

22 June 2017

First-of-its-kind ambulance performance data available

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) has today released a new report showing how public hospitals and ambulance services in NSW performed in the January to March 2017 quarter.

BHI Acting Chief Executive, Dr Kim Sutherland, said the *Healthcare Quarterly* report is the first time that NSW Ambulance data will be regularly reported for NSW and 18 ambulance zones.

“These new ambulance measures help build a more comprehensive picture of emergency care provided to people in NSW,” Dr Sutherland said.

BHI has introduced a new patient-centred measure ‘call to ambulance arrival time’ to reflect the time from when a Triple Zero (000) call is answered to when a paramedic arrives.

Operational measures such as the number of ambulance responses to calls, response time, mobilisation time and turnaround time are also included in the report.

The report shows that for 277,218 ambulance responses in January to March 2017:

- 94.7% of priority category 1 patients (emergency cases) had a call to ambulance arrival time within 30 minutes. These are patients that, for example, experience breathing problems or were unconscious.
- 95.0% of priority category 2 patients (urgent cases) had a call to ambulance arrival time within 60 minutes. These are patients that experience, for example, abdominal pain.

“Call to ambulance arrival time for patients in the two most urgent priority categories has been relatively stable for the past three years,” Dr Sutherland said.

Alongside NSW Ambulance information, the report includes activity and performance measures of admitted patients, emergency department care and elective surgery. The report shows NSW public hospitals have maintained performance on waiting times and increased the volume of services provided during January to March 2017.

“Hospitals have been busy and seen more emergency department patients, more admissions and have performed more elective surgeries than in any other January to March quarter,” Dr Sutherland said.

Compared to the same quarter last year:

- 91.5% of patients who arrived by ambulance had their care transferred to hospital staff within 30 minutes, an increase of 0.8 percentage points
- 75.2% of patients’ treatment started on time in NSW emergency departments, a decrease of 0.2 percentage points
- 73.2% of patients were able to leave emergency departments within four hours, a decrease of 1.1 percentage points
- 97.1% of patients received elective surgery on time, an increase of 0.1 percentage points on the same quarter last year.

The report and data are available at bhi.nsw.gov.au