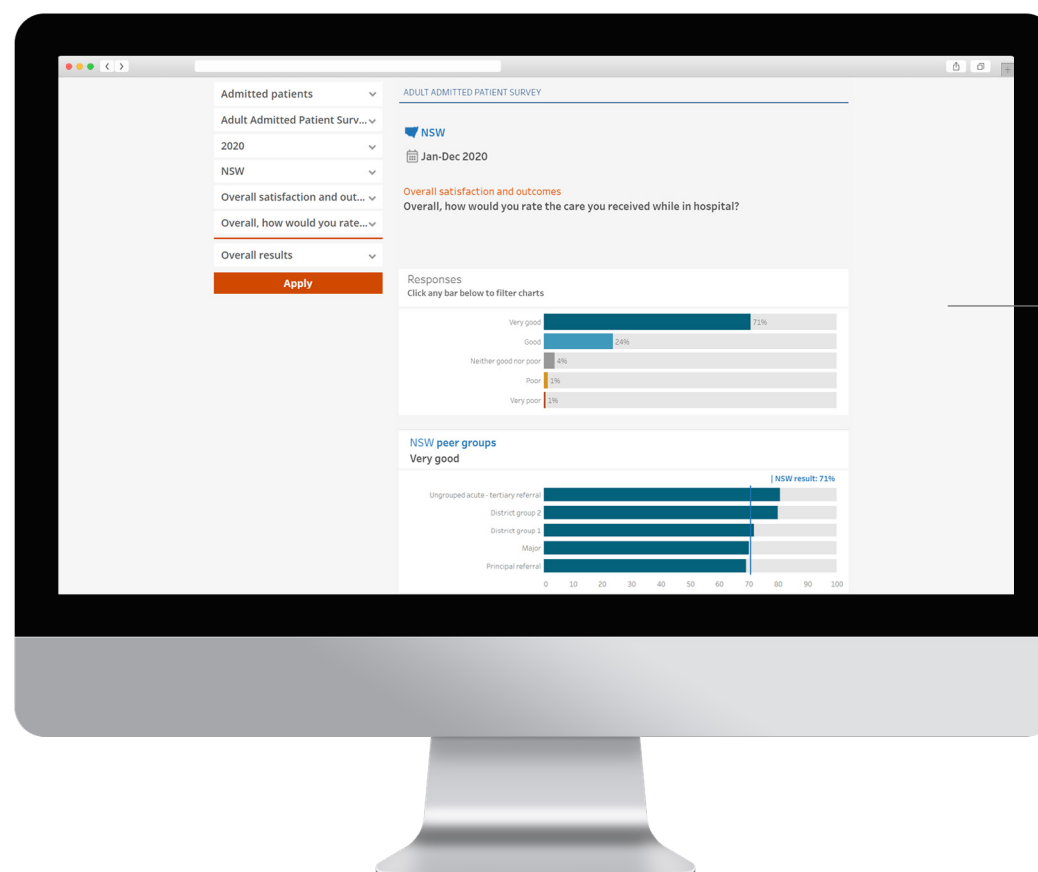
Users are able to explore recent results in comparison with past performance and other health services, including trends over time.

The number of people accessing the Data Portal grew quarter on quarter as we expanded the data available in it.

The staged implementation of the portal is part of a transition to a digital-first way of reporting healthcare performance information, making results more accessible and user-friendly.

BHI ensures healthcare performance information is high quality, integrated and easily accessible through its digital Data Portal.

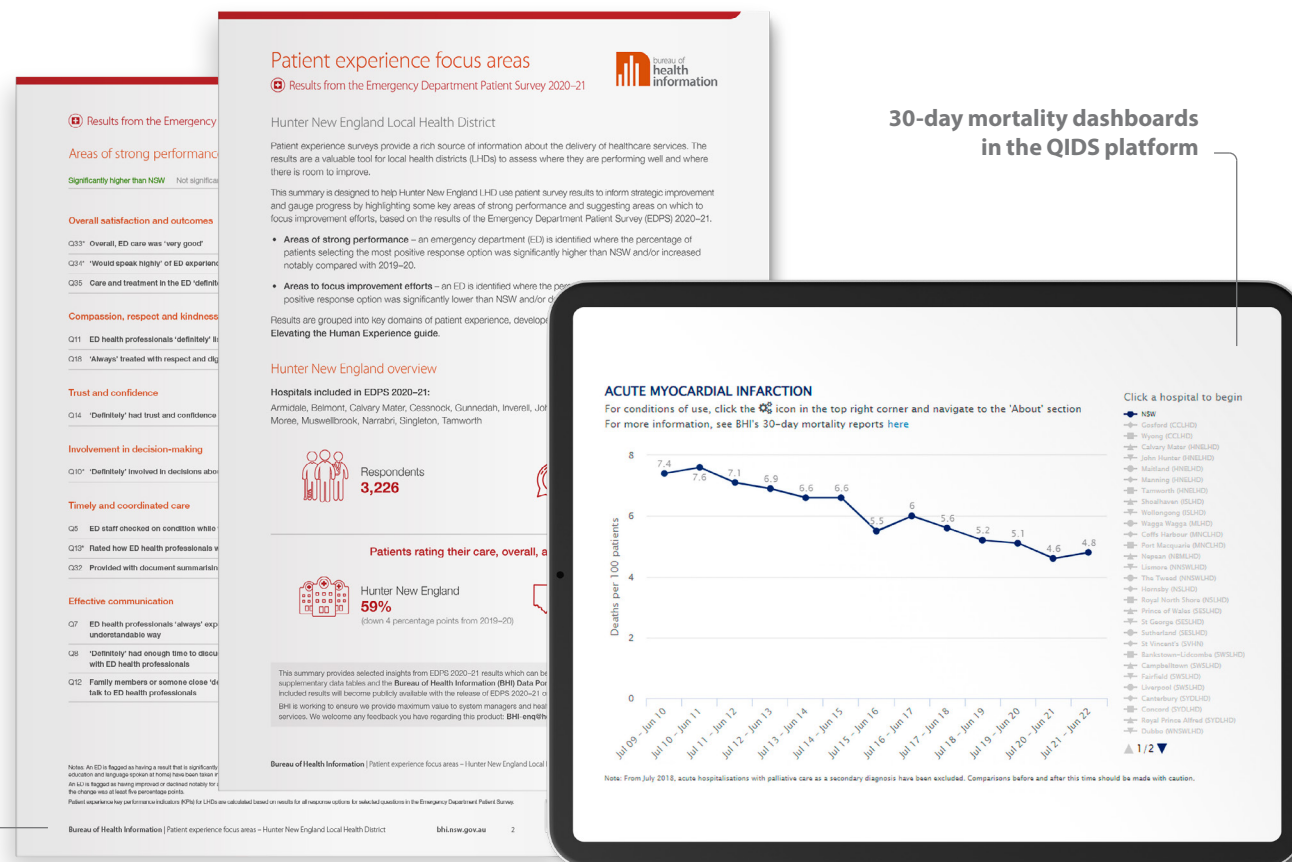
Adult Admitted Patient Survey results, BHI Data Portal



Engagement on reports

We continued to work with the Clinical Excellence Commission to incorporate mortality results into its Quality Improvement Data System (QIDS), making them more accessible to clinicians and health managers to help inform local and system-wide efforts to improve care. We also engaged extensively with LHDs to support their understanding of the results.

Patient experience focus areas summaries for LHDs



Engagement and collaboration

Promoting use of BHI products

We piloted a series of information sessions to raise awareness of the information available from BHI and to support stakeholders to make effective use of key reporting and information products. These were well received with almost 150 participants by June 2022. We will roll out a fuller program in 2022–23.



BHI information sessions

Patient experience collaboration

BHI continued to collaborate around the design and measurement of patient experience, including with the Centre for Aboriginal Health, the Leading Better Value Care program and the Cancer Institute NSW. BHI also provided expert advice to inform a new conceptual framework for self-reported information and work on strategic alignment of patient experience measurement initiatives.

Consultation for new Strategic Plan

We consulted on our upcoming *Strategic Plan 2023–26* through wide-ranging engagement with stakeholders across the NSW Health system. Our goal in the coming three years will be to maximise the impact of our information on behalf of NSW patients and communities and enhance its value to the NSW healthcare system.

In BHI's 2021 independent stakeholder survey:

More than 9 in 10 respondents said...

BHI fulfils its purpose well, providing information that is trusted and objective.

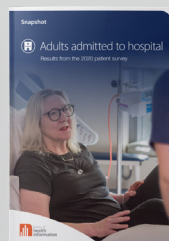
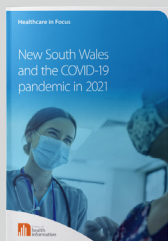
Around 8 in 10 said...

reports are relevant, meaningful, robust, easy to understand and actionable.

Who did we reach?

Reports

11
public
reports



Mentions in the media

3,820

Total

946

Online

243

Print

2,105

Broadcast

526

Social



Who did we reach?

Website

86,338
visits

192,800
page views

208
visitors per day



Social media and e-newsletter

1,759
Twitter followers

1,089
LinkedIn followers

1,299
e-newsletter subscribers

About the Bureau of Health Information

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) is a board-governed organisation that provides independent information about the performance of the NSW healthcare system.

BHI was established in 2009 and supports the accountability of the healthcare system by providing regular and detailed information to the community, government and healthcare professionals. This in turn supports quality improvement by highlighting how well the healthcare system is functioning and where there are opportunities to improve.

BHI manages the NSW Patient Survey Program, gathering information from patients about their experiences and outcomes of care in public hospitals and other healthcare facilities.

BHI publishes a range of reports and information products, including interactive tools, that provide objective, accurate and meaningful information about how the health system is performing.

BHI's work relies on the efforts of a wide range of healthcare, data and policy experts. All of our assessment efforts leverage the work of hospital coders, analysts, technicians and healthcare providers who gather, codify and supply data. Our public reporting of performance information is enabled and enhanced by the infrastructure, expertise and stewardship provided by colleagues from NSW Health and its pillar organisations.

bhi.nsw.gov.au