

Snapshot



# Outpatient Cancer Clinics

Results from the 2019 patient survey





We heard from more than  
**13,000 people** about their  
experiences of care at NSW  
**outpatient cancer clinics** in 2019





Outpatient cancer clinics provide important and ongoing care to patients, from initial diagnosis through to treatment and follow-up care. Treatments provided at these clinics include chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery. Outpatient cancer clinics also provide treatment for reasons other than cancer and around one in five patients who responded to this survey (21%) received care for other reasons, such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

A better understanding of how patients experience the care they receive at outpatient cancer clinics can assist health professionals to identify where and how improvements can be made.

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) partnered with the Cancer Institute NSW (CINSW) to deliver the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey 2019. Survey results reflect the experiences of 13,009 patients who responded to the questionnaire following attendance to one of 49 NSW facilities in November 2019, including three private facilities (Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, Riverina Cancer Care Centre and Sydney Adventist Hospital). Results for the 44 facilities where enough responses were received to report at a facility level are available in supplementary data tables and on BHI's interactive data portal, Healthcare Observer, at [bhi.nsw.gov.au](http://bhi.nsw.gov.au)

This Snapshot report highlights key findings in relation to the experiences of patients at outpatient cancer clinics in NSW. While a facility may house a number of individual clinics, results are reported at the facility level.

**Overall ratings of care:** Almost all patients (99%) said overall, the care they received was 'very good' (87%) or 'good' (12%). Around eight in 10 patients (83%) said their care was 'very well organised' (pages 4–5).

**Experiences of care:** Around eight in 10 patients (82%) said health professionals 'definitely' knew enough about their medical history, while a similar percentage (81%) said they were 'definitely' involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment (pages 6–7).

**Follow-up and self-management support:** Around nine in 10 patients (91%) said they were told who to contact if they were worried about their condition or treatment after they left the clinic. Around seven in 10 patients (71%) said a health professional gave their family or someone close to them 'completely' enough information to help care for them at home (pages 10–11).

Overall, **99%** of patients rated their care at cancer clinics as



'very good'

87%

'good'

12%

# Overall ratings of care

Overall ratings of care reflect general measures of patient satisfaction about the care they received in outpatient cancer clinics.

Almost all patients (99%) said overall, the care they received was 'very good' (87%) or 'good' (12%) (Figure 1a). For patients who said 'very good', results ranged from 73% to 98% across facilities (Figure 2a).

Almost nine in 10 patients (88%) rated their health professionals as 'very good', while a further 11% said they were 'good' (Figure 1b). For patients who said 'very good', results ranged from 71% to 97% across facilities (Figure 2b).

Around eight in 10 patients (83%) said their care was 'very well organised' (Figure 1c). Across facilities, results ranged from 66% to 97% (Figure 2c).

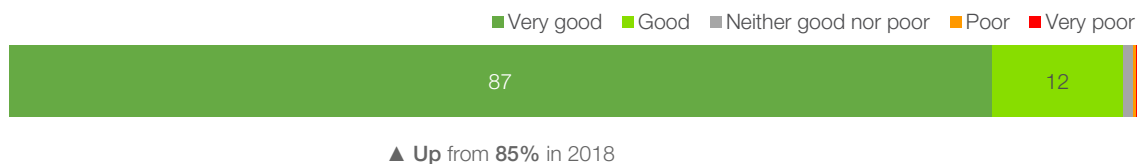
Some patient groups tend to respond more positively to surveys. This means that facilities with higher proportions of patients with these characteristics tend to have higher patient experience ratings.

To enable fairer comparisons across facilities, BHI has taken the characteristics of patients in each facility (including age, sex, education level, language, cancer type and non-cancer patients) into account.

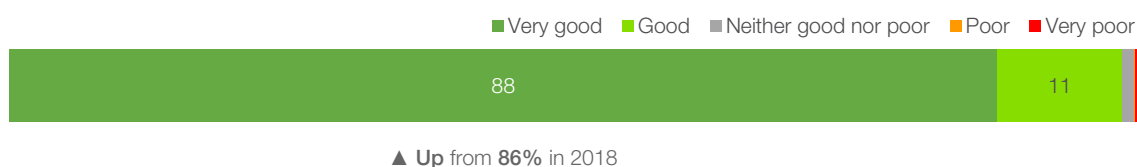
Therefore, when a facility is flagged as having a significantly higher or lower result than NSW, this is more likely to reflect differences in patients' experiences and less likely to reflect differences in the facility's patient mix. For further details, please see the survey's technical supplement at [bhi.nsw.gov.au](http://bhi.nsw.gov.au)

Figure 1 Percentage of patients in NSW, all response options, 2019

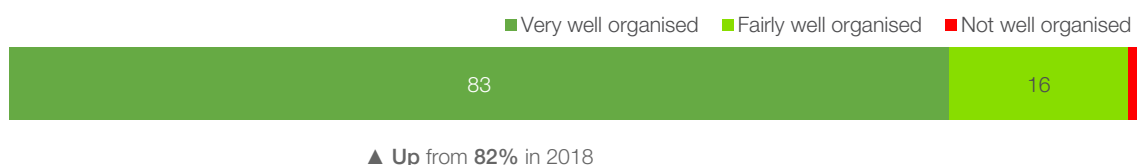
a. Overall, how would you rate the care you received at the clinic?



b. Overall, how would you rate the health professionals who treated you?



c. How well organised was the care you received at the clinic?



Note: Results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

# When asked how well health professionals worked together



of patients said  
**'very good'**

## Best part of care...

“

The way the entire care team – doctors, nurses, administration staff, specialists, support services – worked together.

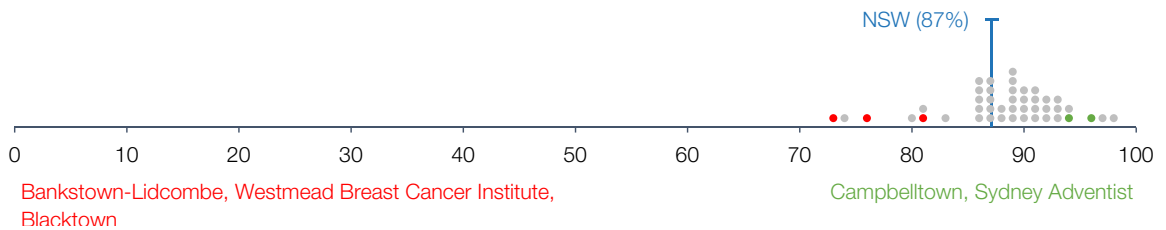
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In the figures below, each dot represents an individual facility's result. After accounting for patient characteristics, facilities whose results are significantly different from NSW are listed below the graph in order from lowest to highest. Detailed results for all facilities are available in Healthcare Observer and the survey's supplementary data tables at [bhi.nsw.gov.au](http://bhi.nsw.gov.au)

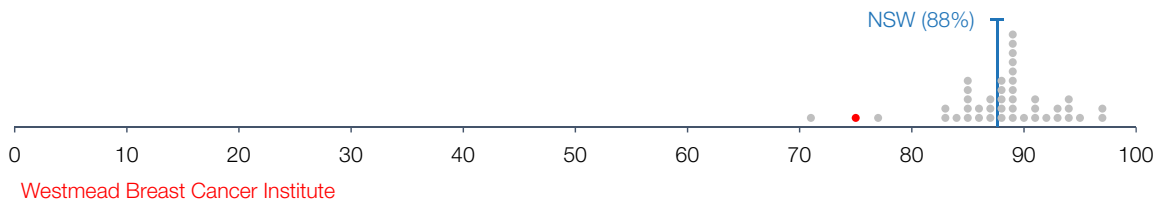
Figure 2 Percentage of patients in each facility who selected the most positive response option, 2019

Facility result relative to NSW: ● Significantly lower ● Not significantly different ● Significantly higher

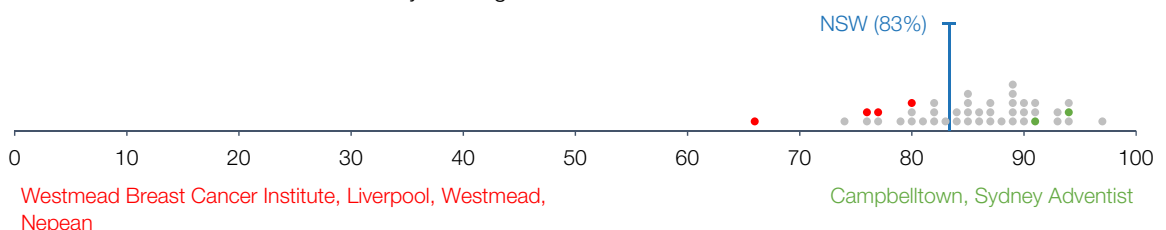
### a. Overall, care in the clinic was 'very good'



### b. Overall, health professionals were 'very good'



### c. Care received in the clinic was 'very well organised'



Note: A facility is noted as having a result that is significantly higher or significantly lower than the NSW result for a question after differences in patient characteristics (including age, sex, education level, language spoken at home, cancer type and non-cancer patients) have been taken into account.

# Experiences of care

Patients who attended outpatient cancer clinics shared their experiences of a range of aspects of their care, including waiting time, coordination of care and involvement in decisions.

Around eight in 10 patients (82%) said their appointment started within 30 minutes of the scheduled time (Figure 3a). Across facilities, results ranged from 49% to 100% (Figure 4a).

Around eight in 10 patients (82%) said health professionals 'definitely' knew enough about their medical history (Figure 3b). Across facilities, results ranged from 70% to 97% (Figure 4b).

More than nine in 10 patients (95%) wanted to be involved in decisions about their care and treatment. Of those, 81% said they were 'definitely' involved as much as they wanted to be (Figure 3c). Across facilities, results ranged from 63% to 91% (Figure 4c).

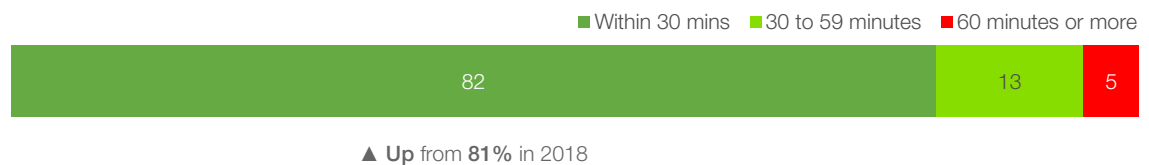
Almost six in 10 patients (59%) said the treatment area was 'very comfortable', while a further 39% said it was 'fairly comfortable'. For patients who said 'very comfortable', results ranged from 42% to 87% across facilities (data not shown).

Almost eight in 10 patients (78%) needed parking at the clinic. Of those, more than half (54%) said they had no issue with parking. However, across facilities results varied widely, ranging from 16% to 96% (data not shown).

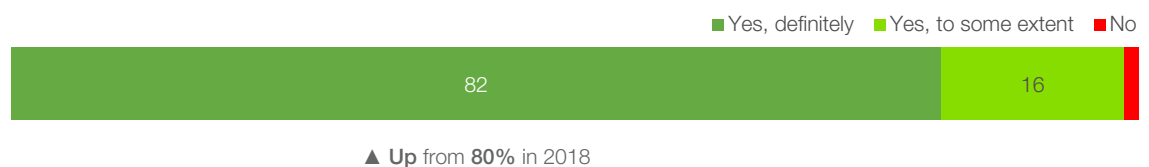
This Snapshot report focuses on experiences of care in 2019 and presents changes from the previous survey year for the most positive response option for selected questions at NSW level. To see changes from the previous survey for all comparable questions at NSW, local health district and facility levels, please see the supplementary data tables to this report and BHI's interactive data portal, Healthcare Observer at [bhi.nsw.gov.au](http://bhi.nsw.gov.au)

Figure 3 Percentage of patients in NSW, all response options, 2019

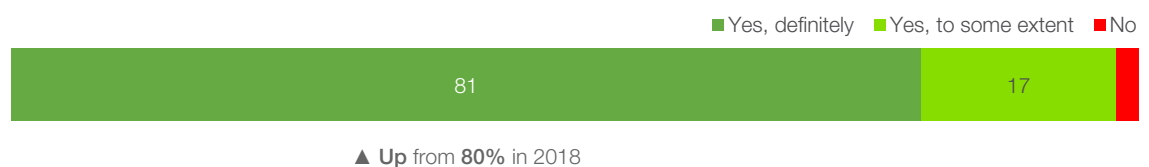
a. How long after the scheduled appointment time did your appointment actually start?



b. During this visit, did the health professionals know enough about your medical history?



c. Were you involved, as much as you wanted to be, in decisions about your care and treatment?\*



\*Based on the responses of 12,085 patients (95%) who wanted to be involved.  
Note: Results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Almost all patients (98%)  
said the treatment area was



'very comfortable' 59%

'fairly comfortable' 39%

What could improve...

“  
Continue replacing  
the old treatment  
chairs to make it  
more comfortable  
for patients with  
long treatment  
sessions.  
”

Figure 4 Percentage of patients in each facility who selected the most positive response option, 2019



\*There were no facilities that had a significantly higher or lower result than NSW for this measure.  
Note: A facility is noted as having a result that is significantly higher or significantly lower than the NSW result for a question after differences in patient characteristics (including age, sex, education level, language spoken at home, cancer type and non-cancer patients) have been taken into account.







Of the patients who said their family or someone close to them needed information to care for them at home...

13%

said they were not given enough information



Best part of care...

“

Highly professional staff who worked seamlessly together to provide my treatment and care.

”



What could improve...

“

Access to parking – it was sometimes stressful to find a park and get to my appointment on time.

”

# Follow-up and self-management support

It is important that health professionals enable patients and their families to manage their ongoing health following treatment at an outpatient cancer clinic.

More than eight in 10 patients (84%) said a health professional 'completely' explained the next steps of their care and treatment in a way they could understand (Figure 5a). Across facilities, results ranged from 68% to 100% (Figure 6a).

More than seven in 10 patients (76%) said they needed to know who to contact if they were worried about their condition or treatment after they left the clinic. Of those patients, around nine in 10 (91%) confirmed they were given this information (Figure 5b). Across facilities, results ranged from 82% to 97% (Figure 6b).

More than half of patients (55%) said their family or carer needed information about how to help care for them at home. Of those patients, around seven in 10 (71%) said their family or carer received enough of this information (Figure 5c). Across facilities, results ranged from 60% to 82% (Figure 6c).

Patients may experience problems during or shortly after attending a clinic. Around one in 10 patients (13%) said they experienced at least one problem or complication related to their treatment. Almost seven in 10 of these patients (68%) said health professionals were 'completely' open with them about their problem or complication (data not shown).

Figure 5 Percentage of patients in NSW, all response options, 2019

a. Did a health professional at the clinic explain the next steps of your care and treatment in a way you could understand?



▲ Up from 83% in 2018

b. Were you told who to contact if you were worried about your condition or treatment after you left the clinic?\*



▲ Up from 90% in 2018

c. Did a health professional at the clinic give your family or someone close to you enough information to help care for you at home?\*\*\*



▲ Up from 69% in 2018

\*Based on the responses of 9,389 patients (76%) who needed this type of information.

\*\*Based on the responses of 6,876 patients (55%) who thought their family or carer needed this information.

Note: Results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

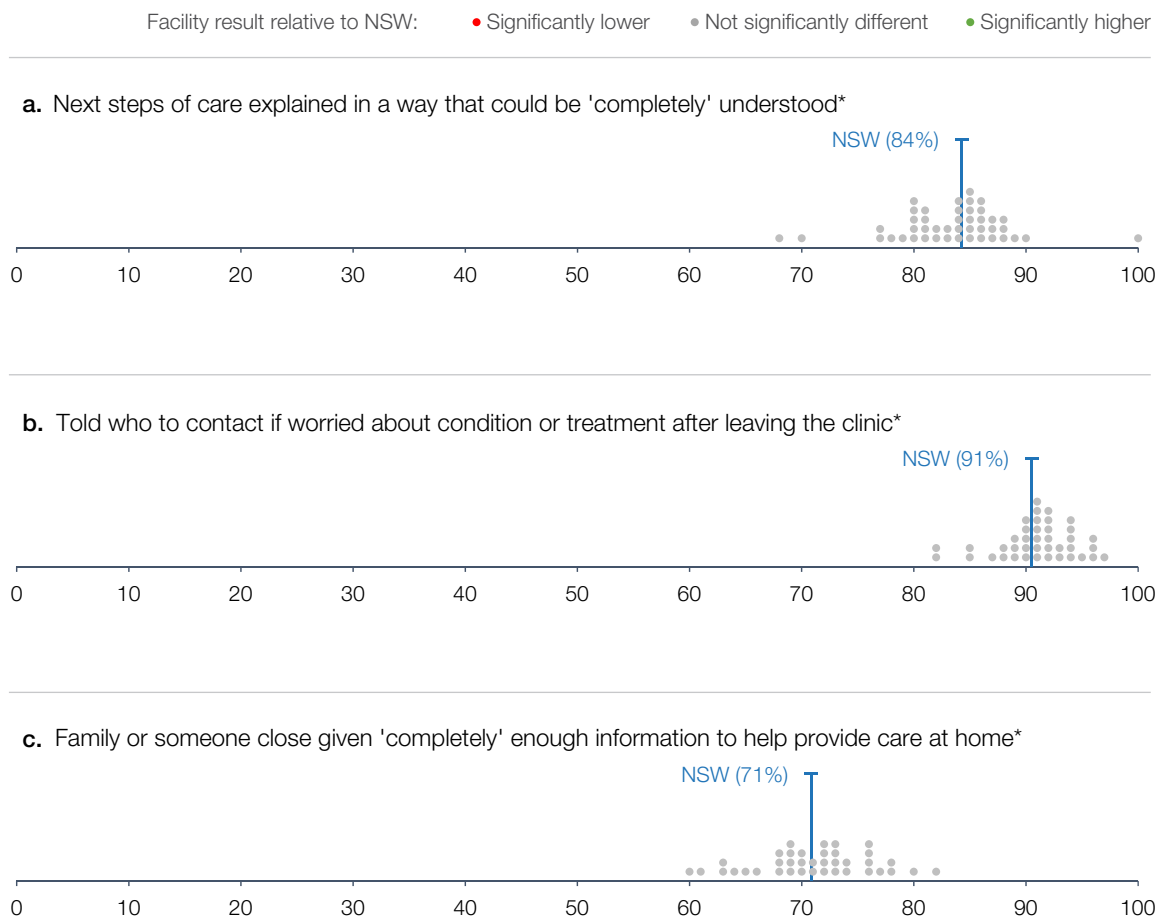


About one in 10 patients (9%) said they were not told who to contact if they were worried about their condition or treatment after they left the clinic.

Best part of care...

“  
As a rural patient two hours from this facility, there was good communication via text and phone calls.  
”

Figure 6 Percentage of patients in each facility who selected the most positive response option, 2019



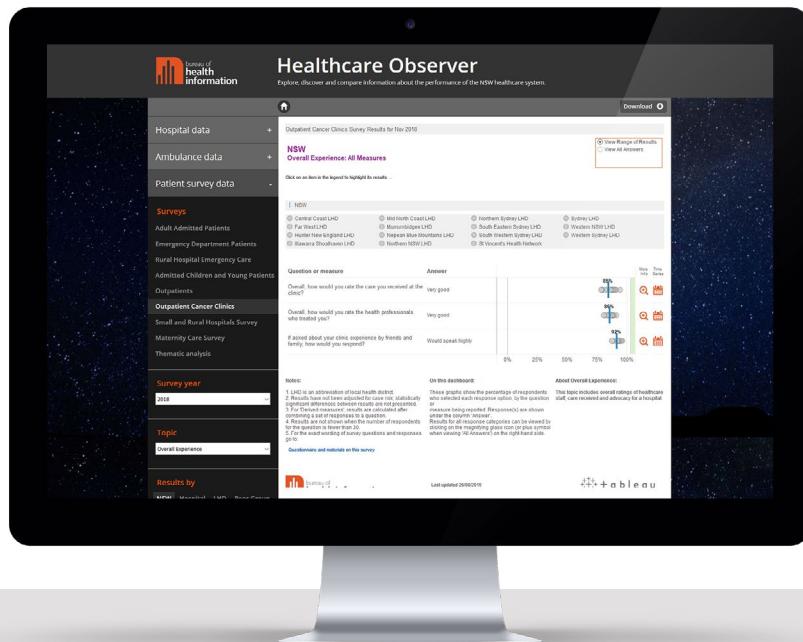
\*There were no facilities that had a significantly higher or lower result than NSW for this measure.  
Note: A facility is noted as having a result that is significantly higher or significantly lower than the NSW result for a question after differences in patient characteristics (including age, sex, education level, language spoken at home, cancer type and non-cancer patients) have been taken into account.



# Healthcare Observer

Healthcare Observer is the Bureau of Health Information (BHI's) online interactive data portal which lets you explore and download information about the performance of the NSW healthcare system.

Full results from the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey 2019 are available at [bhi.nsw.gov.au/Healthcare\\_Observer](http://bhi.nsw.gov.au/Healthcare_Observer)



Adult Admitted Patient Survey



Emergency Department Patient Survey



Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey



Admitted Children and Young Patients Survey



Maternity Care Survey



Rural Hospital Adult Admitted Patient Survey



Rural Hospital Emergency Care Patient Survey

## NSW Patient Survey Program

Each month we ask thousands of people in NSW to tell us about their recent experience with the public healthcare system as part of the NSW Patient Survey Program.

The surveys ask people questions about different aspects of their care such as accessibility and timeliness, the physical environment of the hospital, safety and hygiene, communication and information, and whether they were treated with respect and dignity.

Further information about our surveys can be found at [bhi.nsw.gov.au/nsw\\_patient\\_survey\\_program](http://bhi.nsw.gov.au/nsw_patient_survey_program)

## About the Bureau of Health Information

BHI is a board-governed organisation that publishes independent reports and information about the performance of the healthcare system in NSW.

We aim to provide the community, health professionals and policy makers with information that enhances visibility and understanding of the performance of the healthcare system, in order to inform actions to improve healthcare and strengthen accountability.

State Health Publication Number: (BHI) 200366

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The conclusions in this report are those of BHI and no official endorsement by the NSW Minister for Health, the NSW Ministry of Health or any other NSW public health organisation is intended or should be inferred.



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