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Patients rate experiences of care in NSW hospitals during 2021

The Bureau of Health Information's new report into patients' experiences in NSW hospitals reveals most rated their care highly in 2021, when health services were managing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Released today, the results of the Adult Admitted Patient Survey 2021 reflect the experiences of 19,304 adults who received care in one of 87 NSW public hospitals.

BHI Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson said the pandemic led to significant changes in how services were delivered, and additional measures were introduced to ensure patient and staff safety.

"COVID-19 restrictions may have affected experiences of care, particularly in the second half of the year with the peak of the Delta outbreak and the beginning of the Omicron wave," said Dr Watson.

"However, most patients were positive about their experiences during their hospital stay, around their discharge and with virtual care appointments afterwards."

Around nine in 10 patients (92%) said their hospital care, overall, was very good or good, and 86% said health professionals were always kind and caring.

The teamwork of the health professionals also impressed patients, with 92% saying it was very good or good, while 96% said their care was very or fairly well organised.

"These survey results give healthcare professionals and system managers specific information about where they are doing well, and also areas where care could improve," said Dr Watson.

"Around one in five patients (21%) said they received contradictory information about their condition or treatment."

With the use of virtual care continuing to expand during the pandemic, BHI also asked patients about their experiences of telephone or video appointments with a hospital or outpatient clinic in the three months after their discharge.

Dr Watson said 90% of eligible respondents rated the virtual care they received as very good or good, and 85% said they would use virtual care again. Just 11% said they would not choose to use virtual care again.

"The most frequently mentioned benefits of using virtual outpatient care after discharge from hospital were convenience and saving time," she said.

For the 2021 survey, BHI analysed results for patients from 46 urban hospitals (8,973 patients) and 41 larger rural hospitals (10,331 patients). For most questions, there were no significant differences between rural and urban patients in their ratings of care including for involvement in decision-making, clear information and effective communication.

The Adult Admitted Patient Survey 2021 Snapshot report includes findings for key aspects of care, including variation across hospitals and monthly trends in patient experience. More detailed results are available on the [BHI website](#).

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