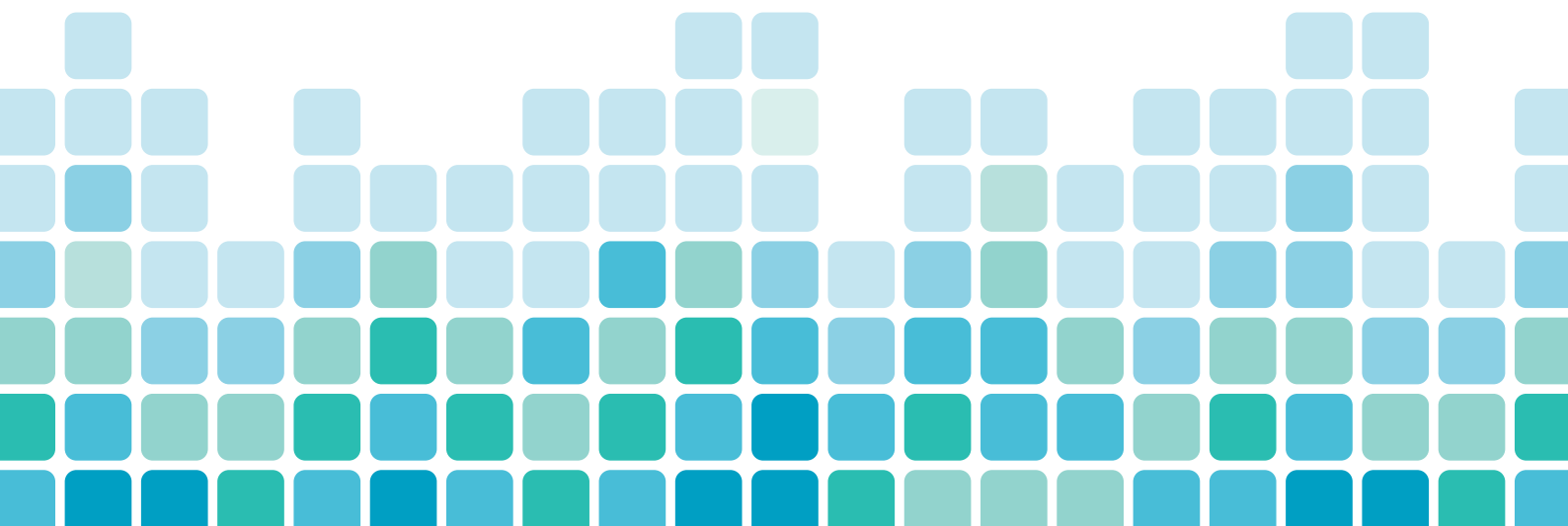


Strategic Plan

Visions, values and future directions
2009 to 2014



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1. Message from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive

The Bureau of Health Information was established by the NSW Government to excel in the delivery of timely, accurate and comparable information on the performance of the NSW public health system. It does this to better the health and wellbeing of the people in NSW.

At the conclusion of the *Special Commission of Inquiry into Acute Care Services in NSW Public Hospitals 2008*, Commissioner Peter Garling SC recommended the establishment of the Bureau of Health Information as an independent, board-governed statutory organisation. The Commissioner advised that *“public reporting of information about the health system and hospital performance is essential for the future of NSW Health. At the least it improves patient choice and encourages improvement in all services. But it does a lot more. It is the single most important driver (or lever) for the creation of public confidence in the health system, engagement of clinicians, improvement and enhancement of clinical practice and cost efficiency.”*

In developing its strategic directions, the Board relied on insights about needs for health system performance information gained by the *Special Commission*. Commissioner Garling visited 61 public hospitals, heard evidence from over 600 people including patients, community members, doctors, nurses and allied health professionals and received over 1200 written submissions from over 900 individuals and organisations.

The Board also consulted widely with clinicians, administrators and government experts who provided insights about NSW's healthcare system and the types of performance information that would inform efforts to improve patient care. The Board used international evidence about what people want to know about the performance of their public health system

and how information on the performance of healthcare organisations stimulates quality improvement initiatives leading to better care and better health.

In this Strategic Plan for 2009 to 2014, the Bureau of Health Information commits to do all in its power to:

- inform the NSW community about the performance of its public health system;
- inform efforts to improve patient care and strengthen healthcare policy in NSW;
- identify factors that support high performance public health systems;
- advise on strategies to improve health service performance reporting; and
- maintain ethical, effective, responsible and reasonable business practices.

Looking forward, and in anticipation of continued and increasing efforts to improve the performance of the NSW public health system, the Bureau will engage with the community and healthcare professionals in NSW and across Australia to lead in, and give momentum to, the delivery of impartial information to improve patient care and health system performance.



Professor Bruce Armstrong AM
Chairman of the Board



Dr Diane Watson
Chief Executive

2. Preamble

The Bureau of Health Information was established by the NSW Government as part of its *Caring Together: The Health Action Plan for NSW* to “provide public reporting of performance for the State as a whole, each Area Health Service, hospitals and units or wards”.

The Bureau was established as a board governed statutory organisation “independent from and not part of the Department of Health”.

The functions for the Bureau of Health Information, set out in section 53 of the Health Services Act 1997 and in addition to section 12 of the same Act, are as follows:

- To prepare and publish regular reports on the performance of the NSW public health system, including safety and quality, effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness of the system to the needs of the people of NSW;
- To provide an annual report to the Minister and Parliament on the performance of the NSW public health system;
- To publish reports benchmarking the performance of the NSW public health system with comparable systems;
- To establish and maintain a website providing information and analysis on the performance of the NSW public health system; including tools for data analysis;
- To develop reports and tools to enable analysis of the performance of health services, clinical units and clinical teams across the NSW public health system;
- To advise the NSW Department of Health on the quality of existing data sets and the development of enhanced information analysis and reporting to support performance reporting to clinicians, the community and Parliament;

- To undertake and / or commission research to support the performance by the Bureau of its functions;
- To liaise with other bodies and organisations undertaking reporting on the performance of the health systems in Australia;
- To provide advice to the Minister for Health and the Director-General of the Department of Health on issues arising out of its function.

While maintaining and protecting its independence, the Bureau works closely with the NSW Clinical Excellence Commission, NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation, NSW Department of Health and other health organisations to strengthen and enhance the quality of and capability for analyses and public reporting on health system performance in NSW.

The Bureau’s mandate is to provide objective, relevant and accurate information to the community and to healthcare professionals who deliver services and formulate health policy.

International research indicates that public reporting of information on the performance of healthcare organisations stimulates quality improvement initiatives leading to higher levels of patient care.

In today’s society, health matters are of primary importance to the community and people are increasingly seeking information about health care issues and services. Patients across NSW expect high level care in their public health system and the dissemination of, and ready access to, health information are essential elements of the Bureau’s mission to bring improvements across the health system.

3. Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our Mission

To provide the community, healthcare professionals and the NSW Parliament with timely, accurate and comparable information about the performance of the NSW public health system in ways that enhance the system's accountability and inform efforts to increase its beneficial impact on the health and wellbeing of people in NSW.

Our Vision

The community has an accurate understanding of the performance of the NSW public health system and healthcare workers make optimal use of information to improve the health and wellbeing of people in NSW.

Our Values

The Bureau's values:

- Excellence in the delivery of accurate and impartial information that enhances understanding of health system performance;
- Independence and objectivity in providing information to our audiences and in ensuring our methods are valid and interpretations are impartial;
- Availability of relevant, reliable and valid information in understandable formats;
- Respect and fairness in safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of sensitive information;
- Ethical business practice that is just, reasonable and responsive;
- Openness that ensures transparent measurement, analytical methods and report production and release;
- Innovation, curiosity, creativity and courage.

4. Our Strategic Directions

4.1: To inform the NSW community about the performance of its public health system

Strategic initiatives	Strategic objectives
Regularly publish timely, accurate and comparable information that informs the people of NSW about the performance of their public health system and individual services and units within it.	<p>4.1.1. The community, media and the NSW Parliament regard information publicly released by the Bureau to be objective, relevant, timely and accurate.</p> <p>4.1.2. The NSW Government and NSW Health use performance information from the Bureau to inform their communications with the public.</p>
Enhance web-based access to timely, accurate, relevant and comparable data that the community can use to compare performance of health services, clinical units and clinical teams across NSW, to inform decisions about their care.	<p>4.1.3. The community has easy web-based access to comparable information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The performance of hospitals and use of healthcare services; (b) The use, effectiveness, efficiency and equity of healthcare services across NSW.
Proactively respond to inaccurate media portrayals of health system performance and provide accurate information to the community.	<p>4.1.4. Over time, media portrayals of the performance of the NSW public health system are more comprehensive and more in alignment with evidence than they were before the establishment of the Bureau.</p>

4.2: To inform efforts to improve patient care and strengthen healthcare policy in NSW

Strategic initiatives	Strategic objectives
Regularly publish timely, accurate and comparable information that informs local efforts to improve patient care and contributes to evidence-based health policy formulation.	<p>4.2.1. Healthcare professionals and policy makers in NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Regard information produced by the Bureau to be objective, timely and accurate; (b) Use Bureau information to identify need for, stimulate, focus, inform and monitor healthcare quality improvement; (c) Use Bureau information and research in developing and strengthening clinical services and healthcare policy.
Publish an annual report to the NSW Parliament and Minister for Health that provides an accurate, comprehensive and comparative account of the performance of the NSW public health system and benchmarks its performance with other health systems.	<p>4.2.2. The NSW Parliament and Minister for Health use Bureau information to support healthcare policy development and to justify health policy change.</p>
Enhance web-based access to timely, accurate, relevant and comparable data and tools for data analysis that clinicians can use to compare performance of health services, clinical units and clinical teams across the public health system in NSW.	<p>4.2.3. Clinicians and other healthcare professionals and policy makers have easy access to Bureau information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The performance of hospitals, clinical services and clinical groups, as well as use of healthcare services; (b) The use, effectiveness, efficiency and equity of healthcare services across NSW. <p>4.2.4. Clinicians and other healthcare professionals use Bureau web-based tools for data analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) To enhance their knowledge and understanding of the performance of the services in which they are engaged; (b) To develop and evaluate service improvements.

4.3: To identify factors that support high performance public health systems through its analyses and reporting of information on health system performance

Strategic initiatives	Strategic objectives
Publish reports that include information and analyses that may assist in identifying factors, initiatives or policies that affect the impact of the NSW public health system on the health and wellbeing of people across NSW.	<p>4.3.1. Healthcare professionals, policy makers and planners in NSW:</p> <p>(a) Consider Bureau analytical reports to be objective, relevant, timely and accurate;</p> <p>(b) Use the insights they provide to stimulate and inform quality improvement at local levels and to strengthen healthcare policy and planning.</p>
Publish reports that include information and analyses that may assist in identifying factors, initiatives or policies that affect the equity, efficiency and sustainability of the NSW public health system and the degree to which it is responsive to the evolving needs of people across NSW.	

4.4: To advise on strategies to improve health service performance reporting

Strategic initiatives	Strategic objectives
Undertake and implement the results of research into ways of improving performance measurement and public reporting on the NSW public health system.	4.4.1. The Bureau will improve its practice through research and contribute to international understanding of best practice in methods of measurement, analyses and public reporting of healthcare system performance information.
Identify strengths and weaknesses of present data and data quality assurance processes and offer advice that could improve information quality, information management and performance reporting to healthcare professionals, the community and the NSW Parliament.	4.4.2. Bureau advice on data and data quality assurance processes contributes to increased accuracy, comparability and timeliness of NSW healthcare information.

4.5: To institute and maintain ethical, effective, responsible and reasonable business practices

Strategic initiatives	Strategic objectives
Engage and work with staff and stakeholders in ways that are respectful, reasonable, responsive and fair.	4.5.1. The Bureau's stakeholders and staff regard its business practices as respectful, reasonable, responsive and fair.
Institute best-practice business operations in accordance with all applicable laws and State Government policies.	4.5.2. The Bureau operates effectively and efficiently and meets all ethical, legal and policy requirements.
Institute systems, policies and procedures that safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of information and ensure full compliance with NSW and Australian privacy laws and policies.	4.5.3. The Bureau is acknowledged for the excellence with which it protects the privacy and confidentiality of personal information.