

MEDIA BACKGROUND

Hospital Quarterly: Performance of NSW public hospitals April to June 2014

Hospital Quarterly is the quarterly report on performance of the NSW public hospital system, it is published in three modules on Admitted Patients, Emergency Departments and Elective Surgery and provides results for NSW and profiles for 80 hospitals and each local health district in NSW.

Admitted Patients, April to June 2014

There were 451,594 admitted patient episodes in the April to June 2014 quarter. This is 8,935 more than the same quarter a year ago, 96% (433,671) of these were acute.

There were 235,814 acute overnight patient episodes and 197,857 acute same day episodes. 75% of same day episodes were planned and 15% of overnight episodes were planned.

The average length of stay in a hospital for all episodes was 3.6 days, and for overnight acute episodes was 4.9 days.

The average length of stay for an acute patient episode of care has decreased slightly over the past five years, and compared to one year ago.

Emergency Departments, April to June 2014

More than 600,000 patients (600,962) attended NSW emergency departments (EDs) from April to June 2014. This is 3% more than the same quarter a year ago.

The number of patients admitted to hospital from the ED has increased by 5% to 168,675, compared with the same quarter last year.

Measures relating to ambulance arrivals at the ED

- 85% of patients arriving at NSW EDs had a transfer of care time within 30 minutes
- The median transfer of care time was 13 minutes during April to June 2014, the same as the corresponding quarter last year
- The median off stretcher time during April to June 2014 was 27 minutes, this has remained fairly stable over the last five quarters.

Time to start treatment

At a state level, the Bureau reports the time it takes for patients to begin treatment following arrival at the ED across four triage categories. The results are provided below and compared to the same quarter for the previous year.

- The Bureau does not report time to treatment for triage 1 patients (e.g. critical injury, cardiac arrest) as this category is extremely time sensitive, representing a two minute window to begin treatment.

All Bureau reports are available at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au

- **Triage 2** – emergency (e.g. chest pain, severe burns)
The median time to start treatment was 8 minutes (unchanged) and 95% of people started treatment between 0 and 33 minutes (1 minute shorter than the same quarter in 2013).
- **Triage 3** – urgent (e.g. moderate blood loss, dehydration)
The median time to start treatment was 20 minutes (1 minute shorter) and 95% of people started treatment between 0 and 97 minutes (12 minutes shorter than the same quarter in 2013).
- **Triage 4** – semi-urgent (e.g. sprained ankle, earache)
The median time to start treatment was 26 minutes (unchanged) and 95% of people started treatment between 0 and 140 minutes (12 minutes shorter than the same quarter in 2013).
- **Triage 5** – non-urgent (e.g. small cuts, abrasions)
The median time to start treatment was 23 minutes (2 minutes shorter) and 95% of people started treatment between 0 and 133 minutes (14 minutes shorter than the same quarter in 2013).

Compared to the same quarter in 2013, the time that it took for half of patients to start treatment was the same or shorter across all triage categories. The patients waiting the longest (95th percentile) are being seen more quickly in all triage categories.

Leaving the emergency department

- The median time to leaving the ED for all patients was 2 hours and 49 minutes after arrival. This is 12 minutes shorter than the same quarter in 2013.
- The 95th percentile time to leaving the ED was 10 hours and 3 minutes after arrival. This is an improvement on 11 hours 18 minutes from the same quarter in 2013.
- 29% of patients received treatment in the ED and were subsequently admitted to a ward, a critical care unit or via an operating suite in the hospital. On average, these patients spent longer in the ED.

Leaving the ED within four hours

- During the April to June 2014 quarter, 72% of patients left NSW EDs within four hours.
- This is lower than the last quarter (73%) and higher than the same quarter last year (66%).

Elective Surgery, April to June 2014

During the April to June 2014 quarter, 54,397 elective surgical procedures were completed in NSW public hospitals or in facilities contracted by NSW public hospitals. This is 1% less surgical procedures than completed in the same quarter in 2013 (55,121).

97% of all elective surgery patients were admitted within the recommended time for the urgency of their care, the same as the corresponding quarter in 2013.

Surgeries performed on time

Recommended times for surgery are 30 days for urgent surgery, three months for semi-urgent surgery and 365 days for non-urgent surgery.

During the April to June 2014 quarter, NSW achieved:

- 100% on time for urgent surgeries, an increase of 1 percentage point compared to the same quarter in 2013
- 97% on time for semi-urgent surgeries, unchanged from the same quarter in 2013
- 95% on time for non-urgent surgeries, unchanged from the same quarter in 2013.

Median waiting times for elective surgeries

- The median waiting time for urgent surgery was 11 days, largely unchanged from the same quarter in 2013
- The median waiting time for semi-urgent surgery was 45 days, up 1 day from the same quarter in 2013
- The median waiting time for non-urgent surgery was 226 days, 6 days less than the same quarter in 2013.

90th percentile waiting times for elective surgeries

- The 90th percentile waiting time for urgent surgery was 26 days, unchanged from the same quarter last year and 2 days less than the same quarter in 2012.
- The 90th percentile waiting time for semi-urgent surgery was 83 days, 1 day more than the same quarter last year (82 days) and 6 days less than the same quarter in 2012 (89 days).
- The 90th percentile waiting time for non-urgent surgery was 358 days, 1 day less than the same quarter in 2013 (359 days) and 6 days less than the same quarter in 2012 (364 days).

There were 1% more people on the waiting list for urgent surgery, no change in the number of people waiting for semi-urgent surgery and a 5% increase in patients waiting for non-urgent surgery compared to the same time in 2013.

At the end of the quarter there were 396 patients who were waiting more than 12 months for surgery compared to 581 patients the same quarter in 2013.