

MEDIA RELEASE

NSW emergency department performance and surgery wait times improve

The latest issue of *Hospital Quarterly* published by the Bureau of Health Information today shows NSW hospitals continue to improve in many areas including emergency department performance and reductions in elective surgery waiting times but the state is still short of the National Emergency Access Target (NEAT).

Hospital Quarterly looks at NSW hospital performance for the July to September quarter in three modules: admitted patients, emergency department (ED) and elective surgery and provides performance profiles for more than 80 NSW hospitals.

Deputy Chief Executive of the Bureau of Health Information, Kim Browne said;

“The report shows an overall improvement in hospital performance. Even though presentations to EDs are increasing, patients are waiting less time before they are treated and also waiting less time for surgery, despite more surgeries being completed.”

More surgeries were completed in the July–September quarter and 97% of surgeries were completed on time, an increase of 4% compared to the same quarter last year. Median wait times for all categories of elective surgery in NSW have also decreased.

The time patients wait to be seen in an ED has either decreased or remained unchanged in all triage categories compared to the same time last year. Furthermore, the total time spent by patients in EDs has also reduced.

The majority of hospitals recorded an improvement in their results against the National Emergency Access Target (NEAT) - which records the percentage of patients leaving the ED within four hours. The result for NSW increased 7% from one year ago to 65% but is yet to meet the yearly target of 71%.

“Our report also shows that large hospitals with a high volume of patients have more difficulty meeting the NEAT target due to the higher urgency and number of patients” said Kim Browne.

This issue also reports on transfer of care, which is the time taken for the care of a patient to be transferred from the Ambulance paramedics to the care of ED clinicians.

In the July to September quarter, 80% of patients arriving at NSW EDs had a transfer of care time within 30 minutes.

The full report and profiles of more than 80 hospitals are available at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au.

Key findings of *Hospital Quarterly*

(All findings are compared with the July-September quarter, 2012)

- 97% of surgeries completed on time (up 4 percentage points)
- Median wait times for elective surgery in NSW have decreased
- Median times to start treatment in EDs have decreased or are unchanged
- Median time to leaving the ED has decreased
- NSW performance against the National Emergency Access Target has improved by 7 percentage points to 65%
- 56 hospitals improved their National Emergency Access Target performance
- 80% of patients arriving at NSW EDs had a transfer of care time within 30 mins