

25 October 2023

## New report shines light on healthcare experiences of people who mainly speak a language other than English

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) has released a new report that reveals important new insights into the experiences of patients from non-English speaking backgrounds in NSW public hospitals.

**The Insights Series – Hospital care experiences for people who mainly speak a language other than English** is based on the experiences of more than 22,000 patients who mainly speak a language other than English at home and completed a survey about their care in NSW public hospitals between 2017 and 2022.

BHI Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson said the report shows that between 2017 and 2022, linguistically diverse patients provided increasingly positive overall ratings of their hospital care.

“It is encouraging to see that linguistically diverse patients’ experiences of hospital care improved over time and the report illustrates gains across several aspects of care,” said Dr Watson.

“However, while the difference has narrowed, their overall experiences remained less positive than people who mainly speak English.”

Advanced analyses show that regardless of language spoken, patients who said their care was well organised and that health professionals worked well together as a team were much more likely to have a positive overall experience of care.

While people from linguistically diverse backgrounds may face distinct challenges when accessing and navigating the healthcare system, the report shows that compared with patients who speak English, they provided similar ratings on several key aspects of their hospital care. For example:

- While admitted patients who speak a language other than English at home were significantly more likely than patients who speak English to say they had religious or cultural beliefs to be considered, they were just as likely to say these beliefs were ‘always’ respected by hospital staff and that they were ‘always’ treated with respect and dignity while in hospital.
- Both groups provided similar ratings of the way health professionals explained things, and whether they received the right amount of information about their care and treatment.

However, linguistically diverse patients were more likely to say they received contradictory information from health professionals about their condition or treatment.

“Understanding the experiences of linguistically diverse people who use the NSW health system helps inform efforts to make services more accessible, inclusive and responsive to their needs,” said Dr Watson.

BHI has also released two other reports today that are informed by patient survey results:

**The Insights Series – Patients' experiences of elective surgery care** highlights key insights from analyses of the experiences of more than 1,100 people who had elective surgery in one of 63 NSW public hospitals between August and October 2022. Detailed results are available in supplementary data tables.

The **results of the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey 2023** reflect the experiences of more than 8,000 adult patients who attended one of 43 NSW facilities housing outpatient cancer clinics in January 2023. Detailed results, including at facility level, are available in supplementary data tables and the BHI Data Portal.

All three reports and associated information products are available on the BHI website at [bhi.nsw.gov.au](http://bhi.nsw.gov.au)

**SPOKESPERSON: Dr Diane Watson, Chief Executive**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** 0475 946 065