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BHI releases ratings of children and adolescents' experiences in NSW public hospitals

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) has today released survey results reflecting the experiences of more than 11,000 children and adolescents who attended NSW public hospitals in 2017.

The Admitted Children and Young Patients Survey was directed to either the parent (for children aged 0–7 years), a combination of both the parent and child (8–15 years), or just the adolescent (16–17 years).

BHI Chief Executive, Dr Diane Watson, said most children and adolescents had positive experiences of care in NSW public hospitals, which were reflected across the different age groups.

“Overall, the care received in public hospitals was rated as very good or good by more than nine in 10 respondents to our survey, ranging from 91% among 16 and 17-year-olds to 95% among parents who responded on behalf of their children,” Dr Watson said.

Interactions with health professionals received particularly high ratings across all age groups, including by children themselves. Almost nine in 10 of those aged 8 to 15 years (89%) said that doctors and nurses were always kind and caring towards them, while parents gave similarly high ratings on behalf of their children aged 0 to 7 years.

Dr Watson said the survey results indicate that 16 and 17-year-olds would like to be more engaged with the health professionals providing their care. They were notably less positive when asked if health professionals explained things to them in a way they could understand and when asked if they were given enough information about how to manage their care at home.

One in five 16-17-year-olds (20%) said they experienced a problem or complication during or shortly after their hospital stay, compared to 10% among children aged 0–7 and 13% among those aged 8–15. The 16 and 17-year-olds also experienced the highest proportion of problems or complications that were rated as not at all or not very serious.

“We need to listen to what young people are telling us about their care in this survey and the provision of information is clearly a key issue, particularly in relation to reaching successful outcomes following discharge from hospital,” Dr Watson said.

A *Snapshot* report published today highlights key findings on the experiences of children and adolescents in NSW public hospitals, including the state's three largest paediatric hospitals – The John Hunter Children's Hospital, Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick and The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Results for 46 individual hospitals are available on BHI's website, showing the differences in ratings of care across NSW public hospitals, by age group.

BHI has also today released the results of the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey 2017, reflecting the experiences of care of more than 11,000 patients who attended one of 50 facilities housing outpatient cancer clinics.

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