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## Patients provide high ratings of care in small, rural NSW hospitals

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) has today released survey results reflecting the experiences of almost 4,500 adult patients in 98 small, rural public hospitals in NSW from July 2019 to June 2020.

Almost all patients who responded to the Rural Hospital Adult Admitted Patient Survey were satisfied with the care they received, with 95% rating their overall care as 'very good' or 'good'.

BHI Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson said patients provided high ratings of their care during what was an extraordinary time for the people of rural and regional NSW.

"Through this survey, most patients told us they had positive experiences with our state's small, rural hospitals in a period marked by the devastating 2019–20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic," said Dr Watson.

Patients were particularly positive about the healthcare professionals who cared for them.

More than nine in 10 patients (96%) rated how healthcare professionals worked together as 'very good' or 'good', while more than eight in 10 (86%) said they 'always' had confidence and trust in the healthcare professionals treating them.

"This survey includes patients' feedback on a range of questions specifically tailored to healthcare experiences in rural and regional areas," said Dr Watson.

This includes:

- Of the 13% of patients who received telehealth services in the three months following discharge, around nine in 10 (92%) said these services benefitted them.
- Of the 22% of patients who were transferred from a larger hospital to a small, rural hospital, around nine in 10 (93%) said the transfer benefitted them.

The results also allow healthcare professionals to see where there are opportunities to improve. For example:

- Around one in 10 patients (12%) said they did not receive enough information about their condition or treatment.
- Fewer than seven in 10 patients (68%) said they were 'always' listened to when expressing their views and concerns.

"These survey results provide great value for health professionals caring for patients in rural and regional areas who can use them to see where they are doing well and where there are opportunities to improve services," said Dr Watson.

A Snapshot report highlights key findings for nine questions, including variation between hospitals.

Full survey results, including for 55 individual small, rural hospitals, are available in BHI's interactive data portal, Healthcare Observer at [bhi.nsw.gov.au](https://bhi.nsw.gov.au)