

MEDIA RELEASE

Fewer deaths following hospital admission in NSW

A new report released by the Bureau of Health Information today, shows deaths within 30 days following hospitalisation in NSW has decreased for heart attack, ischaemic stroke, haemorrhagic stroke, pneumonia and hip fracture surgery over the last decade.

Together, the five conditions account for approximately 20% of all deaths in NSW hospitals.

This is the first time in Australia that these mortality measures are being published at the state level and for individual hospitals for these conditions.

Using an internationally recognised method, this report compares actual number of deaths following hospitalisation with an 'expected mortality' given patients' characteristics within each hospital.

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

"In all five conditions mortality has decreased in NSW since 2000 and shows that NSW compares well in the international context. It also shows that the vast majority of hospitals in New South Wales do not have higher than expected mortality."

Among 80 referral, major and district hospitals, between July 2009 and June 2012:

- 58 did not have higher than expected mortality for any of the five conditions
- No hospital had higher than expected mortality for all five conditions
- 18 had higher than expected mortality for only one of the five conditions
- 3 had higher than expected mortality for two conditions
- 1 had higher than expected mortality for four conditions
- Hospitals with higher than expected mortality were found in urban and rural settings

Over the period 2000-2012:

- Few hospitals consistently had higher than expected mortality

"This report provides invaluable information about mortality occurring during hospitalisations as well as following discharge.

"The findings should not be used for comparing or ranking hospitals or for identifying avoidable deaths, but there are some important findings that point to where further considerations and assessments of care could be made.

"While the vast majority of NSW hospitals do not have higher than expected mortality, this report highlights hospital settings that warrant further assessments to identify potential areas of improvement," Dr Levesque said.

The full report and individual hospital profiles are available at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au