

Wait times in NSW public hospitals continue to improve

The latest report from the Bureau of Health Information, *Hospital Quarterly (January – March 2014)* shows NSW public hospitals have continued to show improvements in Emergency Department (ED) and elective surgery performance.

Released today, the report includes performance information from an additional 21 emergency departments, with a total of 117 EDs included in the NSW results.

Chief Executive of the Bureau of Health Information, Dr Jean-Frederic Levesque said,

“Our report shows that although emergency attendances are increasing at about two per cent each year, the performance of the NSW public hospital system continues to improve.

“Key areas such as the percentage of patients leaving the ED within four hours following their arrival and the percentage of patients receiving elective surgery within timeframes recommended by the clinicians have all seen improvements from one year ago.

“Importantly our report shows a continued reduction in the time people wait in emergency departments and in the number of people experiencing extended waits for semi-urgent and non-urgent surgeries.

“Almost all elective surgeries (97%) were completed within the recommended timeframe, which is a notable improvement from the same quarter in 2013.”

Hospital Quarterly (January - March 2014) key findings:

- The per cent of patients who left the ED within 4 hours following their arrival reached 73%, an increase of 7 percentage points from the same quarter last year
- The time it takes EDs to start treatment for almost all of their patients (95%) have reduced across all triage categories from the same quarter last year
- The per cent of patients that had their care transferred from ambulance paramedics to hospital staff within 30 minutes reached 88%, a 4 percentage points increase from the same quarter last year.

The report also shows possible areas for improvement – waiting times for non-urgent surgery in large volume hospitals varies considerably and so does the time spent by patients in the ED in large metropolitan hospitals.

Hospital Quarterly is released in three modules covering admitted patient data, elective surgery and emergency department performance. For the first time, quarterly performance is available for viewing and downloading online through our new interactive webpage Healthcare Observer.

View online results, the report modules and performance profiles for 77 NSW hospitals at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au.