

**1 March 2023**

## NSW public hospital and ambulance services remain very busy

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) has today released its latest *Healthcare Quarterly* report, showing activity and performance for public health services in NSW from October to December 2022.

BHI Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson said the report shows ambulance and emergency department (ED) activity continued a long-term increase that began before the arrival of COVID-19, despite more recent fluctuations in demand throughout the pandemic.

"While patients continued to wait longer for ambulance and hospital care than before the pandemic, there was improvement on a number of measures in October to December 2022 following record long waits in April to June 2022," said Dr Watson.

### Ambulance

In October to December 2022, there were more ambulance responses (346,748) than in any quarter since BHI began reporting in 2010.

Of those, 179,174 were emergency – priority 1 (P1) responses, including 10,937 highest priority 1A (P1A) patients, both well above pre-pandemic levels in October to December 2019.

The median response time for P1 and P1A cases was 14.5 minutes and 8.4 minutes, respectively, both longer than October to December 2019 but down from the record waits in April to June 2022.

### Emergency departments

EDs experienced near-record demand, with 790,309 ED attendances, up 1.8% (13,758) from October to December 2019.

Similar to ambulance services, EDs have seen a growing proportion of more urgent patients over time. In October to December 2022:

- There were a record 6,175 triage 1 and 113,435 triage 2 presentations, both at their highest since BHI began reporting in 2010.
- 66.4% of all patients, and 54.6% of triage 2 patients, started their treatment on time.
- 78.0% of patients had their care transferred from paramedics to ED staff within 30 minutes.

### Elective surgery

There were 54,384 elective surgeries performed in October to December 2022, down 5.8% compared with October to December 2019.

The waiting list remained high at 99,300 patients at the end of December 2022 (compared with 88,044 at the end of December 2019) as hospitals continued to manage the effects of suspensions of non-urgent and some semi-urgent surgery in response to the pandemic.

The number of patients waiting longer than recommended (17,074) continued to decrease from a record high at the end of June 2022.

Find and compare results, including for the 77 larger hospitals and 91 local ambulance areas, in the [Bureau of Health Information Data Portal](#). Snapshots of hospital results can also be found in the [Activity and performance profiles](#).

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